**Minutes**

**Forsyth City Council Meeting**

**November 4, 2024**

**Call to Order**

Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m

**Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation and Roll Call**

Mayor Wilson led the Pledge of Allegiance. The invocation was led by Ms. Marilyn Tucker. In attendance for the meeting was Mayor Eric Wilson, Councilmembers Josh Hill, Chris Hewett, Lois Allen, Charles Wilder, and Mike Dodd. Also in attendance was the City Manager, Craig Mims, the Assistant City Manager, Regina Ivie and the City Attorney, Bobby Melton. Not in attendance was Councilmember Greg Goolsby. Five members of the council were in attendance for the meeting; therefore, all unanimous votes will be five votes (Hill, Hewett, Allen, Wilder and Dodd).

**Approval of the agenda**

Mayor Wilson stated that the agenda needed to be amended to make an addition. He stated that 7A would be Dean Nelson with a grant application report.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the amended agenda with the addition or change. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of the minutes from the council meeting held on October 21, 2024.**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the minutes from the council meeting held on October 21, 2024 with the correction that the City Attorney was not present for the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**2023 Audit Presentation by Davey King, Mauldin & Jenkins**

Mr. Davey King stated that he was the manager in charge of this year’s audit with the city. He stated they conducted the audit in accordance with general auditing standards as well as government auditing standards and provided a clean unmodified opinion which is the highest level of assurance that can be provided as an external auditor. This means that all financial statements and material were fairly presented in accordance with the general aspects of accounting principles. He stated that the financial statements are broken into two parts. The first part being the government wide level which reviewed the city assets and differed outflows and the liabilities and differed inflows. The second part of the financial statement is the fund-level statements, which are the general funds and tend to be the heart and soul of the operations of the city. Mr. King reviewed the general fund, liabilities, income statement, and expenditures. He thanked Mrs. Regina Ivie for her hard work and commended the city for preparing an annual comprehensive financial report, which goes above and beyond the financial requirements.

**2025 Insurance Review by Julie Maxman with the Baldwin Group**

Ms. Julie Maxman, Client Manager with the Baldwin Group, stated that she was here to review where they are with the employee benefit package for January 1, 2025. She stated that Anthem Medical came in with a 31% increase, Mutual of Omaha is the Basic Life and AD&D, Voluntary Life, and Short Term Disability plans are on a rate hold until January 1, 2026, MetLife Dental was a 15% increase it was renegotiated to 9% pending the caveat that enrollment stays around the same, Vision is a 4% increase, and the AFLAC worksite plans are staying the same. Ms. Maxman stated that the increase was due to high claims. She stated that we have two options. The first option is the no shop rate with Anthem, which means she would go to the representative with a comfortable percent increase and be ready to commit to renew right now. She stated that she told the representative 20%, but he will not go to the underwriters without the council’s approval to go with Anthem. The second option is to go to the market, meaning to put out a request for proposals, which they have already done. They sent out proposals to Aetna, United Healthcare, and Cigna. They are operating very slowly, and she expects to have a response by Friday. Ms. Maxman stated that they are implementing Employee Navigator, an online system to assist with employee enrollment. They have their own accounts, they can make elections, make changes and review coverage online. It is better for efficiency. It is offered as a free service for their clients. The Baldwin Group has an employee care center for employees that may need assistance. They are open Monday through Friday from 8:00a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Ms. Maxman stated that open enrollment is scheduled for December 6, 2024. Ms. Maxman reviewed the Ancillary Plans with the increase. She stated that she hopes to have all proposal information from Aetna, Cigna, and United Healthcare by Friday, November 8, 2024.

After a brief discussion Mr. Wilder offered a motion to give Julie the option to negotiate with Anthem for up to a 20% ceiling, with the understanding that if they receive a lower rate from another company the product offered must be better. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously with four votes in favor (Hewett, Allen, Wilder, and Dodd) and one vote in opposition (Hill).

**Approval of the Rotary Club Donation Agreement and Change Order**

Mr. Dean Nelson, the Community Development Director, stated that the Forsyth-Monroe County Rotary Club is donating $126,000.00 toward the construction of a Rotary Pavilion at the newly constructed pickleball courts at Country Club Park. The proposed pavilion will be a smaller version of the one already constructed on site. He stated that Renfroe Construction, the contractor, provided a proposal for a 40’ x 28’ Rotary Club Pavilion Shelter at a total cost of $112,226.00. The remaining funds from the donation will be used to purchase furniture in the same style as that purchased by the City for the pavilion or benches between courts for use players. The Rotary club requested an Inclusion of a Rotary Wheel on the pavilion or a sign at the top below the eaves facing the entrance, Forsyth-Monroe County Rotary Club Pavilion,” if such a sign is structurally possible. The ability to reserve the courts twice a year for organized pickleball tournaments, and the ability to reserve a court once each month for organized instructional classes. He stated he recommends the approval of the design presented by Hofstadter and Associates and the proposal presented by Renfroe Construction. Additionally, he recommended that the city provides Rotary with a letter of acceptance of the donation and donation agreement. He stated that Ms. Beverly Savage is present for any questions they may have.

Mr. Craig Mims, the City Manager, additionally noted that the fifteen-year term needed to be added to the agreement.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the Rotary Club Donation Agreement and Change Order. Seconded by Mr. Hill; the motion carried unanimously.

