



CITY OF DAHLONEGA Council Work Session Minutes

May 17, 2021, 4:00 PM

Gary McCullough Council Chambers, Dahlonega City Hall

PRESENT

Mayor Sam Norton
Councilmember Ron Larson
Councilmember JoAnne Taylor
Councilmember Mitchel Ridley
Councilmember Roman Gaddis
Councilmember Johnny Ariemma
Councilmember Joel Cordle

OPEN MEETING

Mayor Norton opened the Work Session at 4:17 pm

1. Cemetery Committee—April 2021, Chris Worick, Committee Chairman (absent)

Presented by Mark Buchannan:

- Commendation to the Appalachian Studies group who repaired the AB Holt tomb at Mt. Hope Cemetery.
- GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar) completion in the old section of Mt Hope Cemetery gave exciting discoveries.

2. Main Street – April 2021, Ariel Alexander and Skyler Alexander, Main Street/DDA Staff

- We are implementing new programs and initiatives based on the Main Street 4-Point approach. Ms. Ariel Alexander discussed the Concerts in Hancock Park, the success of the Wine Festival, and the growing Farmers Market, which runs Tuesdays and Saturdays.
- The Independence Day schedule is posted and available on social media through the City and the Lumpkin County Chamber.
- Council commended the Main Street /DDA team on attending the required DDA training to become certified.
- The Main Street /DDA Board Meeting will be on the 1st of June, and discussion topics are changes to the bylaws and job descriptions for a Main Street/ DDA Manager.

3. TOURISM: Sam McDuffie, Tourism Director (absent)

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

4. Marshal's - April 2021, Jeff Branyon, Marshal

- Marshal Branyon expressed fuel is an issue; we are buying commercial fuel as the county fuel is down.
- Marshal Branyon informed the Council and Mayor of our change to yellow tasers to allow unambiguous identification; training is complete using the new taser. Our Body Cam is now auto-turn-on of the cameras when tasers or weapons are pulled. On June 6th, installing this same camera activation in our vehicles will allow auto engagement when the blue lights are

activated in vehicles. Technology continues to advance, and it makes deputies better, safer, more accountable

- Council and Marshal Branyon discussed staffing for the Marshal's Office and the ratio of patrol vehicles to staff, and the most efficient use of staff. The City Manager discussed the possible funding of an additional vehicle this fiscal year.

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

- Director Herrit discussed the support GMRC would provide to assist us in putting together the Comprehensive Plan and the need for nominees for Stakeholder advisory committee.
- Director Herrit provided ideas for the Main Street / DDA staff to promote extra activities for visitors to Downtown Dahlonaga.
- Council and Director Herrit discussed the late Occupational Tax Certificates and the need to ensure late notices with penalties, assessed at 10% of their fee, are mailed each month.
- Council discussed the number of building inspections monthly completed by this department.

6. Finance and Administration Department – April 2021, Melody Marlowe, Finance Director

- Director Marlowe discussed the ongoing work of the Finance Department working with Directors and their operational and capital needs.
- Director Marlowe and Council discussed the Head House proposal, which is due back May the 26th for presentation to the DDA Board at their next meeting on the 3rd of June and moving to approve the award of the note and intergovernmental agreement with the DDA and the Council at the Council Meeting on the 7th of June.

7. Public Works—April 2021, Mark Buchanan, PW Director/City Engineer

- Director Buchanan discussed road closures during the creation of the Oak Grove roundabout up until the first week in August 2021.
- Director Buchanan and Council discussed the Madeline Anthony Park sidewalk installation project. Mayor Norton offered a reminder to stain the signs at Hancock Park, Madeline Anthony, and the Diving Bell.
- Councilman Ridley suggested the possible recognition of the Poore Family contribution to the City of Dahlonaga.
- Director Buchanan offered recognition for Don Wilson as Friday was his last day.
- Council discussed the best way to keep the public informed of the projects going on around the city. The city website was the topic of discussion as one possible avenue to keep citizens informed.

5. Water & Wastewater Treatment - April 2021, John Jarrard, Water/Wastewater Treatment Director

- Director Jarrard discussed the Cross Connection program that protects residents from commercial buildings with chemicals that could cause backflow; this is state-mandated.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Appointment to Historic Preservation Commission - Ivana Pelnar - Zaiko, PhD

Mayor Norton brought attention to the application of Dr. Ivana Pelnar for the Historic Preservation Commission and encouraged Council recommendations for open Boards and Commissions seats.

2. ConnectAbility Inc. Presentation, Kim Bell, Director of Community Connections
The ConnectAbility Inc. group will present at the next Work Session.
3. GMA It's Worth a Shot Campaign, Joel Cordle, Councilmember
 - Council discussed the GMA Its Worth a Shot Campaign to promote vaccination opportunities for residents in Lumpkin County. Lumpkin County has a vaccination rate of 20%; the vaccination rates are available on the GA Dept of Health website.
4. 147 N Park Mirakovits Proposal, Bill Schmid, City Manager
 - Mr. Joe Mirakovits presented his proposal for the site on 147 South Park Street. This proposal encouraged parking, retail, dining, and possibly living options that would stay in alignment with the look and feel of Dahlonega.
5. WMP Canoe/Kayak Concessionaire, Bill Schmid, City Manager
 - City Manager Schmid outlined the possibility of concessionaire opportunity at the Kayak Launch.
6. FY2021 Mid-Year Budget Amendment, Melody Marlowe, Finance Director
 - Director Marlowe presented the FY2021 Mid-Year budget amendments. No changes to the budget were introduced, only adjustments to line items to align with current costs/projections.
7. Intergovernmental Agreement Lumpkin County and City of Dahlonega Municipal Election 2021, Mary Csukas, City Clerk
 - Ms. Csukas presented an amended IGA with Lumpkin County to support the special election for the seat left vacant by the death of David Miller. The combined elections will allow cost savings for the City of Dahlonega.

Mayor Norton suspended the work session to enter a Special Called Meeting at 5:38 pm

Mayor Norton reconvened the work session at 5:42 pm

Mayor Norton suspended the work session to enter an Executive Session at 5: 55 pm.

Mayor Norton reconvened the work session at 6: 25 pm.

8. Executive Session - Personnel Matter
No action was taken at the Executive Session

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Norton adjourned the work session at 6:26 pm.