

Galax City Council

Minutes

October 24, 2016

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on October 24, 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, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick. Councilman Garner and Councilwoman Crouse were absent.

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

In special action, Mayor Mitchell along with Council welcomed and congratulated the following:

- Ms. B. J. (Bettie Joe) Carroll, was presented a proclamation by Mayor Mitchell for her recent induction into the Virginia High School League Hall of Fame on October 12, 2016. Ms. Carroll was the first Galax coach to be so honored. Ms. Carroll led Galax High School theatre team to numerous state and district championships along with many other awards too numerous to mention.
- Detectives Aaron Criner, J. B. Greer, and Robert J. Isom were commended by Police Chief Rick Clark as he came forward to describe the hard work and dedication of Detective Aaron Criner, who was awarded the Dr. Paul Ferrara VFSAAA Crime Scene Officer of the Year Award by the Virginia Academy of Forensic Science Alumni Association. Chief Clark also informed Council regarding Detectives J.B. Greer & Robert J. Isom who were recently honored at the 2016 Virginia Homicide Detectives Conference as the Detectives of the Year. Chief Clark told of how the detectives worked countless hours in the case of a murdered Galax mother & her infant daughter. Chief Clark also commended Keith Barker and James Cox for their support during the investigation.
- Officer Dakota Martin was introduced by Mayor Mitchell as Galax Police Department's newest officer. Mayor Mitchell administered the oath of office to Officer Martin.

Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on September 12, 2016. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Mayor Mitchell requested to have the old business on the agenda re-ordered. Council agreed.

Mayor Mitchell welcomed Jon Applebaum, Twin County Regional Hospital CEO, along with Susan Clark, Galax Department of Social Services Director, to speak regarding a Medicaid expansion resolution. A request was received from the Virginia Faith Center for Public Policy asking VML and localities to support a resolution for expanded Medicaid coverage in Virginia. Mr. Applebaum said if the expanded Medicaid coverage was approved, an additional 460 individuals in Galax would receive services which would improve their overall health, 30 jobs would be created, and strengthen financial stability of our local hospital. Ms. Clark spoke briefly in favor of the expanded Medicaid coverage. She said that many of the recipients who would

qualify for the expanded coverage were already receiving services from DSS. Councilman Davis made the motion to approve the Medicaid Resolution. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion. It was approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Davis – yea. Councilman Helmick abstained due to a personal conflict.

Mayor Mitchell announced that this was the date for a public hearing regarding the VDOT Transportation Alternatives (SRTS) Application. He opened the floor for comments. Brenda Marrah spoke briefly. Keith Barker informed Council that staff had been reviewing possible VDOT funding opportunities for expansion or reconstruction of sidewalks and traffic signals. He said we had identified funding within the VDOT Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program, which included the Safe Routes to School funding. Mr. Barker said we would like to consider applications for two projects within the VDOT TA Program which included the reconstruction of McArthur Street sidewalks at the Galax Elementary School, and replacement of the traffic signal at the intersection of McArthur and Swanson Streets. Mr. Barker described the proposed projects:

- The McArthur Street sidewalk project would replace sidewalks from Anderson Street to Swanson Street at an internal estimated cost of \$175,000 to \$250,000. The funding source was an 80/20 match (\$37,500 - \$50,000 local funds) which we could match from our stormwater fees since the project will replace some stormwater piping and replace curbing. If awarded, projects under \$200,000 must be funded in full from VDOT.
- The traffic signal replacement would replace one of our older intersections and provide a pedestrian control. The VDOT funding source would be a 100% grant so no local funds were required. This project was recommended with a school traffic study we had completed in 2012, however our application at that time was not awarded. The estimated cost for the signal upgrade is approximately \$250,000 - \$300,000.

Mayor Mitchell closed the public hearing when no other comments were made. Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to approve the resolution for the VDOT Transportation Alternatives (SRTS) Application. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Mayor Mitchell informed Council that there had been no interest in the two vacancies on the IDA Board. Council agreed to hold this item over until such time as candidates express an interest in being on the IDA.

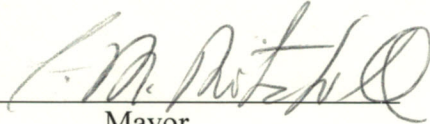
Keith Barker informed Council we had applied for a grant with USDA to purchase two (2) Galax Police Department vehicles and were awarded \$27,000 as a grant and \$23,000 as a loan. He said these grants were typically 55/45 in regards to match requirements, and while we did not apply for a loan, it was a requirement in order to secure the grant. Two resolutions were presented to Council for consideration; one would authorize the signatures on all paperwork, and one would accept the grant and loan. The loan terms were 5 years @ 2.75%, however Mr. Barker said that we may be able to pay it off early depending on funding. After discussion, Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to authorize the Mayor and City Manager to sign all required documentation. Councilman Helmick seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to approve the resolution to accept the grant and loan. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes:

Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Susan Clark, Director of Galax Social Services was present to request approval for an appointment to the Community Policy Management Team (CPMT). The CPMT board has had an appointment for a local service provider, but we had not been able to fill that seat for a year. Ms. Clark explained the CPMT board had recommended Mr. Trent Staton of Family Preservation Services as an appointment to the team. Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to appoint Trent Staton to the CPMT Board. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

ADJOURNMENT at 8: 50 p.m.

  
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Mayor

  
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Clerk