

Galax City Council
Minutes
November 8, 2021

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on November 8, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

At 6:00 p.m. Mayor Greene called the meeting to order with the following Council persons present and they are as listed: Mayor Greene, Vice Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

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

Consent Agenda

Mayor Greene requested approval from Council for the following item on the consent agenda:

- Adoption of minutes of the October 11, 2021 regular meeting.

Vice Mayor Mitchell made the motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Greene, Vice Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

New Business

As discussed at the October regular meeting, Mr. Settlemyer, City Manager, presented a resolution to facilitate obtaining financial assistance from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Division for the potential purchase of a ladder truck to replace Tower 11 for the Galax Fire Department. Mr. Settlemyer explained the USDA resolution was the first step in obtaining USDA financing. There was a brief discussion regarding the current USDA interest rate of 2.125% for 15 years. Chief Ayers said the estimated cost of a new ladder truck was approximately \$1.5787M. Chief Ayers gave a brief update on the progress of the on-going search for a ladder truck. New and demo ladder trucks were being looked at. Mr. Settlemyer said that he understood the anxiousness to obtain a replacement ladder truck, but the procurement process still needed to take place. After clarification from Mr. Settlemyer that the resolution did not commit Council to a specific course of action, but rather allowed the City to continue pursuit of a possible USDA financing solution, Councilman Larrowe made the motion to approve the USDA resolution as presented. Councilman Warr seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Greene, Vice Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Mr. Settlemyer informed Council of a resolution of City Council which would approve the City's participation in the proposed settlement of opioid-related claims. He explained the proposed resolution would approve the City's participation in the settlements with the "Big 3" Distributors (McKesson, Cardinal Health, and AmerisourceBergen) and Janssen Pharmaceuticals. The

proposed settlement would provide for up to \$26 billion in total settlement proceeds nationwide. Mr. Settlemyer reminded Council as in earlier updates given, this settlement process would be set out in phases. He said the first phase was to see if the proposed settlement received enough support from state attorneys general nationwide to move forward, which it did, including the support of the Virginia Attorney General's Office. The next phase was for localities in each state to vote on whether to participate in the settlement. He said this was the purpose of the Resolution that was presented to Council.

Vice Mayor Mitchell made the motion to approve the resolution as presented. Councilman Larrowe seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Greene, Vice Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Public Hearings

Mayor Greene announced this was the date approved and advertised for a public hearing for FY 2022 budget amendment requests. He opened the floor for public comments. Ms. Judy Taylor-Gallimore, Director of Finance, presented a description of FY 2022 budget amendment requests associated with grant funds and other General Fund adjustments which totaled \$1,169,914. With no further comments, Mayor Greene declared the public hearing closed.

Councilman Larrowe made the motion to approve the 2022 budget amendments. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Greene, Vice Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Mayor Greene announced this was the date approved and advertised for a public hearing concerning the approval of a resolution authorizing the filing of a DHCD CDBG application for the Eastview Phase II housing project. He opened the floor for public comments. Mr. Settlemyer briefly gave an update on the project and application process. He said past project have had limits for DHCD funding of \$700,000, but the new limit was now \$1,250,000. Mr. Settlemyer said the application submission goal date was December 2021. With no further comments, Mayor Greene declared the public hearing closed.

Councilwoman Ritchie made the motion to approve the resolution authorizing the filing of the DHCD CDBG application for the Eastview Phase II housing project. Councilman Warr seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Greene, Vice Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Mayor Greene announced this was the date approved and advertised for a public hearing to consider the rezoning of parcels owned by The Rock Worship Center. Mayor Greene opened the floor for public comments. Ms. Stephanie Dalton, Galax GIS/Zoning Coordinator, was present and gave an overview of the request. Ms. Dalton explained that Chuck Edwards of The Rock Worship Center had requested a rezoning of Parcels 55-212 and 55-344 located along Madison Street and E. Washington Street from M-2 Heavy Industrial to B-2 Business

General. She said the rezoning was necessary for them to be in compliance with City Ordinance. Ms. Dalton closed by saying the Galax Board of Zoning Appeals met regarding the request and it was their recommendation for the rezoning to be approved.

Councilman Haynes made the motion to approve the rezoning request. Councilwoman White seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Greene, Vice Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Citizen Comments

Chuck Edwards, Pastor of The Rock Worship Center, informed Council of a request to hold a parade on Main Street on February 11, 2022. He said the proposed parade would be sponsored by A Night to Shine Foundation who selects a host church to honor and highlight people with special needs. Council thanked Mr. Edwards for speaking and said that his request would be looked into.

Communication from City Manager

Mr. Settlemyer reminded Council of an upcoming strategic planning session where topics such as ARPA funding and Vision 20/20 would be discussed. He asked Council for any questions they may have had after receiving a memorandum from him which gave an overview of the status of various projects and initiatives that are underway with the City or with regional boards. There was a brief discussion regarding the former M & M Trailer Park on Glendale Road. Fire Chief Mike Ayers responded that all of the mobile homes should be burned by November 25.

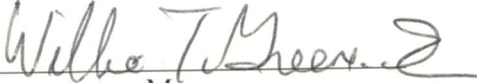
COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

- Councilman Warr informed Council of 2 new businesses downtown, and a grand re-opening of another. He discussed plans for getting downtown cleaned up from the fall decorations and then working on Christmas decorating.
- Councilwoman White reminded everyone that District Three was continuing to offer free bus transportation. She said that the schools and families were getting involved in activities downtown for the holidays.
- Councilwoman Ritchie informed Council that the Down Town Association sponsors a shopping grant on Black Friday.
- Vice Mayor Mitchell congratulated the re-elected City Council members and to the newly elected Councilman, Evan Henck. He said that Council had been doing an excellent job, and now with Councilman Henck on board - who also serves as an attorney. Vice Mayor Mitchell said he felt that Councilman Henck would give a different perspective which would be an asset to Council.

- Councilman Haynes congratulated Councilman Henck for winning the open Council seat. He also thanked Vice Mayor Mitchell for his contributions to the City in his 36 years of service. He spoke briefly explaining how GGEMS had been covering shifts. He said they were to be commended. Councilman Haynes also discussed the need to clean up, repair, and find a use for the City owned drive-thru bank building.
- Councilman Larrowe gave Council an update on the following:
 - Galax Development Corporation handling the Vaughan Furniture revitalization project.
 - City's Comprehensive Plan and how it was instrumental to infrastructure.
 - Discussed a possible housing market study.
 - Impact of sales tax on grocery sales.
- Mayor Greene congratulated the newly elected and re-elected Council members. He also discussed the Governor's Rural Prosperity Summit held recently in Farmville.

Councilwoman Ritchie made the motion to adjourn. Councilman Warr seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Greene, Vice Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

ADJOURNMENT at 7:05 p.m.


Mayor


Clerk