



# CITY OF DAHLONEGA

## Council Meeting Minutes

August 07, 2023, 6:00 PM

Gary McCullough Chambers, Dahlonega City Hall

---

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 706-864-6133.

Vision - To be an open, honest, and responsive city, balancing preservation and growth and delivering quality services fairly and equitably by being good stewards of Dahlonega's resources.

---

### CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Mayor Taylor welcomed everyone who came to the City Council Meeting.

Mayor Taylor called the City Council Meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

### 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 Taylor asked Councilmember Larson to lead the Prayer.

Councilmember Ragon led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Taylor made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion made by Councilmember Bagley, Seconded by Councilmember Shirley.

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

### PUBLIC COMMENT – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Mayor Taylor called for public comments.

No comments were made.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Council Meeting Minutes - July 10, 2023, Mary Csukas, City Clerk

Mayor Taylor commented that there were some corrections to the minutes. There was a misspelling of a name and a misstatement of a motion.

Mayor Taylor motioned to approve the July 10, 2023, Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion made by Councilmember Ariemma, Seconded by Councilmember Gaddis.

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

## APPOINTMENT, PROCLAMATION & RECOGNITION:

Mayor Taylor recognizes Chief George Albert and his deputies. She goes on to thank him and his deputies for everything they do.

### 1. Proclamation and State Flag for Joe Mirakovits, JoAnne Taylor, Mayor

Mayor Taylor states that this Proclamation is a recognition of Joe Mirakovits and his leadership of the Dahlonega-Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor Taylor motioned to approve the Proclamation and State Flag for Joe Mirakovits.

Motion made by Councilmember Larson, Seconded by Councilmember Shirley. Voting Yea: Councilmember Larson, Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Shirley, Councilmember Bagley

Councilmember Bagley commented that this proclamation is warranted for Joe Mirakovits.

### 2. Georgia Initiative for Community Housing, JoAnne Taylor, Mayor

Mayor Taylor addresses the new Georgia Initiative for Community Housing. According to Mayor Taylor, the council's main issue is housing in the city. She states that the city has conducted a housing needs assessment, and the results will be used to impact our upcoming zoning amendments. This will make it easier for people to start businesses in the city. Mayor Taylor states that another result of the Housing Needs Assessment is that we are eligible for the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing. She continues to say that she is very hopeful that we will be selected for this because it gives our community a lot of tools to address the needs of the community.

Councilmember Ariemma commented to the DDA that housing is essential to the city.

### 3. Grants, Allison Martin, City Manager

City Manager Martin states that she will review the grants the city has received for projects:

- Georgia Department of Transportation, we received an allocation of just over \$201,000 to assist us with East Main Street.
- \$44,000 for the SAP Program.
- \$ 250,000 for assistance with the Parks Street Project Paving.
- \$ \$66,000 was awarded from the State of Georgia for leading the copper survey.
- She states that the city has made it to the next round of funding for the Koyo Lift Station Project. We currently sit in the Federal Budget for a \$3,000 allocation.
- If we are accepted into the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing, this will open the doors for more grants.

After City Manager Martin presented the grants, a discussion was had about the different grants between City Councilmembers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

## CITY REPORTS:

### 4. Financial Report - June 2023, Allison Martin, City Manager

City Manager Martin discussed the financial reports for June 2023.

The city met 100% of the 2022 taxes that were budgeted and collected and can send 100% to the tax commissioner's collection of tax digest.

Sales Tax collections remain strong. We are sitting at just 7 1/2% greater than last fiscal year.

Alcohol Beverage Tax and License Revenue continue to be greater than the prior year.

Permit Revenues are now trending slightly less than last year's collections.

Department Operational Expenditures are in line with our budget expectations. Same with the Downtown Developmental Authority.

Hotel/Motel Tax Fund, we now see a trend at just 0.7% greater than FY22. Still higher than pre-pandemic collections.

Water & Sewer Funds continue to perform strongly. We are sitting with charges 8.6% more than last year and are still trading 5 1/2% greater than the pandemic.

All Department expenses are in line with the budget.

The Solid Waste Fund is 1 1/8% greater than the prior year.

There was a discussion about the June 2023 Financial Report after City Manager Martin gave the June 2023 Financial Report.

Mayor Taylor made a motion to accept the June 2023 Financial Report. Motion made by Councilmember Gaddis, Seconded by Councilmember Larson.

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

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS: None

CONTRACTS & AGREEMENTS:

OTHER ITEMS:

5. Whataburger Right-Of-Way Dedication Deed, Doug Parks, City Attorney

City Attorney Parks says this right-of-way dedication deed will dedicate a 0.02-acre parcel on Riley Road to the City of Dahlonga.

City Engineer Buchanan states that a sidewalk is required when you undertake a development, and it eases over the exciting right-of-way line. In a location where the existing right-of-way line and the line appeared awkward, we encompassed that sidewalk with the proposed right-of-way, cleaned it up, and shaped it.

Mayor Taylor made a motion to approve the Whataburger Right-Of-Way Dedication Deed.

Motion made by Councilmember Larson, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

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

COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Mayor Taylor requested Council comments.

Clerk Comments - No comments were made.

City Manager Comments - City Manager Martin says she is happy to announce that the City's bond rating was upgraded to an A+. She goes on to say that this is almost unheard of for a community of our size.

City Attorney Comments - City Attorney Parks applauds the excellent rating and states that this was considered an unattainable goal a couple of years ago. He goes on to say that it has been attained with all the hard work and effort from the city.

City Councilmembers Comments

Councilmember Larson thanked Allison and the other City employees for earning that rating. He goes on to say that the construction on the square is going until early to mid-October.

Councilmember Gaddis did not comment.

Councilmember Ariemma comments on the traffic on North Grove Road.

Councilmember Reagin congratulated the city on the excellent rating.

Councilmember Shirley congratulates the city on this rating.

Councilmember Bagley brags about the City employees and how good the square looks. He commented on how well Chief Albert's deputies were doing and thanked all of the employees for having a great City.

Mayor Comments - Mayor Taylor comments on how great this rating means to the City. She goes on to thank all the employees in the city for keeping the city great.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to adjourn the City Council Meeting at 6:39 P.M.

Motion made by Councilmember Bagley, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

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