**Grant Application Report by Dean Nelson**

Mr. Dean Nelson, the Community Development Director, stated that Ms. Tammy Selman, the Grant Specialist from The Monroe County Board of Commissioners, contacted the City for an in-kind financial letter of support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant for the Monroe County Recreation program of $10,625.00 or 5% of their grant request.

Ms. Tammy Selman stated that the county is building a new gymnasium and had to remove the outdoor basketball courts. They have applied for a Land and Water Conservation Grant for $425,000.00 with a 50% match. She thanked the Mayor and the City for the in-kind letter of support of $10,625.00 in donated labor, equipment, and materials should they make it to the final stage of the project.

**Approval of bid award to ISES Corporation.**

Mr. Will Campbell, the Project Manager, stated that at a called meeting earlier this year the city staff was tasked with finding a firm to do assessments at the Welcome Center and the Alderman Hall. A Request for Proposal was written and posted; eight firms responded. They were scored on four metrics cost approach experience and capacity. ISES scored the highest. He stated it is recommended that the city moves forward with the project with ISES Corporation.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the bid award to ISES Corporation. Seconded by Mr. Wilder; the motion carried unanimously with four votes in favor (Hill, Hewett, Wilder, and Dodd) and one opposition (Allen).

**Approval of the lead service line inventory notification contractor**

Mr. Mike Batchelor, the Utilities Director, stated that 120 Water was selected earlier in the year to facilitate lead and copper service water lines inventory. They send out notifications to customers of unknown and verified lead service lines existing in the City of Forsyth’s water distribution system. The city did not have any verified lead service but roughly 70% of the system is still unknown. The cost is $9150.64 base charge with $2000.00 contingency. The cost is reimbursable through grant received from GEFA.

 Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the lead service line inventory notification contractor. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**First reading of the proposed 2025 budget**

Mrs. Regina Ivie, the Assistant City Manager, reviewed the adoption timeline for the 2025 proposed budget. The Public Hearing will be on November 18, 2024, at 6:00p.m. and the adoption of the resolution will be on December 2, 2024. She stated it is being advertised in the Monroe County Reporter on November 6th, 13th, and 27th. She reviewed the General Fund Revenues and Expenses, the Budgeted Employee Benefits, proposed salary increases, new positions in the city’s pay plan, and a new title. Mrs. Ivie reviewed the proposed 2025 capital request for the Cemetery Department, Police Department, Fire Department, Recreation, Public Works, and the Garage. She reviewed the Hotel Motel Tax Fund and how the funds are split and the portion that is used for the Tourism Product Development Fund. Mrs. Ivie proposed that when the adoption of the resolution is done to include language specifying that a separate resolution assigning the funds are spent annually towards city parks or included with this year’s budget adoption for 2025 only. She reviewed the Special Revenue Funds and the Combined Utilities Revenues and Expenditures.

**Approval of Requisitions Greater than $6,000**

* **Calibration Controls & Automation - $10,015.41**
* **Holiday Designs, Inc. - $10,425.00**
* **Gresco Utilities Supplies. Inc. - $13,198.00**

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the requisitions greater than $6000 as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously**.**

**City Manager’s Report**

Mr. Craig Mims, the City Manager, reported that:

* The Trick or Treat Event on the square last week was a great success, thank you to our Main Street Manager Kemie Childs.
* The 1st Annual Forsyth Fun Day was Saturday, and it was well attended. Thanks to all the City Departments for their dedication to this event.
* We are wrapping up the concept plans for Kynette Park and hope to have the plans out for bid in Mid-December.

**City Attorney Report**

Mr. Bobby Melton, the City Attorney, had no business to report.

**Mayor’s Report**

Mayor Wilson stated that the Trick or Treat event and the City Fun Day were both a great success and thanked all City Staff that participated. He invited everyone to attend the celebration for Mr. Robert Melton on November 18, 2024 at the City Hall at 2:00p.m.

**Council Board Reports**

No Council Board Reports.

**Additional Business**

Mr. Josh Hill stated that they recently hosted a water meeting and thanked Mr. Craig Helms and Mr. Mike Batchelor for attending, sharing with the resident, and listening to their concerns and questions. Additionally, he questioned why Main Street doesn’t receive any of the Hotel Motel Tax.

Mayor Wilson stated that it is in the state law.

Mrs. Allen thanked Councilman Wilder for hosting a townhall meeting.

Mr. Wilder stated that he and Commissioner Davis will host a Townhall Meeting every quarter on the weekends for the people that are unable to attend during the week. He stated that he was questioned as to why the city and county don’t come together and host meetings on the weekends. Mr. Wilder stated that it may be something we can look into for 2025. He thanked Councilmembers Hill and Allen for attending.

**Public Comments**

Ms. Jennifer Hudgins at 81 Hillsdale Road and Ms. Janice Pippen at 89 W. Morse Street, with the Friends of the Monroe County Library, invited Mayor and the council to the Christmas Read-a-thon on December 17, 2024 from 4:00p.m to 6:00p.m. Ms. Hudgins stated they would receive the invitation via email.

**Executive Session (if necessary)**

Mr. Wilder offered a motion to go into executive session for personnel matters at 7:17p.m. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilder offered a motion to end the executive session at 7:41p.m. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Hewett offered a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:41p.m. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously

**Minutes submitted by:**

**Shayla Furlow, Assistant City Clerk**