

November
2024

Introduction

This Newsletter is to give you an overview of the activities and discussions of council, along with the status of various projects and initiatives that are underway with the city. The intent is to be as transparent as possible.

Vision

“Galax is a vibrant, diverse, friendly, citizen engaged community that pursues a culture of excellence.”

Mission Statement

“The city provides high quality public services to sustain an excellent community in which to live, work and play.”



A Minute with the Mayor

A Message from the Mayor

As we approach Thanksgiving, I want to take a moment to express my gratitude to the citizens of Galax. This year, we've come together in so many meaningful ways to make our community stronger, kinder, and more vibrant. I'm incredibly proud of how we support each other and work together to make our city a great place to live.

I encourage everyone to take time this season to reflect on what we have and appreciate the bonds we share. Whether you are spending time with family, friends, or neighbors, I wish you all a safe and joyful Thanksgiving.

Thank you for making Galax such a wonderful place to call home.

Warm regards,

Willie

Willie T. Greene, Sr
Mayor
City of Galax



November City Council Meeting 11/12/2024

Here is a quick summary of our last Council meeting.

RECOGNITION OF RETIREMENT:



Mayor Greene & Jason Hawks

Mayor Greene made a presentation to Officer Jason Hawks in recognition of his retirement as a Galax City Police Officer after almost eighteen (18) years of service. He served the City of Galax from January 1, 2007 through August 14, 2017 and again August 24, 2017 through September 30, 2024.

OLD BUSINESS

Hurricane Helene Recovery Update

– *City Manager Burnette and Ben Accurti of FEMA* - City Manager Burnette reviewed the latest local recovery efforts from Hurricane Helene, including a report of major expenditures paid out by the City related to the weather event.

Mr. Ben Accurti of FEMA provided Council with an overview of recovery resources available due to Helene and described the governmental outreach to Galax citizens as well as the new Disaster Recovery Center that was opened on November 2nd.

POLICE OFFICER OATHS OF OFFICE



Mayor Greene & Brian Barnes

Mayor Greene administered the oaths of office to officers Brian Barnes and Isaac Diamon.



Mayor Greene & Isaac Diamon

FY2024 Rollover Discussion – *City Manager Burnette*

– At the previous meeting, Council approved putting remaining unrestricted funds from the FY 2024 budget into a rollover budget amendment to the FY 2025 budget. The City Manager made a request to Staff for one-time expenses that would be appropriate uses for these funds. A list of these requests were discussed at the meeting. In addition, significant portions of this available funding will be recommended for use on large strategic investments and to cover expenses incurred during Hurricane Helene.

Council referred the list to the Budget Committee for recommendations.

Galax Grows Downtown Revitalization Plan – *Main Street Director Hailey Ryan*

– For many months, Staff has been working with a committee of interested local citizens and a planning and design firm, Destination by Design, to craft a vision and roadmap for the revitalization of the downtown Galax area. These efforts have included numerous opportunities for Staff, the public, and Council to review and comment on the plan as it was being developed and has resulted in a final draft document that was presented to Council for review and discussion.

Council heard the report and scheduled a public hearing for final review and potential adoption of the plan.



Main Street Director Hailey Ryan

– *Grants Administrator Jolena Young* - Grants Administrator Jolena Young made a request to Council to allow the City to apply to the VDOT for funding for road paving through the State of Good Repair grant program. The City can apply for up to \$1.5 million to help with certain road segments within the locality. The grant applications are due on December 13, 2024.

City Council heard the request and approved the submission of a grant application(s) to VDOT

November City Council Meeting 11/12/2024 (Continued)

Approval of Rex Theater Planning

Contracts – City Manager Burnette – Previously, Council had allowed Staff to apply for grant funding to pay for architectural / engineering planning work regarding the renovations necessary at the Rex, as well as hiring outside consultants to put together a proposed operational and business plan for the facility. These grant applications were approved and Staff created and advertised requests for proposals for the two contracts. After completing interviews, the top respondents were chosen and contract negotiations took place. Staff presented Council with a recommended vendor and contract amount at the November 12, 2024 meeting for each of the two contracts and requested Council approval to authorize the City Manager and City Attorney to finalize and execute the contracts.

Council approved the request.

NEW BUSINESS

• High Country Lights Update – *Mr. William Bottomley* – Mr. Bottomley provided Council with an overview of the 2024 version on the High Country Lights event annually held at Felts Park. Opening night will be November 23rd and the lights will be up until the event closes on January 1, 2025.

City Council thanked Mr. Bottomley for all the hard he has put into the lights at the park over the years and continue grow the event each. His goal for this year is to have over 80,000 visitors to the park including Santa Clause.

Discussion of the FY2025-2026

City Budget Process – City Manager Burnette – The time has once again arrived to begin discussions on the next fiscal year budget. City Manager Burnette spoke with Council regarding any changes desired from the past year's process and provided a general budget calendar. The next fiscal year begins on July 1, 2025 and ends on June 30, 2026. Council was asked to provide input to the City Manager on general policies, priorities, and processes for the upcoming budget effort.

The general consent of Council was to continue to schedule the budget process the same as last year.



Christmas in Galax

HIGH COUNTRY LIGHTS SHOW 6PM - 11PM | NOVEMBER 28TH THROUGH JANUARY 1ST
DECEMBER 6 - TREE LIGHTING 6:45PM AND PARADE 7PM: GALAX FARMERS MARKET, 206 N. MAIN

DECEMBER 7 - THE EMBERS@ THE REX THEATER | 7 PM

DECEMBER 11 - "POLAR EXPRESS" @ THE REX THEATER | 6:30 PM

DECEMBER 12 - TWIN COUNTIES HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA @ THE REX | 7 PM

DECEMBER 13 - KINNFOLK CELTIC CHRISTMAS @ THE REX | 7PM

DECEMBER 14 - OLD TIME APPALACHIAN CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL, MAIN ST | 12PM-6PM

DECEMBER 18 - "CHRISTMAS VACATION" @ THE REX THEATER | 6:30 PM

DECEMBER 20 - THE MALPASS BROTHERS @ THE REX THEATER | 7 PM