

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
November 6, 2017

PRESENT: Mayor Brandon Johnson, Councilmembers Billy Ethridge, Arthur Craft, Tray Hicks, Mike MacNabb, Tony Haynie, and Bill Griggs. Others present were City Manager David Aldrich, Assistant Manager Jon Herschell, City Attorney Robert Leverett, City Clerk Jean Turner, Representatives of the Press/Media, and Interested Citizens.

The City of Hartwell Mayor and Council met in regular session on Monday, November 6, 2017 in the council chambers of city hall, 456 E. Howell Street, with Mayor Brandon Johnson calling the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. Following the invocation given by Mayor Johnson, everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Mayor Johnson expressed appreciation to the Downtown Development Authority for a wonderful Mayor's Monster Mash held on Halloween night, and appreciation to the community for participating.

Appreciation was also extended by the Mayor to American Legion Post 109 for sacrifices they have made and for what they do for our community. A Proclamation was also signed by the Mayor, proclaiming the week of November 5, 2017 as "Veterans Week" and encouraged every citizen to observe and appreciate the sacrifices and contributions of all veterans.

Hearing no additions or corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting, a motion was made by Councilman Haynie to approve as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

The first reading of Ordinance No. 2017-04 was presented regarding adoption of the Fiscal Year 2018 budget. As reported by the City Manager, the proposed General Fund budget for 2018 totaled \$5,365,590, an increase of approximately \$153,000 due to health insurance coverage.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve requests of the Chamber of Commerce for the annual Christmas Tree Lighting and street closure on November 21<sup>st</sup>, and the Christmas Parade and street closure on December 10<sup>th</sup>. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to accept a proposal from Stantec for a study of improvements and ADA accessibility at the Depot/Carolina Street intersection in the amount of \$6,500 to come from SPLOST funds. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously. The City Manager explained that this was basically a study to receive recommendations and cost estimates for the needed improvements of this area of Depot Street.

Upon request of Chief of Police Anthony Davis, a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to approve the reallocation of budget funds for the purchase of a new 2018 Dodge Charger police cruiser from Ed Murdock Superstores at the quoted price of \$21,610.00. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously. As reported by Chief Davis, the Police Department had withdrawn from the North Georgia Drug Taskforce, leaving unobligated 2017 Police Department budget funds in the amount of \$20,000; therefore, the purpose of requesting the transfer of funds to the department's vehicle capital line item. Chief Davis further stated that the new vehicle would be replacing an older police vehicle.

As discussion ensued regarding a request from Fire Chief Terry Vickery for purchase of a computer server for the Fire Department, and acceptance of the low bid of \$5,784.14 from Dell, Inc., Councilman Hicks

commented that he was disappointed that specifications were not included for consideration. He also questioned why the Fire Department needed a separate server than the one in city hall. Following a brief discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Haynie to table this request until the next council meeting. Motion to table was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously. It was also noted that this was a budgeted item.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Ethridge to accept the low bid received from Bobcat of Greenville for a Bobcat Compact Excavator in the amount of \$42,166.16, and a 7 x 20 heavy duty trailer in the amount of \$4,200.00 for towing the excavator, totaling \$46,366.16. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hicks and carried unanimously. This was also a budgeted equipment item for the Water/Sewer Department.

A motion was made by Councilman Craft, seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously to approve the request of Hart County NAACP for the Black History Parade to be held on February 18, 2018, using the same route as the Hartwell Christmas Parade.

