

Galax City Council  
Minutes  
November 10, 2014

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on November 10, 2014 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 Webb, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, and Councilman Lazo. Councilman Garner was absent.

Councilwoman Plichta prayed the opening prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilman Webb made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on October 13, 2014. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

Mayor Mitchell opened the Public Hearing for the rezoning request from LMC Properties, LLC. He stated that this was the date advertised as the public hearing for the zoning change request from the LMC Properties, LLC. He said that the intent was to change the RMH – Mobile Home Park zoning for a portion of this parcel to B2 – General Business behind 972 East Stuart Drive. Mayor Mitchell explained that this would allow LMC Properties to construct a warehouse that would be ancillary to the main building that currently houses Mathews Five & Dime. Daniel Reigel, GIS/Zoning Administrator was present and gave the Planning Commission's report and recommendation from the meeting which was held November 5<sup>th</sup>. The PC recommended the approval for the zoning change and conditional use permit unanimously. Also present to address Council was Tom McChesney who stated that he was expecting the warehouse to be 30,000 to 50,000 sq. ft. and it would serve as storage space for the business on the parcel. He also stated that the warehouse is still in the preliminary stage and there was no site plan. Councilman Webb made the motion to accept the recommendation of the Planning Commission to approve the conditional use permit as well as the zoning change from RMH to B2 behind 972 East Stuart Drive for LMC Properties, LLC. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

Keith Barker gave an update to Council on the Safe Routes to School Project. Mr. Barker explained that the SRTS project would be started within the next couple of weeks. He said that work would begin on Maroon Tide Drive and then move to Front Street. He noted that that in order for the contractor to be able to work on Front St., traffic would be limited to one-way for periods of time. Also, with the replacement of the sidewalk on the west side, parking would not be available for residents except in their driveways or on the opposite side of the street. Mr. Barker further explained while working with our consulting engineer, it is recommended that parking along Front St. be limited to residents only during this portion of the SRTS construction project. He added that we would contact the school and ask that they notify students and parents, and we would propose to provide each household with a car pass for each vehicle. Visitors to residents will need to park in the residents driveway if they do not have a pass. In closing, Mr. Barker informed Council that we hope the inconvenience for residents would be minimal, and the removal of school car traffic should help in alleviating the parking problem.

Keith Barker informed Council that the City has applied for a VDOT Revenue Sharing Grant for FY2016 to help recover some funds committed to the Bottom Area/Shaw St. Storm Drainage Improvement Project. He explained that while we had received funds from DHCD and Centurylink towards this construction project, we hoped to receive \$380,000 in VDOT Revenue Sharing Funds towards the project. If awarded, this would allow us to reallocate funds moved from the Rt. 58/ Reserve Blvd. Safety Improvement Project back to that project. Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to approve the VDOT Revenue Sharing Resolution and authorize the City Manager to sign grant documents as may be required. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

Judy Bolt, HR Director, addressed Council regarding the updated Employee Handbook. Mrs. Bolt noted that we have spent a number of months updating our Employee Handbook to address new hiring requirements and to bring various adopted policies into a single document. Keith Barker said that our attorney provided the draft and review of the document as we worked through it. While most updates were changes to verbiage and personnel law, others were changes to our existing policies and how we handle certain items. These included:

- Section 3 Compensation – Several updates regarding FLSA
- 5.2.5 Training and Educational Development – Added financial aid verbiage and a repayment schedule if the employee leaves full-time employment with the City
- 5.5.1 Observed Holidays – Employees will no longer bank holiday hours worked, non-exempt employees will be paid for the 8 hours worked during the pay period when the holiday occurs.
- 5.5.3 Sick Leave – adds policy changes regarding hybrid employees, sick leave and the disability policy as required by VRS.
- 5.5.4 Bereavement Leave – changes the allowable time off from 16 hours to 24 hours and states this must occur the day before, day of and day after a funeral or service. The change in hours recognizes 12 hour shift employees.
- 6.3 Driving Policy – amends this section to recognize new requirements with our insurance carrier.
- Section 8 – Discipline – updates requirements within this section.
- Appendix B – Travel Advance/Reimbursement Form – New form
- Appendix C – Meal Per Diem Policy – New policy that provides a set amount of allowable costs for meals rather than a reimbursement policy.
- Appendix H – Credit Card Policy – puts this policy in the handbook.
- Appendix I – Cellular/Data Service Equipment Policy and Form – New policy and form

Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to approve the Employee Handbook, Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

Keith Barker informed Council that AEP was upgrading electrical service on the west side of Galax in order to reduce the possibility of a power loss due to overloading of circuits. Part of the project would require them to install two (2) poles on the Mountain View Part lot, adjacent to the parking lot. He noted that he and Dave Nelson, Galax Recreation Director, met with AEP reps to view the project. While AEP would need to remove 3 – 4 trees, the main trees in front of the park would remain and the line would be mainly over the parking lot, behind these trees. Code of VA section 15.2-1800 requires a public hearing prior to providing a lease or ROW as requested. Mr. Barker asked that Council set a November date as the public hearing date for this request.

Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to set the date for the public hearing for the AEP request to November 24, 2015. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

Mayor Mitchell along with Council recognized Chief Clark for his appointment by Governor McAuliffe to the Governor's Task Force on Prescription Drug and Heroin Abuse. Chief Clark gave a brief description of the objectives of the task force.

Mayor Mitchell along with Council recognized Chief Passmore as the Governor's 2014 Outstanding EMS Administrator. Mayor Mitchell explained that Chief Passmore was nominated at the local level and was selected as the Southwest Region EMS Administrator of the year. He noted that this made him eligible for the state award. The Governor's EMS Awards are the highest awards bestowed by the Commonwealth to members of the EMS community in 11 categories. It was also noted by Mayor Mitchell that the Galax-Grayson EMS was selected as agency of the year at the 2013 awards. Chief Passmore was congratulated on his outstanding accomplishment.

It was decided at this meeting that the next meeting that Council would meet would be on November 24, 2014, the Monday before Thanksgiving.

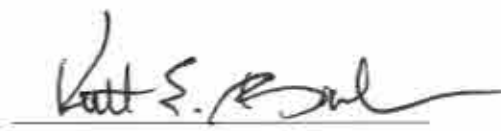
#### CLOSED SESSION

At 8:10 p.m., a motion was made by Councilwoman Crouse to enter into closed session under **Personnel Matter §2.2-3711 A.1 of the Code of Virginia** - Candidates for employment; the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, discipline, salaries, compensation, or resignation of employees. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

At 8:40 p.m., Council reconvened in open session. Mayor Mitchell certified that no items other than those allowed under the cited Virginia code section were discussed and no action taken, with the following affirmation: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:40 p.m.

  
Mayor

  
Clerk

