



# CITY OF DAHLONEGA

## Council Meeting Minutes

October 02, 2023, 6:00 PM

Gary McCullough Chambers, Dahlongega City Hall

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In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 706-864-6133.

Vision – Dahlongega will be the most welcoming, thriving, and inspiring community in North Georgia

Mission Statement - Dahlongega, a City of Excellence, will provide quality services through ethical leadership and fiscal stability in full partnership with the people who choose to live, work, and visit. Through this commitment, we respect and uphold our rural Appalachian setting to honor our thriving community of historical significance, academic excellence, and military renown.

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### CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Mayor Taylor called to order the City Council Meeting of October 2, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed the audience that topics discussed at the recent Work Session would be up for approval tonight.

### PRESENT

Mayor JoAnne Taylor  
Councilmember Ron Larson  
Councilmember Roman Gaddis  
Councilmember Johnny Ariemma  
Councilmember Ryan Reagin  
Councilmember Ross Shirley  
Councilmember Lance Bagley

### PRAYER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

Mayor Talyor led the prayer, and Councilmember Larson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Taylor informed the audience that the Council approved the updated vision statement and mission statement that was recently developed as a result of the collaboration with the Council and Staff during a retreat in Canton a few months ago. She thanked the City staff for making those changes and seeking approval from the Council.

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to approve the agenda and move two items to the council meeting in the November meeting. Cemetery Committee Recognition is well deserved, but none could be there tonight, so we will wait until they arrive. That second item is the Cemetery Committee Annual Report. With those two changes, Mayor Taylor entertains a motion to approve the Agenda.

Councilmember Gaddis made a motion to approve the agenda with these changes, Seconded by Councilmember Bagley.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Larson, Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Shirley, Councilmember Bagley

## PUBLIC COMMENT – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Mayor Taylor opened the floor to public comments.

Mr. Gribben expressed his thoughts on the City of Dahlonaga.

Mayor Taylor thanked everyone for the public comment.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Council Meeting Minutes - September 5, 2023, Sarah Hunsinger, Assistant City Clerk
- b. City Council Work Session Minutes - September 18, 2023, Sarah Hunsinger, Assistant City Clerk

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Councilmember Larson recommended approval of the September 5th Council Meeting minutes and the Work Session Minutes on September 18th as presented, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Larson, Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Shirley, Councilmember Bagley

## APPOINTMENT, PROCLAMATION & RECOGNITION:

1. Cemetery Committee Recognition, Mayor JoAnne Taylor

Mayor Taylor announced they will recognize the Cemetery Committee at the November meeting as they are working with students tonight in the cemetery,

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

## CITY REPORTS:

2. Financial Report - August 2023, Allison Martin, City Manager

Mayor Taylor announced that City Manager Martin is absent and will not be in the office for the rest of the week. She asks the council if they have any questions about the August 2023 Financial Report.

Mayor Taylor calls for a motion to accept the August 2023 financial report.

Councilmember Reagin made a motion to accept the financial report for August 2023, Seconded by Councilmember Gaddis.

Mayor Taylor commented that the City is in very good and stable financial shape. We have the tax revenues from the measures we typically use for measuring outside of tourism from pre-pandemic numbers. We are on a good trajectory from that standpoint. All the funds are balanced and well within budget with everything. She goes on to thank Assistant Finance Director Stafford and City Manager Martin.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Larson, Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Shirley, Councilmember Bagley

3. Cemetery Committee Annual Report, Chris Worick, Chairman,

This item is moved to the November Council Meeting

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS: None

## CONTRACTS & AGREEMENTS:

### 4. 2024 Employee Benefits Program, Allison Martin, City Manager

Mayor Taylor introduces the Employee Benefits program by saying that it is that time of year when offering our employees enrollment in the benefits program is timely. She states that the council has seen all this at the Work Session. The final version is included here in the packet for tonight.

Mayor Taylor entertained a motion to approve the 2024 Employee Benefits Program.

Councilmember Shirley made a motion to approve the insurance renewal package offered by GMA and freeze employee contributions for FY2024, Seconded by Councilmember Larson.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Larson, Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Shirley, Councilmember Bagley

### 5. Park Street Utility Project Award, Allison Martin, City Manager & Mark Buchanan, Director of Engineering

Mayor Taylor reminded everyone that the South Park Street portion is approval of the initial phase of that project and how we will fund it. She tells the council that if they had looked at the bid memo, there was an extensive choice of analysis of the particular forms we could contract to complete this complicated job.

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to approve the Park Street Utility Project Award.

