



The CITY OF DAHLONEGA Council

Meeting Minutes April 6, 2020, 6:00 pm

<p>PRESENT – Zoom Meeting Mayor Sam Norton Council Member Roman Gaddis Council Member Mitchell Ridley Council Member Ron Larson Council Member JoAnne Taylor Council Member Helen Hardman Council Member Johnny Ariemma</p>	<p>PRESENT- Zoom Meeting City Clerk Mary Csukas Director Melody Marlowe City Manager Bill Schmid Director Mark Buchanan Director Kevin Herrit Marshal Jeff Branyon</p>	<p>PRESENT – Zoom Meeting City Attorney Doug Parks Director Shannon Ferguson DDA Program Assistant Cari McDuffie Tourism Director Sam McDuffie</p>
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CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Mayor Norton called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the agenda as written.

Motion made by Council Member Ariemma, Seconded by Council Member Gaddis.

Voting Yea: Council Member Hardman, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma.

PUBLIC COMMENT – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES –

- Greg Finan, the Nugget, requested a copy of the 2007 City Attorney contract with the City of Dahlonega.
- City Manager Schmid informed the Council the City did not locate the original contract.
- Mayor Norton stated that the City Attorney renewal contract reflects the original terms of the agreement with the City of Dahlonega.
- Council Member Ridely asked for clarification of City Employee Contracts.
- Council Member Gaddis stated point of order; this is the public comment time slot.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve Work Session Minutes; February 18, 2020, as written.

Motion made by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Hardman.

Voting Yea: Council Member Hardman, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

RECOGNITION

- 1 Proclamation Child Abuse Prevention Month April 2020
 - Ms. Bridgette Barker, Director of Family Connections, discussed the growing need for assistance with child abuse cases in Lumpkin County. The joint proclamation between the City of Dahlonega and Lumpkin County is to support the month of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.
 - Council Member Ridley asked Ms. Barker for an update on the state of our homebound children concerning their health and well-being during this pandemic.
 - Ms. Barker informed Council that food distributed to needy families this month increased from 3000 to over 8000 pounds. Weekend food distribution has risen from 150 a weekend to over 300 box lunches. Our center has created a drive-through distribution center for meats, eggs, and other fresh groceries. We have local restaurants assisting with meals for families. A grant of \$5000 has allowed our center to purchase gift cards from local restaurants to give dinners to families in need.
 - Council Member Ridley offered the City of Dahlonega bottled water to families in need. The City

- Manager Schmid assured Ms. Baker that the bottled water would be delivered as required.
- Community Helping Place coordinates meal delivery to senior citizens and is sharing donations with Family Connections as needed.
- Council Member Ariemma praised all organizations for their efforts with the pandemic and hoped the stimulus packet could assist families in need.
- Council Member Taylor would like to communicate with the mentors and mentees.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to support the Proclamation Child Abuse Prevention Month as April.
Motion made by Council Member Larson, Seconded by Council Member Ridley.
Voting Yea: Council Member Hardman, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma.

OLD BUSINESS:

2 Employee Compensation and Benefit Review

Melody Marlowe discussed the recent compensation and benefit Study performed by Whit Perrin Wright Consulting. The Consultant’s recommendation includes the adoption of a revised pay structure and changing the grade of several jobs. The cost to implement the recommendations is an estimated \$94,000. Implementation of the Consultant's advice will enable the City of Dahlenega to continue to attract and retain qualified employees to perform the essential work of the City most efficiently and effectively possible. Director Marlowe recommends the adoption of the pay structure and considers pay changes as a high priority with the development of the FY2021 Budget.

- Director Marlowe informed Council that the FY2020 Budget had budget savings that could have absorbed this cost, but these savings will be used for other areas due to the pandemic.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the recommended adoption of new a pay structure and pay changes as a high priority with the development of the FY2021 Budget.

Motion made by Council Member Taylor, Seconded by Council Member Hardman.

- FY2021 Budget could include the pay changes or a budget amendment later in FY2021, and these increases would affect most employees at the City, at a small amount.
- Council Member Taylor informed Council that this pay structure would be more in keeping with the industry that allows merit increases without a promotion.
- Mayor Norton reminded the Council of the need to stay competitive in the market, and this new pay structure gets us closer to the industry.

Voting Yea: Council Member Hardman, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

3 City Attorney Contract Renewal

Mayor Norton informed Council that the City Attorney Renewal Contract was open for discussion, and we needed to make a motion to approve this Contract and continue the earlier discussion.

Mayor Norton called for a motion to approve the renewal of the City Attorney Contract.

Motion made by Council Member Hardman, Seconded by Council Member Larson.

- Ms. Csukas, City Clerk, stated that she and City Manager Schmid reviewed all the current employee contracts.
- Council Member Ridley, Larson, and Taylor asked that city contracts be presented to Council every year.

Voting Yea: Council Member Hardman, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

Voting Opposed: Council Member Ridley

COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Clerk Comments – No comments currently.

City Manager Comments – Commend the Council and Staff in this pandemic

City Attorney Comments – No comments currently.

City Council Comments:

- o Cost for legal fees in advance on large projects
- o Restaurant drive-thru operations are a health safety concern
- o Control visitors parking in Downtown Dahlenega
- o UNG Matrix Sign donated for use in Downtown Dahlenega
- o A great thanks to all partnerships assisting our families in need.
- o Thanks to Staff and City Attorney for diligent work on the pandemic.
- o Contract renewal review every year.
- o Hazard pay to employees on the front line.

Mayor Comments –

- o Auto-renewal of contracts is in place for a reason, but yearly reviews are a good practice.
- o Out of town visitors in Downtown Dahlenega has slowed in the last few weeks.
- o The Downtown Merchants are feeling the financial impact of the pandemic.
- o Vandalism in Mt Hope Cemetery begs a review of the safety gates.
- o Expect road closures in the Downtown area for maintenance and repairs.
- o Many thanks to the staff for all their hard work.

Mayor Norton asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion made by Council Member Larson, Seconded Council Member Hardman.

Voting Yea: Council Member Hardman, Council Member Taylor, Council Member Ridley, Council Member Gaddis, Council Member Larson, Council Member Ariemma

Approved this _____ day of _____, 2020.

_____ Sam Norton, Mayor

Attest: _____ Mary Csukas, City Clerk