



# CITY OF DAHLONEGA

## Council Meeting Minutes

December 04, 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 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.

---

### CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Mayor Taylor called the December 4th, 2023, City Council Meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Mayor Taylor welcomed everyone and thanked the audience for coming. She announced that there would be some changes to the agenda.

### 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 say the prayer and Councilmember Reagin to lead the pledge of allegiance.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Taylor amended the agenda to include the appointment of Allison Martin as acting Zoning Administrator and Resolution 2023-06 Moratorium to the Acceptance and Processing of Sign Permit.

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

### APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Taylor made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion made by Councilmember Gaddis to approve the consent agenda, which includes the GEFA Service Line Inventory Grant Program, GDOT Safety Action Plan 2023-13, Koyo Lift Station Rehabilitation Bid Award, 2024 Agreement for Tourism Development Services, and Park Street Construction Inspection Services Seconded by Councilmember Larson.

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

Mayor Taylor thanked Dr. Bobby Mayfield for attending the meeting.

GEFA Service Line Inventory Grant Program SP# 2 - Infrastructure

Allison Martin, City Manager

GDOT Safety Action Plan 2023-13 – SP #2 – Infrastructure

Vince Hunsinger, Capital Projects Manager

Koyo Lift Station Rehabilitation Bid Award – SP #2 – Infrastructure

John Jarrard, JWS

2024 Agreement for Tourism Development Services – Strategic Priority #3 - Communication

Allison Martin, City Manager

Park Street Construction Inspection Services - Wiedeman and Singleton - SP #2 – Infrastructure

Mark Buchanan, City Engineer/Public Works Director

PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA SPECIFIC / THREE MINUTE LIMIT

Mr. Hulseley made a public comment about Dahlonaga's government.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. City Council Meeting Minutes - November 6th, 2023

Sarah Hunsinger, Assistant City Clerk

Mayor Taylor made a motion to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes on November 6th, 2023

Motion made by Councilmember Reagin, Seconded by Councilmember Shirley.

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

APPOINTMENT, PROCLAMATION & RECOGNITION:

1. Cemetery Committee Recognition

JoAnne Taylor, Mayor

Mayor Taylor acknowledged the Cemetery Committee and thanked them for their efforts. She states that this committee has done major things for this community's history and historic preservation. A lot of work has been done, and they have been collaborating with UNG and have greatly assisted UNG with the Appalachian Studies Program. She states that, most importantly, they have improved the appearance of our cemetery and that there will be more to come. She complimented and thanked them once more.

2. Recognition

JoAnn Taylor, Mayor

Mayor Taylor recognized Councilmember Larson. He has decided not to seek re-election, she says. Larson has been a council member in this city for eight years. He has a financial background, so he has been really helpful with budget analysis and has a great eye for detail. Larson has been a pillar of this council and has done so much for the community outside of the council.

Councilmembers acknowledged Councilmember Larson and thanked him.

Councilmember Larson thanked the Mayor, Council, and staff for the past eight years.

3. Proclamation - Dr. Frank "Mac" McConnell Retirement from UNG  
JoAnne Taylor, Mayor

Mayor Taylor said that Mr. McConnell was one of many community leaders who collaborated on a master plan for Downtown Dahlonga in 2008 that was never implemented. Mayor Taylor announced that they would be using portions of that plan and that his work would be continued.

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

4. Appointment of Allision Martin as Acting Zoning Administrator  
JoAnne Taylor, Mayor

Mayor Taylor made a motion for the appointment of Allision Martin as Acting Zoning Administrator.

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

#### CITY REPORTS:

5. Cemetery Committee 2023 Annual Report  
Chris Worick, Chairman

Chairman Worick presented the Cemetery Committee 2023 Annual Report to the Mayor and Council.

Mayor Taylor complimented the committee on their hard work and they appreciate their efforts.

6. Financial Report - October 2023 - SP #3 - Communication  
Allison Martin, City Manager

City Manager Martin stated that the finance department is still making the necessary entries for the end of the year. All of the department expenditures are in line. Water revenue continues to exceed based on previous years. She states that most of the revenue that has come in since we closed our Fiscal Year has been adjusted back to its prior year's revenue. We did receive our insurance premium tax, which was over \$624,000, which is an increase of \$100,000 compared to last year and what we budgeted for. She stated that she spoke to the Tax Commissioner, and the property tax revenue continues to come in strong. Our finance department checked with them, and that will be a little over \$400,000.

