

Galax City Council
Minutes
September 12, 2016

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on September 12, 2016, 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 Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

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

Mayor Mitchell along with Council congratulated Mike Brown, Chief Operator at the Galax Water Plant, for receiving the 2015 Excellence in Waterworks Operations Gold Award.

Mayor Mitchell welcomed members of Boy Scout Troop 188 who were in attendance earning their citizenship merit badge.

Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on August, 15, 2016, Councilman Helmick seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Mayor Mitchell informed Council of a request to the General Assembly and the Virginia State Lottery which would amend the state lottery program and how funds would be distributed. Keith Barker explained the intent was to seek legislation that would change the payout formula and remit 5% of sales to the localities where lottery tickets were sold. There would be no reduction in funding to schools, however the payout to winners would be reduced by 5%. Mr. Barker submitted a request to the state lottery to see what total sales were in Galax from 2011 – 2105 and the totals were:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Total Sales</u>	<u>5% returned to localities</u>
FY2011	\$2,397,684	\$ 119,884
FY2012	\$2,822,490	\$ 141,124
FY2013	\$2,764,728	\$ 138,236
FY2014	\$3,222,182	\$ 161,109
FY2015	\$2,573,690	\$ 128,648

Mr. Barker spoke to Grayson and Carroll concerning this request. Grayson received a copy but had not taken action and was reaching out to VACO concerning their position. Carroll did not receive the letter. Mr. Barker also spoke to Mary Jo Fields with VML concerning the proposal and it was recently discussed at the VML Legislative Committee Meeting. The motion at that meeting was to defer the item for a year to gather more information before offering support. There were presentations at the committee meeting by the Mayor of Crewe, VA and a representative from the Virginia Lottery. He said at this point VML was not taking a position, however they were recommending more conversations with the lottery officials and our legislators before any official stance was taken. There were concerns from VML and the state lottery staff that this could lead to

a decrease in sales (as it did in Texas) and it could appear to be a reduction in school funding. Mr. Barker recommended that council table this item until an official position had been taken by VML. He closed by saying without their support and backing, he was unsure about the feasibility of pushing for a legislative change that had this fiscal impact to such a major program for Virginia. VACO was also reviewing this request but had not taken action to date. Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to carry the item over until there was a ruling from VML. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion. It was approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Davis – yea. Councilman Helmick – nay.

Mayor Mitchell addressed Council regarding the IDA & Recreation Center Board appointments. He said to date we had no letters of interest for the IDA positions but had two statements of interest for the Recreation Advisory Board appointments. Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to hold the IDA positions until the next meeting due to lack of interest. 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 Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Eugene McCurdy of 101 Dogwood Street and Jennifer Morris of 104 Wild Flower Lane had both expressed interest in being on the Recreation Advisory Board. Keith Barker explained that one appointment was to fill the unexpired term of Ms. Curly Sellers through June 31, 2017. The other appointment was for an unfilled spot and would run through June 31, 2018. Councilman Garner made the motion to appoint Eugene McCurdy to fill the unfilled spot which would run through June 31, 2018. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Davis – yea. Councilman Helmick – abstained due to possible business conflicts. Councilman Garner made the motion to appoint Jennifer Morris to fill the unexpired term of Ms. Curley Sellers through June 31, 2017. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Davis – yea. Councilman Helmick – abstained due to possible business conflicts.

Keith Barker informed Council on the proposed Bottom Area Phase III project. Mr. Barker showed Council a map of the proposed area. He said the draft map is the area for what we believe would be the Bottom Area Phase III project submittal. He said we were still in the process of obtaining initial surveys from residents but would have the preliminary application for a planning grant completed by October 3. He closed by saying if we were awarded funding then we would proceed to a full planning grant with a submittal in March 2017.

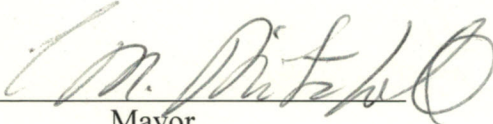
Mayor Mitchell informed Council of expired terms of appointments on the Department of Social Service Advisory Board. He said that Dr. Eugenia Larrowe's and Ms. Theda Early's appointments to the Galax DSS Advisory Board expired at the end of August. They were both eligible for reappointment to a four year term which would expire August 31, 2020. Both had asked to be considered. Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to reappoint Dr. Eugenia Larrowe and Theda Early to the Galax DSS Advisory Board. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Davis – yea. Councilman Helmick – abstained due to possible business conflicts.

Keith Barker explained that we had received a request from the Virginia Faith Center for Public Policy which asked VML and localities to support a resolution for expanded Medicaid coverage in Virginia. He said per their documentation, they estimated an additional 460 individuals in Galax would receive services if Medicaid coverage were expanded by the general assembly. Mr. Barker told Council he could check with Director of Social Services, Susan Clark and Twin County Regional Hospital CEO, Jon Applebaum to see if they could attend the next Council meeting in October to discuss the resolution further. Councilman Helmick made the motion to approve further discussion in October. 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 Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Mayor Mitchell reminded Council of the joint City Council and School Board meeting at the Galax Elementary School on September 14 and September 20 in the school library. Keith Barker explained the School Board issued an RFP with the intent of soliciting professional design services for a Galax Elementary School renovation project. With the increasing cost of constructing a new school, the school board and Council Finance Committee discussed possible budget options which would lead to a large scale renovation project rather than a new building project. Members of City Council were invited to participate in two nights of presentations by architects and contractors. Mr. Barker said there would be two presentations each night from interested firms. The press would be notified and it would be open to the public, however no public comments would be taken at that time.

With no other business, Councilwoman Crouse made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:05 p.m.



Mayor



Clerk