

Galax City Council  
Minutes  
July 9, 2018

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on July 9, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.

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, Councilman Haynes, and Councilman Ritchie. Councilman Helmick was absent.

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

Mayor Mitchell welcomed Judge J.D. Bolt who was present to administer the Oath of Office to re-elected and newly elected City Council members: Mr. C.M. Mitchell, Mr. Willie Greene, Mr. Travis Haynes, and Ms. Sharon Ritchie.

Mr. Barker opened the floor for nominations for mayor. Councilman Davis nominated Councilman Mitchell for mayor. Councilman Haynes nominated Councilman Greene for mayor. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the nomination for Councilman Mitchell. With no second for Councilman Greene, Mr. Barker asked for those voting for Councilman Mitchell to raise their hands. Councilman Davis, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilwoman Ritchie and Councilman Mitchell voted for Councilman Mitchell as mayor. Councilman Greene questioned what the actual voting was for. Mr. Barker said that Councilman Mitchell had received a nomination for mayor by Councilman Davis and a second from Councilwoman Plichta and that the vote was for Councilman Mitchell to be mayor. Mr. Barker said that Councilman Haynes' nomination had not received a second and was not voted on. Mr. Barker then asked if there was a second to Councilman Haynes nomination and Councilman Mitchell then offered a second to the nomination. Mr. Barker then asked for a re-vote on the mayor. Councilman Davis, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilwoman Ritchie and Councilman Mitchell voted for Councilman Mitchell as mayor. Councilman Haynes and Councilman Greene voted for Councilman Greene as mayor.

Councilman Greene said that the vote wasn't proper and required a motion and second to accept the nominations prior to voting. Mr. Barker apologized for the oversight. With no other nominations, Mr. Barker asked for a motion to accept the nominations as presented. Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to accept the nominations as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mitchell and passed with the following votes: Mitchell – yea, Greene – yea, Plichta – yea, Davis – yea, Haynes – yea, Ritchie – yea. Mr. Barker said that the votes would be taken in order of the motion made and asked for those voting for Councilman Mitchell to raise their hands. Councilman Davis, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilwoman Ritchie, and Councilman Mitchell voted for Councilman Mitchell as mayor. Mr. Barker asked for those voting for Councilman Greene to raise their hands. Councilman Greene and Councilman Haynes voted for Councilman Greene. Mr. Barker said Councilman Mitchell was elected mayor based on 4 votes to 2. Mr. Barker turned the meeting over to Mayor Mitchell for election of Vice-Mayor.

Mayor Mitchell asked for nominations for vice-mayor. Councilman Davis nominated Councilman Greene for vice-mayor. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the nomination. Councilman Greene indicated that he would not accept the nomination of vice-mayor at this time.

Councilwoman Ritchie nominated Councilwoman Plichta as vice-mayor. Councilman Davis seconded the nomination. With no other nominations, Mayor Mitchell declared the nominations closed and asked for a vote for Councilwoman Plichta as vice-mayor. The vote to elect Councilwoman Plichta as vice-mayor passed with the following votes: Mitchell – yea, Greene – yea, Plichta – yea, Davis – yea, Haynes – yea, Ritchie – yea.

Mayor Mitchell recognized the following:

- Retirement - Roger Royal, Public Works, 13 years 9 months
- Student Athletes - Cade Ashworth and Jacob Stuart, 2018 Virginia High School League Group 1A Boys Baseball First Team All-State

Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on June 11, 2018. Councilman Greene seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.

Mayor Mitchell informed Council of a request by the City for the appropriation of the FY2019 City Budget. The budget was approved at the June 11 meeting. The approved budget included:

- General Fund Budget (including DSS) - \$24,821,056
- Utility Fund Budget - \$ 9,542,790
- Stormwater Fund - \$ 129,500

Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to approve the appropriation request of the FY2019 City Budget. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.

Mayor Mitchell informed Council of a request by the City for the appropriation of the FY2019 Galax City School Budget that was approved at the May 29 meeting. Mayor Mitchell explained the total budget was \$15,337,570 with local funds of \$3,986,291 and \$138,968 in debt service. Councilman Haynes made the motion to approve the appropriation request of the FY2019 Galax City School Budget. Councilwoman Ritchie seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.

