



CITY OF DAHLONEGA

Council Meeting Minutes

July 06, 2021, 6:00 pm

Gary McCullough Chambers, Dahlonega City Hall

PRESENT

Mayor Sam Norton

Council Member JoAnne Taylor

Council Member Mitchel Ridley

Council Member Ron Larson

Council Member Johnny Ariemma

Council Member Joel Cordle

ABSENT

Council Member Roman Gaddis

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Mayor Norton called the Council Meeting to order at 6 pm

PRAYER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

Councilmember Larson led the Prayer, and Councilmember Ridley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Norton called for a motion to amend the agenda to include:

- Appointment of Donna Logan to Downtown Development Authority /Main Street Board
- Appointment of Ivana Pelnar-Zaiko as a voting member of the Historic Preservation Committee
- Resolution for Head House Financing to move forward to Downtown Development Authority /Main Street Board

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

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

PUBLIC COMMENT – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Members of the community applauded the Independence Day Celebration and supported the return of Fireworks next year and expressed concern regarding recent changes in the Marshal's department.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES -

- a. Work Session Meeting Minutes - May 17, 2021

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the Work Session Meeting Minutes - May 17, 2021

Motion by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Cordle.
Voting Yea: Council Member Ridley, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Cordle

b. Council Meeting Minutes - June 7, 2021

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the Council Meeting Minutes - June 7, 2021
Motion made by Council Member Ariemma, Seconded by Council Member Larson.
Voting Yea: Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Larson

c. Special Called Meeting Minutes - June 21, 2021

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting Minutes - June 21, 2021
Motion made by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Ridley.
Voting Yea: Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley

d. Work Session Minutes - June 21, 2021

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the Work Session Minutes - June 21, 2021
Motion made by Council Member Larson, Seconded by Council Member Taylor.
Voting Yea: Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley

APPOINTMENT/RECOGNITION

1. Appointment of Sharon Thomason for a second term on the HPC – Bill Schmid, City Manager

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the appointment of Sharon Thomason for a second term on the Historic Preservation Commission
Motion made by Council Member Cordle, Seconded by Council Member Taylor.
Voting Yea: Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley

2. Appointment Ms. Danna Foster as Assistant City Clerk - Mary Csukas, City Clerk

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the appointment of Ms. Danna Foster as Assistant City Clerk.
Motion made by Council Member Ridley, Seconded by Council Member Taylor.
Voting Yea: Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley

3. Re-Appointment of Donna Logan to DDA/Main St. Board – Mary Csukas, City Clerk

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the appointment of Donna Logan to the Downtown Development Authority /Main Street Board.

Motion made by Council Member Cordle, Seconded by Council Member Taylor.
Voting Yea: Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley

4. Appointment of Ivana Pelnar-Zaiko as a voting member of the Historic Preservation Commission – Mary Csukas, City Clerk

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the appointment of Ivana Pelnar-Zaiko as a voting member of the Historic Preservation Commission.

Motion made by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Larson.
Voting Yea: Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley

ANNOUNCEMENT/CITY REPORTS:

5. Financial Report - May 2021, Allison Martin, Finance Director

Director Martin reported that 100% of taxes had been collected YTD, and the budget is stable. The Mayor and Council commended the Finance team on how well the city's finances are managed and the desire to keep the history of reducing the milage rate.

ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTION:

1. Head House Renovation Project Financing, Melody Marlowe, Finance Director
Doug Gebhardt, Davenport & Company

Mr. Gebhardt reviewed the lending from United Community Bank, which provided the best interest rate of 2.81% with a Bond of \$850,000 for 15 years at a fixed rate. He highlighted the ability to pay early at no cost and the \$70,000/year debt level structure. He recommended the approval for United Community Banks' proposed lending based on the historically low-interest-rate environment.

Council commented on the investment of honoring Dahlenega's history and the support to move the financing forward with an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Dahlenega and the Downtown Development Authority.