Councilmember Gaddis made a motion to approve the award of Division I of the Park Street Utility Improvements Project to Strickland & Sons Pipeline in an amount not to exceed \$4,950,000, Seconded by Councilmember Larson.

Councilmember Gaddis stated that this has been a topic of discussion during his tenure at the Council. Park Street is a critical piece of our infrastructure, and this project will upgrade this area in need.

Councilmember Ariemma stated Dhalonega is excellent, but we all inherited the problems, such as the infrastructure of these streets. He agrees that it needs to be replaced. He asked City Engineer Buchanan, who approved all the equipment prices.

Mayor Taylor stated that one of the more important aspects of this project is that the infrastructure under that street is over one hundred years old, which is hazardous. Most importantly, it will complete a loop for water distribution, allowing better fire pressure at every hydrant. This makes it much more efficient.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Larson, Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Shirley, Councilmember Bagley

### 6. Intergovernmental Service Agreement – Downtown Development Authority, Allison Martin, Finance Director

Mayor Taylor says this is a standard agreement we have had with the DDA, which helps them operate and keeps funding their department for our downtown area to maintain its beauty.

Mayor Taylor requests a motion to approve the Intergovernmental Service Agreement for the Downtown Development Authority.

Councilmember Bagley made a motion to approve the Intergovernmental Service

Agreement with the Downtown Development Authority for FY2024 and fund its budget from general fund revenue (\$100,000) and hotel/motel tax collections (\$84,875),  
Seconded by Councilmember Shirley.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Larson, Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Shirley, Councilmember Bagley

7. IGA – Lumpkin County & City of Dahlonega Fueling Station Amendment, Allison Martin, City Manager

Mayor Taylor states that this IGA was discussed at our Work Session. This is an Intergovernmental Agreement regarding the fueling station with Lumpkin County and the City of Dahlonega. It is just an amendment to the agreement that we already have in place for a particular type of fuel called DEF, which is very expensive, and we will be sharing the burden of cost with the county.

Mayor Taylor entertains a motion to approve the IGA Lumpkin County & City of Dahlonega Fueling Station Amendment.

Councilmember Reagin made a motion to approve the amendment of the IGA between Lumpkin County and the City of Dahlonega for the use of the Fueling Station, Seconded by Councilmember Gaddis.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Larson, Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Shirley, Councilmember Bagley

8. UCBI Banking Service Contract Renewal, Kimberly Stafford, Finance Director

Mayor Taylor stated City Manager Martin discussed this at the Work Session, and the staff has done a lot of work looking for the best offer to allow the City to keep a local bank.

Mayor Taylor entertained a motion to approve the UCBI Banking Service Contract Renewal.

Councilmember Larson made a motion to approve the contract renewal for banking services with UCBI, Seconded by Councilmember Bagley.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Larson, Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Shirley, Councilmember Bagley

#### OTHER ITEMS:

9. Dahlonega Food and Gas INC dba/Gulf Food Mart - Retail Alcoholic Beverage License, Mary Csukas, City Clerk & Doug Parks, City Attorney

The City Attorney Parks states this was discussed briefly at the Work Session. It is an ownership change, and everything else remains the same. Everything is in order, and he recommends approval.

Mayor Taylor calls for a motion to approve the Dahlonega Food and Gas INC dba/Gulf Food Mart - Retail Alcoholic Beverage License.

Councilmember Gaddis made a motion to approve a Class B Retail Beer Package License and a Class C Retail Wine Package License for a store up to 10,000 square feet for Dahlonega Food and Gas INC dba/Gulf Food Mart, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Larson, Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Shirley, Councilmember Bagley

## COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Ms. Csukas reminded everyone that the Alcohol Consumption on the Premises Licenses will be renewed in October. The final day will be October 31st. There is a memo on our website.

City Attorney Parks had no comments.

City Council -

Councilmember Larson thanked the Mayor for the efficiency of this meeting.

Councilmember Gaddis had no comments.

Councilmember Ariemma had no comments.

Councilmember Reagin made no comment.

Councilmember Shirley reminded everyone of the last First Friday Concert of the season.

Councilmember Bagley said he cannot believe it is already October, and it is a very exciting time to be in Dahlonega. Job well done so far to the Lumpkin County High School Football Team. The excitement around the program is amazing. He stated that he had just toured the new elementary school and how amazing it was. He is also very excited about the Gold Rush.

Mayor Comments -

Mayor Taylor had no further comments.

## ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 P.M.

Motion made by Councilmember Larson, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Larson, Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Shirley, Councilmember Bagley