Mayor Mitchell announced this was the date for the public hearing to consider an amendment to the FY2018 Budget. Mayor Mitchell opened the floor for public comments. Keith Barker, City Manager spoke briefly before Judy Taylor-Gallimore, Director of Finance addressed Council regarding the request. Ms. Taylor-Gallimore said the request for the amendment was an accounting/bookkeeping procedure which would allow loan proceeds and expenditures to be recognized. The departments / projects which were connected to the amendment included: GES School Project, GFD Fire Dept. vehicle, various grant awards, Tourism, VDOT McArthur/Circle Drive, HIDTA, and Bottom Area Phase III. The total budget amendment was \$1,117,144. Commissioner of Revenue, David Hankley noted that even though the fire department’s vehicle loan was in the City’s name, the fire department was making the payments. Mayor Mitchell declared the meeting closed after there were no further public comments made. Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to approve the FY2018 Budget amendment. Councilman Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.

Judy Taylor-Gallimore, Director of Finance asked Council to consider the publication of the delinquent tax payer list for real estate as of June 30, 2018. She explained if the request was approved, the list would be published in the Gazette, however we would amend the list to reflect an additional payments received prior to the ad going to the newspaper. Councilman Davis made the motion to approve the publication of the delinquent tax list. Vice Mayor Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.

Chris Pollins, Director of CCSA and Brenda Marrah, Grants Administrator, were present for a Public Art Committee request. Ms. Pollins presented a mural design for the wall adjacent to the CCSA Woodworking Shop. If approved, the Art Committee would move forward in the process for a submittal to the Planning Commission. Councilman Haynes asked the cost of the mural and if grant funds were available. The cost was given as \$15,000 but this was not grant funds. Brenda Marrah briefly informed Council that the new banners that were placed Downtown recently were covered by a matching funds grant from the DHCD. Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to approve the Public Art Committee request. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.

Mayor Mitchell informed Council of a request from Crossroads which asked for an appointment to their board of directors. Councilman Greene’s appointment expired at the end of June, but he was eligible for another term. Councilman Greene declined the option of being re-appointed. There was a consensus among Council to hold the request over until the next meeting.

Mayor Mitchell informed Council there were a number of Council appointments that needed to be made to various regional boards. Council was first made aware of the appointment at the June 11 meeting. Council members were asked to consider where they felt they could offer additional services. The positions that were open and voted on included:

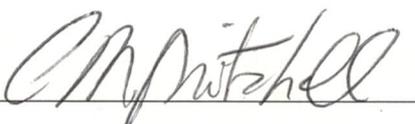
- **District III** – Councilman Greene made the motion to appoint Councilman Helmick with Councilman Davis serving as the alternate. Vice Mayor Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.
- **Workforce Investment Board** – Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to appoint Councilman Haynes with Councilwoman Ritchie serving as the alternate. Councilman Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.
- **Rooftop** – Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to appoint Councilman Haynes. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.
- **E-911** – Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to appoint Councilman Haynes. Councilman Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.
- **Wired Road** – Councilman Davis made the motion to appoint Councilman Haynes. Vice Mayor Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.

- **Galax Grayson EMS** – Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to appoint Councilman Davis. Councilman Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.
- **Planning Commission** – Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to appoint Councilwoman Ritchie. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.
- **Bottom Area Board** – Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to appoint Councilwoman Ritchie. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.
- **Traffic Safety Committee** – Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to appoint Councilman Haynes. Councilman Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.

Keith Barker reminded Council that the City was recently approached by Mr. Keith Jones about accepting the donation of tax parcel 38-45 located on E. Stuart Drive. He explained this was the 20.8 acre parcel located across from Woodview Drive. He said that Mr. Jones visited his office on June 15 and had deeds in hand in order to finalize the donation. Mr. Barker spoke to our attorney and he approved of the transaction at that time but requested that Council should formally approve the acceptance of the parcel by ratifying the decision. Mr. Barker closed by saying with Council’s acceptance and approval, we would begin assessment of the property and work with the IDA on possible development of the parcel. The tax assessment value of the property was listed at \$975,000. Councilman Greene made the motion to ratify the acceptance of tax parcel 38-45 located on East Stuart Drive. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, and Councilwoman Ritchie.

Mayor Mitchell opened the floor for any public speakers. Ms. Megan Helmick approached and asked about Mayor Mitchell about his vote for mayor. Mayor Mitchell responded that because the charter required a vote this evening and only six council members were present, he thought the matter needed to be voted on and settled at this meeting. Ms. Helmick asked if voting would continue with a tie or carry over to the next meeting. Mayor Mitchell said he felt that the matter was required to be settled at this meeting. Mr. Barker clarified that in the event of a tie the matter would have been carried over to the August meeting, however he also stated that when a councilmember makes a motion or second it does not mean that they are required to vote for that individual. With no further comments the meeting adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:25 p.m.



Mayor



Clerk