



# CITY OF DAHLONEGA

## Council Work Session Minutes

December 21, 2020, 4:00 PM

Gary McCullough Council Chambers, Dahlonega City Hall

<p>PRESENT          Mayor Sam Norton          Council Member Mitchell Ridley          Council Member JoAnne Taylor          Council Member Roman Gaddis          Council Member Johnny Ariemma          Council Member Ron Larson</p>	<p>PRESENT          City Clerk Mary Csukas          City Manager Bill Schmid          Director Melody Marlowe          Director Mark Buchanan          Superintendent John Jarrard</p>	<p>PRESENT          City Attorney Doug Parks          Chairman Chris Worick          Tourism Director Sam McDuffie          Chamber President Robb Nichols</p>
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### OPEN MEETING

Mayor Norton opened the Work Session at 4:02 p.m.

### BOARDS & COMMITTEES:

1. Cemetery Report November 2020, Chris Worick, Dahlonega Cemetery Committee Chairman  
 Chairman Worick informed Mayor and Council that he had ordered Memorial Markers for some Veterans' graves that encompass three generations.  
 Council and Mayor praised the Cemetery Committee for their dedication to the preservation of our local cemeteries and the care they exhibit to sustain the memory of the interred.
2. Main Street - November 2020, Lucas Cheney, Main Street Program Coordinator  
 Coordinator Cheney highlighted 2020 events in Downtown Dahlonega and the extraordinary effort taken to ensure we follow the COVID guidelines outlined by the CDC.

### TOURISM:

1. Tourism - November 2020, Sam McDuffie, Tourism Director  
 Director McDuffie outlined the significant aspects of his monthly tourism report.
  - The dashboard on the website is now showing tourism items for 2021
  - Launch of the digital marketing campaign for 2021
  - Sozo Bear Commercial filmed and completed this week.
  - Time lock installation completed on doors of the Visitors Center bathrooms.

### DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

1. Community Development – November 2020, Kevin Herrit, Director
  - City Manager Schmid informed the Council of no additions to the Community Development Department's monthly reports.
  - Council was concerned with South Meaders Street condition, and the current construction company in the area. City Manager Schmid stated before and after pictures of South Meaders will be reviewed and discussed at an after-action meeting to determine the repair cost. This particular road needed some repair before construction began, so the City will bear some of the responsibility for repairs.

2. Financial Services – November 2020, Melody Marlowe, Finance Director
  - Rushton & Company found no requirement for adjustments upon completion of this phase of the audit.
  - Dahlonoga was awarded the GFOA award for 2019; Dahlonoga has received this award for 11 years running. Of the 535 cities in the state of Georgia, only 70 will receive this award for 2019.
  - Mayor Norton praised the City staff for this achievement once again; he is proud that the City has received this award for 11 years in a row.
  
3. Public Works – November 2020, Mark Buchanan, PW Director/City Engineer

Director Buchanan highlighted some aspects of this monthly department report:

  - Paving projects continue throughout the City with the assistance of the County and GDOT.
  - After Hurricane Zeta and the Fall season, the clean-up kept Public Works very busy. This team also completed the installation of Christmas lights downtown.
  - The Wimpy Mill project remains ongoing; please take time to stop by and review the progress.
  - Council discussed the need for safety cameras outside the Hancock Park bathroom.
  
4. Water & Wastewater Treatment November 2020, John Jarrard, Water/Wastewater Treatment Director
  - Superintendent John Jarrard gave the monthly report with no additions.
  - The filter replacement project is ongoing; the cost will be less due to the excellent condition of the filters in place.

#### ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Susie Dekrone Farris Memorial Swing & Plaque, Mark Buchanan & Family of Susie Farris
  - Director Buchanan requested time for Susie Farris's family to speak with the Mayor and Council concerning a request for memorial swing & plaque at the the new Wimpy Mill Park.
  - Family members of Mrs. Farris requested to place a memorial swing & plaque in memory of Ms. Susie Dekrone Farris to be installed near her favorite place, the reservoir. Ms. Farris was a longtime resident of Dahlonoga and will be remembered for her many years volunteering in Dahlonoga.
  - The City of Dahlonoga and the family of Ms. Farris will split the cost of the memorial swing & plaque 50/50; this is standard practice that will include annual upkeep.
  - The Mayor and Council agreed to allow Public Works to install the Wimpy Mill Park memorial swing.
  
