

Regular Council Meeting  
October 5, 2015

The regular session of the Hartwell City Council was held on Monday, October 5, 2015 in the council chambers of city hall, 456 E. Howell Street, Hartwell, Georgia. Present included Mayor Brandon Johnson, Councilmembers Tray Hicks, Mike MacNabb, Billy Ethridge, Arthur Craft, Bill Griggs, and Tony Haynie. Also present were City Manager David Aldrich, City Attorney Robert Leverett, City Clerk Jean Turner, members of the local press/media, and interested citizens.

Mayor Brandon Johnson called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance. The invocation was offered by Mayor Johnson, followed by everyone standing for the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Mayor's comments:

- Reminding everyone that the annual Halloween Monster Mash would be held on Depot Street this year on October 31<sup>st</sup> rather than the town square. He stated also that the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) would be inviting Benson Street residents to the Depot Street activities if they desire, due to the large number of kids (some unattended) who normally walk down heavily traveled Benson Street during Halloween Trick or Treating. The goal is to keep everyone safe.
- A reminder that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.
- Appreciation is expressed to all city employees who assisted with cleanup from fallen trees and flooded streets during the recent heavy rains and wind damage.

A proclamation was read by Mayor Johnson, proclaiming the month of October as "Dysautonomia Awareness Month" in our community. As the Mayor began to read the proclamation, he stated that the daughter of city employee, Shane Turner, had been diagnosed with a form of dysautonomia, which causes malfunction of the autonomic nervous system.

Hearing no corrections or additions to the minutes of the September 8, 2015 council meeting, a motion was made by Councilman Griggs to approve as recorded. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve the application of Mindy S. Wise for a beer and wine license for a new restaurant ("The Table") located at 126 W. Franklin Street. Motion was seconded by Councilman Griggs and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to approve a request from the Hartwell Pilot Club for the annual "Depot Day" Fall Festival to be held October 24<sup>th</sup> on Depot Street. Motion was seconded by Councilman Haynie and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Haynie, seconded by Councilman Griggs, and carried unanimously to surplus a 1988 Chevrolet Rescue Truck as requested by Fire Chief Terry Vickery. This vehicle will be placed on the "GovDeals" auction website.

Upon request of Public Works Director Dennis White, a motion was made by Councilman Haynie to surplus the Street Department's 1996 Case Backhoe, which has been replaced by a new John Deere 410L. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously. This will also be placed on "GovDeals" auction website.

A motion was made by Councilman Griggs, seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously to accept the low bid of \$15,780.00 from Stratton & Sons for paving the parking lot at the Gas Department Shop on Elberton Highway. As stated by the City Manager, this was a budgeted item.

City Manager David Aldrich explained that the Hartwell Housing Authority was requesting approval of school bus stops on their own property at approximately three Housing Authority locations, with the Housing Authority willing to fund all expenses. This proposal is being made to allow children a place to stand out of rain while awaiting a bus. A motion was made by Councilman Hicks to allow the Housing Authority to construct bus stops on their own property at their own expense. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

It was the consensus of Council to set dates for budget public hearings to be held on Monday, November 2, 2015 at 6:30 p.m., and also Monday, December 7, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. prior to the regular meetings of city council.

As reported and explained by Mayor Johnson, the Hart County Industrial Building Authority had voted to allocate \$25,000.00 for one year to Retail Strategies, LLC for the purpose of recruiting commercial growth, and the City is asked to also match this \$25,000.00 for a one-year commitment. Total cost for the services of Retail Strategies, LLC would be \$50,000 for year one, \$30,000 for the second year, and \$30,000 for the third year. The Mayor stated that the funds would come from the Economic Development Fund and not from property taxes. He further explained that Retail Strategies had access to hundreds of detailed research data which could be profitable to our community, and their initial report estimated that approximately \$76,000,000 in leakage is going outside the community on an annual basis. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Hicks to partner with the Hart County Industrial Building Authority and contribute \$25,000.00 the first year for the services of Retail Strategies, LLC, with funds to come from the Economic Development Fund. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

#### City Manager's Comments:

- Received call that the state had given a nod to the City's updated Comprehensive Plan. Would like to open for public review and possibly have placed on the agenda for approval in November.
- All city departments are commended for their work during the recent heavy rain and wind storm, which brought down at least nine large trees just in the city. The waste water crew also had to rotate around the clock to try and maintain operations.
- Citizens are reminded that if contractors are used to clean up their property, it is the contractor's responsibility to remove the debris.

Council Comments:

- Councilman Hicks echoed the City Manager's statement, complimenting City employees for their work during the recent storm. Also, Hart State Park project is still under budget and consultants will be meeting this month with Corps of Engineers for review; should have a master plan for review the following month. Reminding everyone that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and all females are encouraged to have checkups.
- Councilman Craft wished to also commend city employees. He reported that a freshly paved street had a pipe to burst over the past weekend and city crews worked until around 2:00 a.m. to repair.
- Councilman Griggs asked that citizens in South Carolina also be remembered due to the heavy flooding recently, especially in Columbia and Charleston. As reminded by the Mayor, everyone is asked to also remember citizens of Oregon due to a gunman taking the lives of approximately ten people at the Oregon Community College recently. As Councilman Griggs asked that Council consider paying for a one-half page advertisement for the upcoming NAACP Freedom Fund Award Banquet, the Mayor suggested that he and Council could possibly chip in together to pay for an advertisement.

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner  
City Clerk