



CITY OF DAHLONEGA

Council Meeting Minutes

March 01, 2021 6:00 PM

Gary McCullough Chambers, Dahlonega City Hall

PRESENT:

Mayor Sam Norton

Council Member Joel Cordle

Council Member JoAnne Taylor

Council Member Mitchell Ridley

Council Member Roman Gaddis

Council Member Ron Larson

Council Member Johnny Ariemma

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Mayor Norton called the Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and immediately suspended the Meeting at 6:01 p.m.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to relocate the Council Meeting to the Lumpkin County Parks and Recreation Building in the adjacent parking lot.

Motion made by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Larson.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

Mayor Norton reconvened the Meeting at the Lumpkin County Parks and Recreation Building at 6:08 p.m. and informed everyone no action was taken before relocating the meeting.

PRAYER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

Council Member Gaddis led the Prayer, and Council Member Ridley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the amended agenda to appoint Ryan Reagin to the Main Street Program / Downtown Development Authority Board.

Motion made by Council Member Larson, Seconded by Council Member Taylor.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

PUBLIC COMMENT – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

- Mrs. Ellen Mirakovits, President of Dahlonega Downtown Business Association, expressed concern with installing parking meters on S. Meaders Street.
- Mr. Joe Mirakovits, an owner of Yellow Daisy Bed & Breakfast, expressed concern with the dwindling tax digest, parking issues, and the development prospects for the kindergarten property.
- Mr. Jim Gibbon is opposed to the proposed development of the Housley property on Hawkins Street.

- Mr. Wynn Mont is concerned with the lack of safety surrounding the Housley property's proposed Signet development on Hawkins Street.
- Ms. Lisa Lipscomb is against the proposed PUD zoning at the Housley property on Hawkins Street.
- Mr. Noah Steinburg is opposed to the proposed Signet Development at the Housley property due to possible traffic issues on Hawkins Street.
- A citizen was directed to City Manager Schmid to discuss his concern with the proposed parking meters and the marshal's department's direction, and the proposed PUD zoning at the Housley property on Hawkins Street.
- Mr. George Butler, representing the Dahlonga Baptist Church, supports Ordinance 2021-08 for R-2 zoning with conditions for the Housley property on Hawkins Street.
- Ethan Underwood, representing Signet Group, opposes the City Manager's recommendations for the Housley property on Hawkins Street. He believes only the Community Development Director is allowed to make recommendations under the City of Dahlonga codes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES -

a. Work Session Meeting Minutes - January 19, 2021

As written, Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the Work Session Meeting Minutes on January 19, 2021.

Motion made by Council Member Ridley, Seconded by Council Member Taylor.

Voting Yea: Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

Voting Abstaining: Council Member Cordle

b. Special Called Meeting Minutes - January 19, 2021

As written, Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting Minutes on January 19, 2021.

Motion made by Council Member Larson, Seconded by Council Member Ariemma.

Voting Yea: Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

Voting Abstaining: Council Member Cordle

c. Council Meeting Minutes - February 1, 2021

As written, Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the Council Meeting Minutes on February 1, 2021.

Motion from Council Member Gaddis to approve Seconded by Council Member Cordle.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

APPOINTMENT/RECOGNITION

1. Swearing-in Ceremony of Micah Mihok to the Tourism Committee and Ryan Reagin to the Main Street Program/ Downtown Development Authority Board.

Mayor Sam Norton called for a motion to approve Ryan Regain for the Main Street/ Downtown Development Authority Board and Micah Mihok to the Tourism Committee.

Motion made by Council Member Gaddis, Seconded by Council Member Ridley.

Mayor Norton led Ryan Reagin and Micah Mihok through the swearing-in ceremony.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma.

ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTION:

2. Ordinance 2020-28: Hawkins Street Rezoning Planned Unit Development, Kevin Herrit, Community Development Director & Doug Parks, City Attorney

- City Attorney Parks informed the Mayor and Council of a slight change in the survey's reflection for the Hawkins Street development's zoning file. As two surveys existed in the file, we adjusted the ordinance to reflect the later survey with Mr. Underwood's approval. While this ordinance is slightly different than the original ordinance, it presents no material change to the property. This reflection in the survey is valid for all three ordinances under discussion for the Hawkins Street rezoning.
- A citizen presented a concern with Council Member Cordle's knowledge on the matter of the Hawkins Street rezoning. Mayor and Council agreed Mr. Cordle is well informed and ready to participate as a voting member of the Council.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-28 – Hawkins Street rezoning from an R1 to a Planned Unit Development.

