



CITY OF DAHLONEGA

Council Work Session Minutes

April 18, 2022, 4:45 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.

PRESENT

Mayor JoAnne Taylor
Councilmember Ron Larson
Councilmember Roman Gaddis
Councilmember Johnny Ariemma
Councilmember Ryan Reagin
Councilmember Ross Shirley
Councilmember Lance Bagley

OPEN MEETING

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 4:50 pm.

BOARDS & COMMITTEES:

1. Cemetery Committee—March 2022

Chris Worick, Committee Chairman

City Engineer Mark Buchanan presented the report and indicated Chris Worick was at the Cemetery with students from UNG currently working with photographs to put stones back in their original places; five to ten students are working on this project.

2. Selection of Patricia Turner to Cemetery Committee

Chris Worick, Cemetery Committee Chairman

Director Buchanan indicated that Ms. Turner is currently a non-voting member who is available to be appointed as a voting member. The cemetery committee will affirm this action at tomorrow's meeting.

3. Downtown Dahlonega – March 2022

Ariel Alexander, Downtown Dahlonega Interim Manager

Interim Manager Alexander indicated there was nothing to add to the original report, and they were about to start their spring and summer programs. Mayor Taylor asked about the Farmer's Market, and Manager Alexander responded that there were twenty participants at the open house, and there have been more vendors coming in to apply. They have ordered new signs and posters. Councilmember Shirley stated his appreciation for the more prominent parking signs downtown. Councilmember Reagin inquired if any of the older participants from the Farmer's Market were returning.

TOURISM: Sam McDuffie, Tourism Director

Mayor Taylor introduced Director McDuffie, who indicated he did not have a report for March as they did not meet. He stated that the Tourism Committee has some funds for the restroom improvements, and he thanked the Council for presenting this topic in Resolution 2022-08. Director McDuffie said the Master's Golf Tournament billboard was a considerable success and estimated that over 600,000 people saw the billboards. He announced the virtual kiosk is up and operational at the Visitor's Center and new pad maps are at the visitor's center, with Dahlonega City Map on one side and a Lumpkin County map on the other. The Visitor's Center will have a new sign put up on Wednesday. There is still a rise in visitation to Dahlonega and Lumpkin County.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

4. Community Development – March 2022
Jameson Kinley, Planning Administrator
5. Finance and Administration Department – March 2022
Allison Martin, Finance Director
6. Police Department – March 2022
George Albert, Chief of Police
7. Public Works—March 2022
Mark Buchanan, PW Director/City Engineer

Mayor Taylor reminded Council that the Department reports were in their packet prior to the meeting and asked if there were any questions.

Councilmember Ariemma expressed concern with the Enota Street storm drain project flow, especially after significant rain. Director Buchanan responded that they reviewed the flow from the previous storm and poured additional concrete to take care of any additional overflow issues. He also stated the added rainfall did not create property damage and the repairs made to Enota Street have made the street safer.

Councilmember Shirley asked Director Martin the amount of ARPA funds that were initially available and their uses. Director Martin advised the total to be \$2.4 Million in ARPA funds, and \$109,000 will be used for the engineering on Park Street, as well as some cash flow for part of the Barlow Lift Station and investing some of the funds as allowed by Georgia law. We still have most of the funds for use on the Park Street Project.

Councilmember Larson thanked Administrator Kinley and Chief Albert for the formatting of their reports. He asked Chief Albert to give a rolling average for previous months as the method going forward to help Council see the activity and allow credit to be given to him and his officers for their work.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

8. Resolution 2022-08 - FY22 Budget Amendment for Additional Tourism Funds
Allison Martin, Finance Director

Mayor Taylor announced the item, and Director Martin shared the mid-year evaluation of the increase of funds due to state law changes for the Hotel/Motel tax will be approximately \$60,000. The request is to give \$54,000 to the Chamber to improve the restrooms.

Discussion with Council, Director Martin, and City Manager Schmid included the roles of the City and County, the contributions of each party, and the timelines to start and complete the renovation.

9. Resolution 2022-09 - FY22 Budget Amendment for DDA

Allison Martin, Finance Director

Director Martin expressed that she met with the Dahlonge Downtown board, who together looked at the items needing funding, and determined a budget for these items with their agreement. The board also agreed to fund the furniture for the Head House. Chairman Thrailkill spoke to Council, thanking them for their support.

10. 2022 Comprehensive Plan

Jameson Kinley, Planning Administrator

Council, City Manager Schmid, and Administrator Kinley discussed the varying aspects of the Comprehensive Plan and when to expand plan updates.

11. Master Sidewalk Plan

Jameson Kinley, Planning and Zoning Administrator

Mayor Taylor explained that sidewalks are an expensive part of the Comprehensive Plan. Administrator Kinley referred to maps to point out needed new sidewalks. Map one demonstrated the current situation, map two showed those areas needing sidewalks, and map three broke the areas into eight groups, prioritizing the sites but not necessarily prioritizing development. He stated he was looking for confirmation from Council that this was still the direction Council wanted to go. Administrator Kinley indicated that as opportunities to move forward with sidewalk improvements came; they did so- explicitly speaking to the current UNG/Morrison Moore project. As of right now, the development ordinances call for sidewalks in most areas. Administrator Kinley explained that they wanted to look at where it was logical to put sidewalks and economical for future growth. There are six additional miles of proposed sidewalks in this plan. City Manager Schmid advised expecting a proposal in the next year.

COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

City Clerk Csukas had no additional comments.

City Manager Schmid indicated the budget process had started, and if Council had any Capital Projects, they wanted to add, let him know.

City Attorney Parks advised that a citizen called his office regarding a traffic citation and commended the officer, saying he was an incredibly professional officer. He noted that the community respects the team's work.

Councilmember Bagley stated they talked about the budget for engineering and the rising costs across the board. While he trusted the staff and team, he was concerned that opportunists could be moving to price up, and we needed to ensure we were spending as fiscally responsible as we could.

Councilmember Larson stated that council members have opportunities to stay informed with training classes related to topics that assist with the council members' jobs.

Councilmember Gaddis wanted to ensure that we are not inadvertently excluding potential vendors when we ask for an estimate.

Councilmember Shirley indicated he had no additional comments.

Councilmember Ariemma discussed his upcoming bike trip and wished Council well in his absence.

Councilmember Ryan expressed his appreciation to the staff for their effort with sidewalks and pricing proposals.

Councilmember Larson asked about a new car wash coming to town. He indicated he would like to know as new businesses come to town.

Mayor Taylor announced that the City Council held a retreat, open to the public, to discuss priorities: housing, recycling goals, and negotiating LOST; this was a highly effective and action-oriented retreat. Thank you for participating.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to adjourn at 5:25 pm

Motion made by Councilmember Gaddis, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

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