Speaking on behalf of the Bell Family YMCA, Ms. Deborah Sanders, along with YMCA Director Mandy Floyd, addressed Mayor and Council concerning YMCA's request to hold a "Jingle Bell Family" 5K road race and one-mile fun run on December 16<sup>th</sup>, with proceeds to benefit the YMCA. As the request included the 5K runners to enter Hwy. 29, Council had concerns about this proposed route on a state highway. Ms. Sanders stated that the YMCA would have monitors along the highway, letting traffic know a run was taking place. Following considerable discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to table this request until approval may be received from the Department of Transportation (DOT), and if this approval is received, Council would have a called meeting to approve YMCA's request prior to the regular December council meeting. He further included in his motion that if the YMCA changes its mind and would like to use an already Council-approved 5K course, then Council would approve that requested route. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

Mayor Johnson reported that the Industrial Building Authority (IBA) had chosen not to renew the contract with Retail Strategies for a third year. The original contract amount of \$30,000/yr. was split between the City and IBA for consulting services from Retail Strategies for market and retail study in relation to recruitment of retail prospects. Upon being notified by the Mayor that the City could not pay the \$30,000 on its own, Retail Strategies agreed to reduce the cost to \$20,000.00. As conversations by the Mayor and Councilman Hicks occurred with several business owners, contributions were made by Hart Telephone Company (\$2,500), Hampton Inn (\$500), McGee Heating & Air (\$500), CWS Electrical (\$500), Cateechee Golf (\$500), and Mr. Chuck Whelan (\$500), leaving the City's share for the consulting services in the amount of \$15,000.00. A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve the contract with Retail Strategies for year three in the amount of \$20,000, with the City paying \$15,000 and \$5,000 paid by community leaders. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously.

At this time, a hearing was conducted by City Attorney Robert Leverett regarding the appeal of Mr. Marvin Hill, asking Council to rescind citations he received for a violation of the City's sign ordinance. The "Donna's New to You" sign, located at the corner of Chandler and Leard Streets, was cited under the City's old sign ordinance. Representing Mr. Hill was Attorney Christopher NeSmith, who expressed concern of the City's enforcement of other sign violations. Mayor Johnson commented that Council was very serious about enforcing the sign ordinance city-wide. As the hearing concluded, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to stand with the decision of the building official for removal of the sign. Motion was seconded by Councilman MacNabb and carried unanimously.

#### City Manager Comments:

- 2018 Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG) resurfacing list due before end of year; ask that any request by Council for street additions to be included for resurfacing to be submitted to City Manager.
- Bulk leaf truck in operation at present. Remind everyone to please keep leaves out of streets, sidewalks, and ditches.
- Water Treatment Plant upgrade going well; scheduled for completion probably 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2018.
- Garbage truck refurbished and back in operation. Hope to receive new garbage truck in a few weeks.
- Water & gas line relocations on front side of Hwy. 29 at Oakview Crossing should begin late this week or early the following week.
- Sewer line work on Parkdale Drive should be completed in a week or two.
- Striping of city streets under DOT's LMIG Off-System Safety Program almost complete.
- In displaying a wooden replica of a backhoe, the City Manager continued his comments to report that the City's Natural Gas Department had received the statewide 2017 "Golden Backhoe Award" by the Georgia Utilities Coordinating Council for utility line locates and damage prevention. In expressing appreciation for doing an outstanding job for the city, the City Manager named each Gas Department employee, as supervised by Audie Laviolette.

#### Council Comments:

- Councilman Hicks asked that anyone having an opportunity to see any of the local contributors to the Retail Strategies Market & Retail Study to please thank each of them for having the ability to see what the City is trying to accomplish. He further commented how great it was to live in a community where people come together to help each other, making reference to a family whose home was destroyed by fire, and the loss of a gentleman's life in an automobile accident recently. Also, with Veteran's Day approaching, everyone is asked to thank a veteran. Everyone is also encouraged to get out and vote in the election the following day.
- Councilman Ethridge stated that the person who made the wooden replica of a backhoe was a precision artist, and the Gas Department employees were also precision artists who worked hard and did a great job.
- Councilman MacNabb also stated that the City was fortunate to have the Gas Department crew, as well as all other departments.
- Councilman Griggs stated that the front parking lot was complete at the Catholic Church, and expressed appreciation for the young lady working as a crossing guard during the project, as well as Police Chief Anthony Davis and his department for their support.

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:20 p.m. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner  
City Clerk