2. Ordinance 2020-34, Columbarium/Ossuarium Sales, Mark Buchanan, Public Works
  - Council and Mayor discussed the need to move forward with the Columbarium ordinance, which describes the means and methods by which the City will manage the proposed columbarium in Memorial Park Cemetery and perform the sale of niches and ossuaries space.
  - For safety concerns, Council asked Director Buchanan to research the possibility of duplicating the keys associated with the niches in the ossuary.

3. Wimpy Mill Pedestrian Bridge TSPLOST Funding, Mark Buchanan, Public Works
  - Director Buchanan requested an additional \$25,000 of TSPLOST money for the Wimpy Mill Pedestrian Bridge project; this increase of 5% will allow for possible unknown factors in this project's progression.
  
4. Street Department Excavator Purchase, Troy Armstrong, Streets, Parks & Cemeteries Supervisor
  - Council understood that an Excavator purchase was to replace an older model below the expected purchase amount.
  - The City of Dahlonega utilizes purchasing powers within the Government guidelines and sells older models using Gov Deals.
  
5. Dark Skies Ordinance 2020-3, Bill Schmid, City Manager
  - The ordinance allows for regulation of lighting in the City of Dahlonega with new construction and upkeep of existing lights.
  - This ordinance is a modified version of the City of Athens lighting ordinance and is the best fit for the City of Dahlonega.
  - City Manager Schmid stated that while the ordinance is technical, it will allow for compliance and require an engineer with some sites.
  - Georgia Power and the University of North Georgia were both asked for guidance during the conception of this ordinance, and ours will mirror Lumpkin County's corridor requirements.
  
6. 2021 Agreement for Tourism Development Services, Bill Schmid, City Manager

The Council, Chamber President, and Tourism Director discussed the proposed Tourism Arrangement and agreed to some modifications:

  - The maintenance budget will be set at \$6000-\$12,000 annually.
  - A funding increase of \$12,500 from \$250,000 to \$262,500.
  - Upon review of this new agreement, the Tourism Board may request some amendments at a later date.

The Chamber staff have relocated from the Visitors Building in Downtown Dahlonega to the Kelley Building located within the Lumpkin County office complex. This separation of the Chamber and Tourism Board requires the tourism board to absorb a more considerable cost for the Visitors Center Building's upkeep.
  
7. Solid Waste Exemption Procedure, Bill Schmid, City Manager, Mark Buchanan, Public Works
  - Director Buchanan stated there is no exemption request at this time.
  - Council and Mayor understand that City Staff is following the procedures outlined in the Solid Waste Ordinance. Director Buchanan or City Manager Schmid are available to discuss staff procedures in handling requests for exemptions to the ordinance.
  - Mr. Shannon Simms outlined concerns with the ordinance and the billing process for a tenant paying rent and garbage to the owner and the City of Dahlonega. Council requested Staff to review this possible shared garbage service issue.

## COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Clerk Comments – I appreciated the Council funding the Christmas gifts for City staff's children.

City Manager Comments –

- Lucas Cheney has been promoted to the full-time position of Main Street Program Coordinator. An offer has been extended and accepted for the part-time position of DDA Assistant beginning in January.
- City Manager Schmid met the Head House architect at the site, who took pictures of the interior. Proposals received for the Kindergarten property were forwarded to the DDA Board.
- Representatives from Conway, South Carolina, impressed with the City of Dahlonega's workings during a recent visit, hope to bring this talent to their town.

City Attorney Comments – Discussion of changes to the Alcoholic Beverage Ordinance to comply with the new State of Georgia requirements begin with the January Work Session.

City Council Comments-

- Council Member Ariemma thanked everyone for his time on the Council.
- Council Member Gaddis requested the month of February for the Council Retreat in 2021.

Mayor Comments -

Ms. Helen Hardman has officially resigned from the City Council. This open position of temporary Council Member will be discussed and filled within the coming months.

Mayor Norton thanked all of the volunteers who continue to assist yearly to keep Dahlonega a great place to visit.

Mayor Norton thanked Council Member Ridley for donating a Christmas pork loin to all staff members.

## ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Norton adjourned the meeting at 5:18 p.m.