2. Resolution 2021-08 Authorizing Execution, Delivery and Performance of an IGA with the Downtown Development Authority /Main Street Board, Doug Parks, City Attorney

Mayor Norton thanked the Downtown Development Authority Board for being a conduit for the financing, which has been instrumental in saving other historical buildings such as the Dahlenega Square Hotel before the historic buildings deteriorate beyond repair.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve Resolution 2021-08 Authorizing Execution, Delivery, and Performance of an IGA with the Downtown Development Authority.

Motion made by Council Member Larson, Seconded by Council Member Cordle.
Voting Yea: Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley

3. Resolution to Accept the American Rescue Plan Act Funds Allocated to the City of Dahlenega, Allison Martin, Finance Director

Director Martin presented Resolution 2021-011 to accept the Coronavirus Local Recovery Fund established under the American Recovery Fund Plan Act. Director Martin indicated a recommendation by the Georgia Municipal Association to accept the funds of \$2,723,845.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the Resolution to Accept the American Rescue Plan Act Funds allocated to the City of Dahlonega

Motion made by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Cordle
Voting Yea: Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley

4. Banking Resolutions, Melody Marlowe, Finance Director

Director Marlowe presented two resolutions:

Resolution 2021-09 Banking Resolution– Authorized Signers, updating Ms. Allison Martin, Finance Director as a signing authority and Resolution 2021-10 Resolution to authorize Investment Georgia Fund 1, also adding Allison Martin, Finance Director as a signature authority

RESOLUTION 2021-09 BANKING RESOLUTION – AUTHORIZED SIGNERS

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve Resolution 2021-09 Banking Resolution – Authorized Signers.

Motion made by Council Member Larson, Seconded by Council Member Cordle.
Voting Yea: Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley

RESOLUTION 2021-10 RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE INVESTMENT GEORGIA FUND 1

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve a Resolution to Authorize Investment Georgia Fund 1.

Motion made by Council Member Larson, Seconded by Council Member Taylor.
Voting Yea: Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Forward Hotel proposal to Downtown Development Authority /Main Street Board for evaluation and recommendation, Bill Schmid, City Manager

City Manager Schmid proposed sending the Proposal and Offer from Rivermont Hospitality, LLC to the Downtown Development Authority /Main Street Board for consideration. This proposal offers a Hampton Inn on the property.

Council Members discussed the need to keep the uniqueness of Dahlonega's downtown square as a significant component of any accepted proposal for this property.

Mayor Norton emphasized this was not an authorization to build a hotel.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve forwarding the Hotel proposal to the DDA Board for evaluation and recommendation.

Motion made by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Larson.
Voting Yea: Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma, Council Member Cordle, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley

COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

City Clerk - Ms. Csukas commented on her excitement to have an Assistant City Clerk.

City Manager Schmid commented on the outstanding job and success of the 4th of July event. He thanked Director Marlowe and wished her well in her retirement. He also reminded everyone of the Boil Water Advisory for north of Oak Grove for 48-72 hours in the coming days.

City Attorney Parks thanked Director Marlowe for her incredible professionalism and for watching for issues through her time.

Council Member Cordle thanked the Downtown Development Authority /Main Street and City staff for contributing to the Independence Day Celebration and hoping for a great event next year. He also wished Director Marlowe well and welcomed Ms. Danna Foster to the staff.

Councilmember Ariemma commended the finance team for what they managed through the pandemic and indicated he would like to do the sixth year of milage reduction.

Councilmember Ridley offered thanks to Director Marlowe and commended her for being a great asset.

Councilmember Larson gave his thanks to Director Marlowe, who allowed the city to earn many awards. He clarified that Council was not opposed to fireworks and hoped to have fireworks in the future. He also reminded citizens that social media is probably not the best place to get the facts about what is happening in the city. The council is here to serve you, so reach out to us to clarify and update your concerns.

Councilmember Taylor commended the innovation recommended by a citizen of a Send an email button on the city website. She praised Director Marlowe's excellent job as a financial guide, specifically with the new IT systems. She also offered her thanks for the Independence Day Celebration.

Mayor Norton commended staff on the Independence Day Celebrations. He reminded citizens of the public budget meetings tomorrow, and that punch and pastries will be served at the July 19th Work Session to celebrate Director Marlowe's retirement.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Norton adjourned the meeting at 7:17 pm