



CITY OF DAHLONEGA

Council Work Session Minutes

March 15, 2021 4:00 PM

Lumpkin County Park and Recreation Building - 365 Riley Road, Dahlonega, GA 30533

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

OPEN MEETING

Mayor Norton opened the Work Session at 4:29 pm.

BOARDS & COMMITTEES:

1. Cemetery Committee - February 2021, Chris Worick, Committee Chairmen

- Beautification plans for the Memorial Park Cemetery are underway.
- Sales of columbarium niches are now open.
- Research has begun for the placement of a columbarium in the older section of Mt Hope Cemetery.

2. Main Street Program - February 2021, Ariel Alexander and Skyler Alexander, Administrative Assistants.

- Ariel Alexander and Skyler Alexander have completed the Main Street Program 101 training.
- The All-Abilities Kayak Launch dedication is planned for March 23rd is at 3:00 pm.
- Board Member training is open for all Members.
- The Main Street Team will be meeting with Sam McDuffie and Courtney Randolph with the Tourism Committee this week to discuss tourism needs in Dahlonega and Lumpkin County.

3. TOURISM: Sam McDuffie, Tourism Director

- The Chocolate Crawl campaign was a massive success for Downtown Dahlonega Businesses.
- The start of the Dahlonega Plateau ADA digital marking campaign is today with a target audience in the surrounding States; it will last for three months.
- Our Destination Dahlonega, a summer themed commercial, will begin on April 8th targeting overnight accommodations and outdoor adventure in Dahlonega and Lumpkin County.
- We are in partnership with the Radio station 680 the Fan beginning on April 9th, opening day for the Atlanta Braves for a total of twenty-five spots.
- The Holiday Inn Express Downtown has two floors open and selling at this time.

- Council Member Larson thanked the Tourism Committee for the Fox 5 news coverage of the Chocolate Crawl.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

4. Marshal's - February 2021, Jeff Branyon, City Marshal

- Vandalism is an issue with our water tower, kindergarten property, and Memorial Park Columbarium. Director Buchanan will install trail cams to assist with this issue.
- Marshal Branyon will research dilapidated commercial buildings in the City of Dahlenega.
- Council and Mayor discussed the pros and cons of cameras and new systems to assist with coverage in needed areas.

5. Community Development – February 2021, Kevin Herrit, Director

- Mayor Norton is now a member of the Steering Committee, created to update the Dahlenega Comprehensive Plan.
- Occupational Tax applications are in process, with many bank institutions lagging due to changes in ownership.
- Department of Transportation is handling the improper tree removal by the property owner at the Dahlenega Mountain Inn.
- Council discussed the need for single-family homes in the City of Dahlenega.

6. Finance Department – February 2021, Melody Marlowe, Finance Director

- Council discussed funds of 3.2 million dollars allocated to Dahlenega generated by the American Rescue Plan recently enacted by President Biden; monetary relief to states due to the COVID pandemic.

7. Public Works - February 2021, Mark Buchanan, PE, City Engineer & Public Works Director

- Council discussed road upgrades needed in areas around the City of Dahlenega, specifically widening of South Grove Street.
- Council and Mayor discussed the timeline of phase two of Wimpy Mill Park sidewalk expansion. Everyone agreed Wimpy Mill Kayak Launch is an excellent addition to Dahlenega.
- 147 South Park Street, Kindergarten property demolition project is moving forward with the bid process.
- Council and Mayor discussed the challenges of upkeep of brick and concrete city sidewalks and crosswalks.

8. Water & Wastewater Treatment Department Report - February 2021, John Jarrard, Water/Wastewater Treatment Director

- City Manager Schmid outlined the role of John Jarrard in his new role as a consultant at the Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant. His primary job is water sales and rate studies. Managers and Supervisors under his direction will attend council meetings and work sessions.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

9. Hummingbird Trail, Valerie West Fambrough

- Ms. Valerie West Fambrough addressed Council with creating a Hummingbird Trail in Dahlenega to design a map to connect foliage to attract the hummingbirds.

- Council discussed the possibility of a committee for background on this subject for review by the Council; foliage for Spring and Summer is growing in our greenhouse, so Fall foliage is a better target.
10. Martin Street Widening, Vince Hunsinger, Capital Projects Manager
- Director Buchanan discussed the upcoming approved stormwater project and street widening on Martin Street. The Plans for the project were reviewed and are also available in the Public Works Department.
11. Oliver Drive Storm Drain Project, Vince Hunsinger, Capital Projects Manager
- Capital Projects Manager Hunsinger requests the reallocation of Storm Water Funds of \$137,500 to the Oliver Drive storm drain project. Recent repairs of Oliver Drive were unsuccessful.
12. Hurricane Zeta Reimbursement Update, Mark Buchanan, PE, City Engineer & Public Works Director
- Assistant Finance Director Kimberly Stafford was instrumental in the City's reimbursement of \$30,000 from FEMA for damage related to Hurricane Zeta.
13. Park Street Utilities Funding, Mark Buchanan, PE, Public Works Director and City Engineer
- Council and Mayor discussed the Park Street utilities' five-year budgeted funding for both water and sewer lines on South Park Street.
 - Director Buchanan believes this project is best completed in one step if funding is available.
 - City Manager Schmid stated we need design plans for each element whether, done long-term or all at once.

COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

- The topic of franchising in the city limits is an item for discussion at the March 23rd Planning Commission Meeting as the Formula Business Ordinance.
- Mayor Norton reminded everyone that the topic of the Formula Business Ordinance would be a possible topic in the coming months after recommendations from various committees and public hearings in Dahlonega. These meetings and hearings are published and open to the public.
- Mayor Norton reminded Council this topic originated at the 2020 Council retreat to franchising in the B3 historic district, which resulted in a draft ordinance in review with the Planning Commission at this time.

Clerk Comments – No comments

City Manager Comments – City Manager Schmid informed Council the Georgia Department of Natural Resources had approved the official submittal of the Dahlonega Reservoir Management Plan, which will up for adoption at the next Council Meeting.

City Attorney Comments – No comments

City Council Comments – No comments

Mayor Comments – COVID numbers are continuing a downward motion with the new vaccines' assistance in the market.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Norton adjourned the work session at 6:01 pm.