

GALAX CITY COUNCIL

Minutes

June 11, 2012

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on June 11, 2012 at 7:30 pm.

At 7:30 p.m. Mayor Mitchell called the meeting to order with the following council persons present and they are as listed: Mayor Mitchell, Vice-Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Councilman Webb, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, and Councilman Lazo.

Councilman Lazo prayed the opening prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilman Webb motioned to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on May 29, 2012. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice-Mayor Greene -yea, Councilman Garner -yea, Councilwoman Councilman Webb - yea, Councilwoman Crouse - yea, Councilwoman Plichta- yea, and Councilman Lazo-yea.

Mayor Mitchell presented an award from The Office of Drinking Water, Virginia Department of Health to the City of Galax Water Treatment Plant. The 2011 Excellence in Waterworks Operations Silver Award indicates the City of Galax Water Treatment Plant met the Virginia Optimization Program goals for clarification and filtration during 2011.

This is the date set for City Council to approve the City of Galax FY2013 Budget as presented at the May 29, 2012 Meeting. The budget will be appropriated at the July meeting. The FY2013 Budget amounts are:

- General Fund Revenue and Expenditures - \$ 15,841,823
- Utility Fund Revenue and Expenditures - \$ 2,709,400
- The effective tax rates as proposed are:
 - Real Estate - \$0.67 per \$100
 - Personal Property - \$2.25 per \$100
 - Machinery & Tools - \$1.50 per \$100

Councilwoman Plichta motioned to approve the FY2013 Budget as presented. Councilman Webb seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice-Mayor Greene -yea, Councilman Garner -yea, Councilwoman Councilman Webb - yea, Councilwoman Crouse - yea, Councilwoman Plichta- yea, and Councilman Lazo-yea.

Keith Barker informed council that staff advertised a vacancy on the Library Board to fill the unexpired term of Ruth Mattson. Ms. Carol Morris submitted a letter of interest in being appointed to the Library Board for the unexpired term through June 30, 2014. No other letters of interest have been received. Vice-Mayor Greene motioned to appoint Ms. Morris to the Library Board for the term of July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2014. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice-Mayor Greene -yea, Councilman Garner -yea, Councilwoman Councilman Webb - yea, Councilwoman Crouse - yea, Councilwoman Plichta- yea, and Councilman Lazo-yea.

Keith Barker informed council that staff advertised vacancies on the Recreation Board. Letters of interest were received from Mr. Larry Spangler and Mr. Steven Archer. Councilman Webb motioned to appoint Mr. Larry Spangler and Mr. Steven Archer to the Recreation Board for the terms of July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2014. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice-Mayor Greene –yea, Councilman Garner –yea, Councilwoman Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta- yea, and Councilman Lazo–yea.

Keith Barker informed council that staff advertised vacancies for appointments to the Galax IDA and received only one letter of interest from a Galax citizen to date. Ms. Amanda Archer, SBDC Director, has expressed an interest in being appointed to the Galax IDA. Councilwoman Plichta motioned to appoint Ms. Amanda Archer to the Galax IDA for the term of July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2016. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice-Mayor Greene –yea, Councilman Garner –yea, Councilwoman Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta- yea, and Councilman Lazo–yea.

Todd Christensen, Jack Hinshelwood, and Diana Blackburn spoke on behalf of Friends of Southwest Virginia, the nonprofit organization representing Heartwood, The Crooked Road, and 'Round the Mountain.

Keith Barker provided copies of the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) Employer Contribution Rates for Cities Resolution and the VRS Member Contribution by Salary Reduction for Cities Resolution to council. He informed council that the Employer Contribution Rates for Cities Resolution must be adopted to verify that the City is accepting the recommended rate of 11.98% as certified by the VRS Board of Trustees. The Member Contribution by Salary Reduction for Cities Resolution must be adopted to verify that an offsetting raise must be provided for each 1% current employees contribute to VRS (up to 5%) and that all new employees hired after July 1 must contribute the 5% in full. City Council was asked to approve the Employer Contribution Rates for Cities Resolution and the Member Contribution by Salary Reduction for Cities Resolution. Councilwoman Crouse motioned to approve resolutions as required. Councilman Garner seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice-Mayor Greene –yea, Councilman Garner –yea, Councilwoman Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta- yea, and Councilman Lazo–yea.

