



CITY OF DAHLONEGA

Council Work Session Minutes

October 16, 2023, 4:00 PM

Gary McCullough Council 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 at 706-864-6133.

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

Mission Statement - Dahlonega, 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.

OPEN MEETING

Mayor Pro tem Gaddis called the Council Work Session to order at 4:30

PRESENT

Councilmember Roman Gaddis
Councilmember Johnny Ariemma
Councilmember Ryan Reagin
Councilmember Ross Shirley
Councilmember Lance Bagley

ABSENT

Mayor JoAnne Taylor

BOARD & COMMITTEES

1. Cemetery Committee—September 2023, Chris Worick, Chair, Dahlonega Cemetery Committee

Mayor Pro-tem Gaddis complimented the work of the Cemetery Committee. He stated that Mt. Hope Cemetery looks excellent.

2. Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority/Main Street – September 2023, Ariel Alexander, Downtown Development Director

Councilmember Larson asked about the parking committee. He thanked Downtown Development Director Alexander and City Manager Martin for all their hard work.

Downtown Development Director Alexander stated they are looking into funding for parking decks.

Councilmember Bagley followed up by asking to find parking solutions.

Councilmember Shirley stated that employees should get parking tags in the square.

Councilmember Reagan agrees with Councilmember Shirley. He stated that it would be nice to get a tag for employees.

Councilmember Ariemma agreed with everyone in saying that parking passes would be great.

3. Tourism Quarterly Report - 3rd Qtr. 2023, Sam McDuffie, Director of Tourism
Mr. McDuffie said that he could answer any questions on the report.

Councilmember Ariemma commented on the ads he had seen and asked what it costs to make people come to Dahlonega. He also questions how much it is to reach out for marketing.

Councilmember Shirley asks if a number on the report is people who have checked into the visitors center.

Councilmember Reagin asked about the number of visitors in FY2023 and if this is better than surrounding places.

Councilmember Larson states that what Mr.McDuffie and his team do is amazing.

Mr.McDuffie updates the council on his strategic plan.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS AVAILABLE AT: <https://dahlonega.gov/category/department-reports/>

Councilmember Shirley asked if we could get an update on Gold Rush and East Main.

Mayor Pro tem Gaddis asked Chief Albert a question about the First Net.

APPOINTMENT, PROCLAMATION & RECOGNITION : (Vote at Council Meeting)

PRESENTATION – None

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS

4. Change to Open Container Footprint for the Veterans Appreciation Celebration - Strategic Priority #3 – Communication, Doug Parks, City Attorney, Ariel Alexander, DDA Director

Downtown Development Director Alexander stated that the Veterans Appreciation Celebration wants to change the open container footprint similar to the Dahlonega Arts and Wine footprint they have approved before. She noted that this will begin Friday night from 5:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. and Saturday within their event hours.

Councilmember Bagley asked what events they would be having.

Councilmember Ariemma asked about the footprint.

5. Mailbox Ordinance – Strategic Priority #2 – Infrastructure, Doug Parks, City Attorney
City Manager Martin went over Ordinance 2023-06, establishing a Mailbox Ordinance to implement a policy addressing regulations of mailbox installation in the City.

Councilmember Ariemma asked if there is a way they can be lenient on this.

Mayor Pro-tem Gaddis asked what the process would be to get this approved.

Councilmember Reagin agreed with the other council members.

CONTRACTS & AGREEMENTS

6. 2024 Agreement for Tourism Development Services – Strategic Priority #3 – Communication, Allison Martin, City Manager

City Manager Martin states that this agreement continues tourism promotion services provided by the Dahlonega-Lumpkin County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc. as a standalone entity. She says that they are preparing for this on January 1st. They want to be proactive and have this ready for the first of the year. This information was shared with the Tourism Board. They do have a few comments that we will obtain and share with the council. They modeled this after other communities with CVB, which is the model they have gone to. So the contract is a new form this year.

Councilmember Larson asked about the percentage presented and asked if we would allocate the 3%.

Councilmember Shirley asked about the Audit and asked if this was an estimate.

Mayor Pro-tem Gaddis asked about the 5%, and as more people visited Dahlonge, that percentage increased. He says that this is getting bigger and asked about the repairs.

7. Renewal of Probation Contract – Strategic Priority #3 – Communication, Doug Parks, City Attorney

City Manager Martin stated that this provider has been providing probation services for municipal court for several years, and they have no complaints. They have been a good performer for the City for several years now. She states that the staff recommends approving this.

Councilmember Ariemma asked who pays for this service.

8. Contract Renewal - Jarrard Water Services (JWS) – Strategic Priority #2 - Infrastructure
Allison Martin, City Manager

Approval of contract renewal over \$50,000. Jarrard Water Services (John Jarrard's company) has provided part-time consulting services to the water and wastewater departments of the City since January 1, 2020. A one-year contract for another fiscal year in the amount of \$4,458 monthly, or \$53,496 annually. Staff recommend that the council approve this.

Councilmember Ariemma stated that he is thankful for John Jarrard. There should be a plan if someone has been there long enough and enough knowledge if John were to retire tomorrow.

OTHER ITEMS:

9. 2024 Meeting Dates - Public Notice - Strategic Priority #3 - Communication

Mary Csukas, City Clerk

City Clerk Csukas stated that there are no changes. This is just an opportunity to see if anything needs to be changed. All the meetings will still be on exact dates.

Mayor Pro-tem Gaddis said he thinks this looks great and thanked City Clerk Csukas.

10. City Council Meeting Minutes - October 2, 2023 - Strategic Priority #3 - Communication

Sarah Hunsinger, Assistant City Clerk

City Manager Martin stated that they are trying to start to present these things to the council at the Work Sessions, so that is why the minutes are on this agenda.

COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

City Clerk Ms. Csukas has no comments

City Manager Martin stated that open enrollment for city employees is on October 17th in the Council Chambers. TSW provided a baseline date. This means they have completed interviews with state holders and community members and are writing a report that will be here soon. The annual hydrant flushing program will start Sunday night after the Gold Rush and run for two weeks. This will be advertised on our website. She states that people may notice wet streets in the mornings and discolored or low water pressure at night for the next two weeks. She said that she met with the County Manager, Ours, and he provided a timeline for the possible call for SPLOST. The county will be sending a letter soon.

City Council Comments

Councilmember Larson has no comment.

Councilmember Ariemma has no comment.

Councilmember Reagin has no comment.

Councilmember Shirley has no comment.

Councilmember Bagley stated that he loves Gold Rush and is sad he will miss it.

City Attorney Parks

Mayor Comments

Mayor Pro-tem Gaddis thanked everyone for coming, and he apologized for the long meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro-tem Gaddis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:09