Mayor Taylor entertained a motion to accept the October 2023 Financial Report.

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

#### OTHER ITEMS:

7. Leah Kay Catering LLC, dba Yahoola Grill  
Mary Csukas, City Clerk

City Clerk Csukas introduced the Alcohol License of Leah Kay Catering LLC, dba Yahoola Grill. She stated that everything was in order and recommended that this be approved.

Mayor Taylor entertained a motion to approve Leah Kay Catering LLC, dba Yahoola Grill.

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

8. 2024 Alcoholic Beverage License Renewals – Strategic Priority #3 Communications  
Mary Csukas, City Clerk & Doug Parks, City Attorney

City Clerk Csukas stated that all of the applications are in order. We are seeking approval of the list of renewals for the 2024 license.

Mayor Taylor entertained a motion to approve the 2024 Alcoholic Beverage License Renewals.

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

9. 39 Stargel St Encroachment Agreement  
Doug Parks, City Attorney

City Attorney Parks stated that the Encroachment and Easement Agreement for 39 Stargel St allows the current residence/structure to remain in place but denies the current and/or any future owner from building new additions, improvements, or rebuilds in the right of way. Approval is recommended, with possible text refinement before approval.

Mayor Taylor entertained a motion to approve.

Motion made by Councilmember Larson to approve as recommended, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

Councilmember Bagley stated that he was concerned about who approved the right-of-way until he found out the house was built in 1914.

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

10. TSW Guidance on Recommendations - SP #1 - Effectively Manage Growth  
Allison Martin, City Manager

Mayor Taylor went over the TSW Guidance on Recommendations and reviewed TSW's recommendations to provide guidance in the next step of the process.

Mayor Taylor entertained a motion.

Councilmember Gaddis made a motion to move forward with TSW Guidance on Recommendations, seconded by Councilmember Bagley.

Councilmember Ariemma stated that he thinks this company could give the city good guidelines.

Councilmember Shirly stated that he agreed and he thinks that it is important to get recommendations.

Mayor Taylor stated that this rezoning will update zoning regulations that were put in place in 1991. One of the issues it presents is when a developer wants to come and build, they have to translate the zoning to the present day. It is an obstacle for residential buildings. This firm will put in a lot of effort. It will take a lot of public hearings, so she encourages the public to give their opinions.

Councilmember Bagley stated that he wants to be more educated on these options.

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

11. Resolution 2023-06 - Moratorium on the Acceptance and Processing of Sign Permit Applications for All Properties within the City of Dahlonga's Sign Ordinance; and For Other Purposes

Doug Parks, City Attorney

Mayor Taylor states that the sign regulations are outdated and will take around 90 days to finish reviewing this.

Mayor Taylor made a motion to approve this Moratorium.

Motion made by Councilmember Larson, Seconded by Councilmember Gaddis.

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

12. Executive Session - Real Estate

No action taken.

COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Clerk Comments

City Manager Comments

City Attorney Comments

City Council Comments

Mayor Comments

City Clerks Cszik had no comment.

City Manager Martin had no comment.

City Attorney Parks thanked Councilmember Larson for everything he has done for the City of Dahlonga.

Councilmember Bagley told everyone to have a Merry Christmas and stated that Councilmember Larson will be missed

Councilmember Reagin thanked Councilmember Larson for everything and stated that the Cemetary Committee was doing a great job.

Councilmember Larson thanked everyone for the nice things that had been said.

Councilmember Gaddis stated that Councilmember Larson will be missed.

Councilmember Ariemma stated that the Cemetary Committee had a great presentation and thanked Councilmember Larson for everything he had done.

Councilmember Shirley wished Councilmember Larson the best of luck.

Mayor Taylor thanked Councilmember Larson for everything and stated that he would be missed.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to adjourn the City Council Meeting at 6:52 P.M.

Motion made by Councilmember Reagin, Seconded by Councilmember Gaddis.

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