Keith Barker provided copies the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) resolution that City Council is asked to adopt on behalf the schools. He explained that the schools must also certify the rate they are accepting for non-teaching staff and the accompanying resolution must be adopted by July 1, 2012. City Council was asked to adopt the resolution as presented. Councilman Webb motioned to approve the resolution. Councilman Garner seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice-Mayor Greene –yea, Councilman Garner –yea, Councilwoman Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta- yea, and Councilman Lazo–yea.

Susan Clark, Director of Social Services spoke briefly to council on a letter received this week in regards the VDSS conducting reviews of Local Department of Social Services offices and their Federal Title IV-E Foster Care Reviews.

Keith Barker informed council that the Traffic Safety Committee has met a few times to consider changes to the intersection at Lafayette and Center Streets. He explained that this intersection has seen a number of accidents due to individuals not stopping at the Center St. stop signs prior to entering Lafayette Street. Staff has worked with reps from VDOT to review some traffic awareness improvements for the intersection such as rumble strips or raised islands on Center Street. VDOT has reviewed drawings submitted and believes it to be the best alternative. He asked that with council's approval, work will begin with the Public Works Department and Engineering Department to schedule this project. Work and associated costs would be within the proposed budget for FY13. Councilman Lazo motioned to approve these safety changes to the Lafayette and Center Street Intersection. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice-Mayor Greene –yea, Councilman Garner –yea, Councilwoman Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta- yea, and Councilman Lazo–yea.

Keith Barker informed council that the Traffic Safety Committee met to review the traffic signals located on Jefferson Street. He explained that they are older mechanical signals that have been listed for replacement under one of the VDOT 6-year improvement contracts, however due to the smaller sidewalks and areas where signal support cables are attached to buildings staff cannot proceed with that work. He also explained that staff is also unable to convert these signals to Opticom because of the lack of computerized technology in each signal. In meeting with the VDOT rep, he agreed that consideration should be given to moving these four intersections to 4-way stops. The recommendation of the Traffic Safety Committee is to consider moving two intersections to 4-way stops and then moving the other two after a reasonable adjustment period. Appropriate signage and warnings would be provided, as well as new stop signs that are visible and new painted stop bars. There is no proposed timeline, however if Council agrees to proceed, staff would work with the appropriate staff members to provide signage, notice to the public and appropriate notices of a change in the intersection. Councilman Lazo motioned to approve these safety changes to the Jefferson St Traffic Signals. Councilman Webb seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice-Mayor Greene –yea, Councilman Garner –yea, Councilwoman Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta- yea, and Councilman Lazo–yea.

Keith Barker informed council of a notice from District III in regards to pending state funding reductions of \$118,000 to the Area Agency on Aging that will impact some services they offer to the City. Federal funding cuts may be up to \$200,000 if the mandated federal sequestration process takes place on January 1, 2013. It is expected that the biggest decrease in services will be the elimination of a nutrition site in Galax from twice a week to one time a week.

Keith Barker informed council that staff contacted the current solid waste haulers for the commercial dumpster service in the City to verify their interest in continuing to provide services to local businesses and industries. All submitted complete applications to continue services. Proposed rates for Waste Industries and Grayson County are unchanged, and the rates for Waste Management have dropped in some categories. Mr. Barker asked that City Council approve Grayson County, Waste Industries, and Waste Management as approved haulers for August 1, 2012 to July 31, 2013. Councilwoman Plichta motioned to approve Grayson County, Waste Industries and Waste Management as approved commercial dumpster haulers for August 1, 2012 to July 30, 2013. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice-Mayor Greene –yea, Councilman Garner –yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta- yea, and Councilman Lazo–yea.

Keith Barker presented a request from New Harvest Christian Worship Center for permission for a street closing for a car show on July 14, 2012 from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM. The event would be a fundraiser for the church in constructing a new facility. Mr. Barker stated he spoke to Ray Kohl, Tourism Director, in regards to this proposed event and would raise the following concerns.

- There is a cruise-in scheduled for Friday July 13, 2012.
- The city already has 4 car shows/cruise-ins in the downtown from May to August.
- The fundraiser is for a group planning a facility outside the City.
- Potential other fundraising groups may request additional street closings.

After a short discussion council asked Mr. Barker to ask the event organizers to consider moving the event to Felts Park as an alternate location.

Keith Barker reminded City Council that the summer meeting schedule begins in June through October and will only meet the 2nd Monday of each month unless a called meeting is announced.

HEARING OF VISITORS

At the time of the preparation of the agenda, no one has requested to appear before Council, but you may want to allow any citizen that so wishes to address Council with no action taken until the issue can be placed on the agenda for

Council adjourned at 8:50 p.m.



Clerk



Mayor