Motion made by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Ridley to deny Ordinance 2020-28 from an R1 to a PUD.

- Council Member Taylor read a statement from Georgia Supreme Court's ruling about an issue in Clayton County, Georgia, between the local governing body and the Holy Cross Lutheran Church. The order stated, "We take this opportunity to reiterate that the local governing body is the more appropriate one to shape and control the local environment according to the best interest of the locality and its citizens."
- Council Member Ridley agreed with Council Member Taylor's statement and felt that the proposed PUD was not in line with the master plan outlined by the City of Dahlonega.
- Council Member Ariemma stated each attorney made significant points within the meetings, but a PUD at this property would not be appropriate.

Mayor Norton stated there is a motion and second for Ordinance 2020-28 – Hawkins Street rezoning from an R1 to a Planned Unit Development, so all those in favor, please say aye and those opposed nays.

Voting Nay: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

3. Ordinance 2021-07: Hawkins Street Rezoning R2 with Conditions, Kevin Herrit, Community Development Director & Doug Parks, City Attorney

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-07, an R-2 rezoning with Community Development Director's conditions.

Motion made by Council Member Ridley, Seconded by Council Member Gaddis to deny ordinance 2021-07 Hawkins Street rezoning R2 with Community Development Director's conditions.

Council Member Larson reminded everyone that prepared agendas packets are given to Council to discuss and involve all Council Members at Work Sessions.

Mayor Norton stated there is a motion and second for Ordinance 2021-07: Hawkins Street Rezoning R2 with Conditions, so all those in favor, please say aye and those opposed nays.

Voting Nay: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

4. Ordinance 2021-08: Hawkins Street Rezoning R2 with Further Conditions, Kevin Herrit, Community Development Director & Doug Parks, City Attorney

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-08, an R-2 rezoning with enhanced conditions.

Motion made by Council Member Ridley to deny ordinance 2021-08 Hawkins Street rezoning R2 with further conditions. Due to a lack of a second, this motion died.

Motion made by Council Member Larson, Seconded by Council Member Cordle to approve ordinance 2021-08 Hawkins Street rezoning R2 with enhanced conditions.

- Council Member Ridley is opposed to Ordinance 2021-08 Hawkins Street rezoning R-2 with conditions. As purchasers of this property, the Signet Group should understand that this property's rezoning is not a given.
- Council asked City Manager Schmid of any road improvements required of the developers under this ordinance. City Manager Schmid referenced items number three, and number five, in Ordinance 2021-08: which states development shall install street and pedestrian improvements that meet City specifications:
 - 1) Sidewalks along a block section of Church Street and a pedestrian crosswalk indicator crossing Hawkins Street to the sidewalk on Church Street adjacent from the proposed entrance.
 - 2) Hawkins Street shall be improved to meet the road standards required by the development regulations along the portions of the development that front Hawkins Street as well as the intersection of Hawkins and Church Street.
- Council Member Ridley voiced concern about encroaching on these streets' right of way under these developer's improvement requirements.
- City Manager Schmid informed Council Member Taylor this development's practical entrance would be Hawkins Street, but Happy Hollow frontage is an alternate entrance.
- Council Member Larson reiterated the conditions outlined in the Ordinance 2020-08, especially the incorporated housing development limits shows Council is listening to the community's concerns and following the City Master Plan.
- Council Member Ariemma agrees with Mayor Norton's review of Mr. Butler's outline of the viability of an 88-unit development at this site.
- Council Member Gaddis reminded Council that the City of Dahlenega needs single-family homes within walking distance to our downtown and not additional student housing as outlined in Mr. Underwood's proposal.

Mayor Norton stated there is a motion and second for Ordinance 2021-08: Hawkins Street Rezoning R2 with Further Conditions, so all those in favor, please say aye and those opposed nays.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

Voting Nay: Council Member Ridley

5. FY2020 Year-End Budget Amendment – Resolution 2021-04, Melody Marlowe, Finance Director

Finance Director Marlowe stated Resolution 2021-04 is the final year-end budget amendment for FY2020.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve Resolution 2021-04 FY2020 Year-End Budget Amendment.

Motion made by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Cordle.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

6. FY2021 Reappropriations Budget Amendment – Resolution 2021-05, Melody Marlowe, Finance Director

Finance Director Marlowe asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2021-05 to allow the reappropriation of capital expenditures not completed in FY2020 into the FY2021 Budget.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve Resolution 2021-05 FY2021 Reappropriations Budget Amendment

Motion made by Council Member Ariemma, Seconded by Council Member Larson.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

7. Resolution 2021-06 Columbarium Pricing Amendment, Mark Buchanan, PW Director, and City Engineer

PW Director Buchanan informed Council that Resolution 2021-06 allows for additional pricing of the highest premium row of the Ossuary at the Columbarium.

- Council Member Ridley believes there is a need for indigent burials in the inner sanction of the Ossuary/Columbarium. City Manager Schmid will bring recommendations to Council at the next Work Session.
- The sale of Columbarium niches is under the direction of Director Herrit of the Community Development Department. Area funeral homes are aware of the sale of these niches.
- PW Director Buchanan informed the Council of upcoming improvements to the Columbarium area with benches and plants.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve Resolution 2021-06 Columbarium Pricing Amendment.

Motion made by Council Member Larson, Seconded by Council Member Cordle.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

ANNOUNCEMENT/CITY REPORTS:

8. January 2021 Financial Report, Melody Marlowe, Finance Director

Director Marlowe reviewed the first four months of 2021 financials holding strong, with only a 2% decrease in our water and sewer accounts.

Council also discussed the substantial increase in our sales taxes since implementing the new sales tax laws.

OLD BUSINESS:

9. Barlow Lift Station Upgrade Proposal for Engineering Services, John Jarrard, Director of Water/Wastewater Treatment Departments

Director Jarrard informed Council this proposal is from Turnipseed Engineers to provide the engineering and construction administration services on the Barlow Lift Station Upgrade Project, currently planned for FY2022.

- The Barlow Lift Station is on a standby generator at this time, and once the rehabilitation is complete, the generator is on hold for future use.
- This particular project is a complete rehabilitation that will require EPD-stamped engineering plans.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve Barlow Lift Station Upgrade Proposal for Engineering Services.

Motion made by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Cordle.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

10. Solid Waste Supervisor, Mark Buchanan, PW Director and City Engineer

City Manager Schmid is requesting authorization to create and fund a full-time solid waste supervisor position.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the position of Solid Waste Supervisor.

Motion made by Council Member Ridley, Seconded by Council Member Larson.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

11. South Meaders Metered Parking, Bill Schmid, City Manager

City Manager Schmid requests Council approval to table this issue until the Main Street Program/ DDA Board reviews parking meters at their meeting on March 4, 2021.

Motion made by Council Member Ariemma, Seconded by Council Member Ridley.

- Council Member Larson is opposed to tabling parking meters until the Main Street Program/ DDA Board discusses it again. Again, employees are using the open parking spaces on South Meaders, so now is the ideal time for the Council to address parking issues.
- Council Member Ariemma is waiting on staff recommendations for solving parking issues downtown as he believes there are other means besides parking meters.

Mayor Norton stated there is a motion and second to allow the Main Street Program/DDA Board to discuss South Meaders Street parking meters, so all those in favor, please say aye and those opposed nays.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Ariemma

Voting Nay: Council Member Larson

12. Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) Resurfacing for 2021 Award Recommendation, Mark Buchanan, PW Director, and City Engineer

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve awarding the LMIG project #2021-001 to Colditz Trucking Inc. for \$101,363.52.

Motion made by Council Member Ridley, Seconded by Council Member Larson.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

13. Asphalt Leveling and Resurfacing of City Streets in Dahlonega, Ga In House Project for 2021, #2021-002, Mark Buchanan, PW Director, and City Engineer

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve awarding project #2021-002 to Colditz Trucking Inc. for \$104,022.15.

Motion made by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Cordle.

Voting Yea: Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

NEW BUSINESS: COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Clerk Comments – No comments

City Manager Comments – Requesting topics from the Council for the upcoming Council Retreat. The council requests a finalized itinerary for the Retreat.

City Attorney Comments – Adopting Ordinance 2021-08 will require collaboration between my office and the City Clerk.

City Council Comments:

- Council Member Taylor and Council Member Larson had no comment.
- Council Member Ridley thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting.
- Council Member Gaddis thanked Council Member Larson for comments concerning our parking issue and looks forward to Main Street Program / DDA Board's input on this issue.
- Council Member Cordle also appreciates Council Member Larson's concern with our parking issue and hopes to vote on parking at a Special Called Meeting on March 15th following the Work Session. City Manager Schmid will keep the Council informed on the Main Street/ DDA input.

Mayor Norton Comments: As a business owner in Dahlonega, parking is a daily issue for me, my staff, and customers. But it is essential to allow the Main Street Program / DDA Board's input to ensure the best option for parking. Our COVID numbers are at 2.6, making a positive impact.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Norton adjourned the Meeting at 7:46 p.m.