Minutes

Forsyth City Council Meeting

September 18, 2023

**Call to Order**

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

**Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation by Carol Cook, and Roll Call.**

Mayor Wilson led the Pledge of Allegiance. The invocation was led by Mrs. Carol Cook. In attendance for the meeting was Mayor Eric Wilson, Councilmembers John Howard, Chris Hewett, Greg Goolsby, and Mike Dodd. Also in attendance was the City Manager, Craig Mims, Assistant City Manager, Regina Ivie, and City Attorney, Bobby Melton. Four members of the council were in attendance for the meeting; therefore, all unanimous votes will be four votes (Howard, Hewett, Goolsby, and Dodd.).

**Approval of Agenda.**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of minutes from the council meeting held on September 5, 2023.**

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Bicentennial Celebration update by Gilda Stanbery.**

Ms. Gilda Stanbery advised the Bicentennial Celebration kicks off on Friday, September 22, 2023; it will be two and half days of fun. She provided a letter that was sent out to businesses indicating when and where streets will be closed downtown. Ms. Gilda recognized the individuals that worked hard preparing the Bicentennial Celebration. She advised they are over the budget which allows them to have a legacy program.

**Approval of temporary permit for the sale of alcoholic beverages for El Dorado Mexican Restaurant.**

Mrs. Rebecca Stone advised that Maria McDaniel from El Dorado Mexican Restaurant applied for a temporary alcoholic beverage permit to serve at the Bicentennial Celebration. She advised that they are a licensed business in Forsyth, they have valid alcohol licenses, and they paid the fees for participation and inspection. Mrs. Stone asked to have the permit fee of $100 per day waived for El Dorado.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to waive the permit fee for discussion. Seconded by Mr. Dodd.

Mr. Bobby Melton, the City Attorney, advised that according to how the ordinance was written the fee could not be waived. He also advised that El Dorado wants to sale margaritas (liquor) and the ordinance states they can only sale beer, wine, and malt beverages.

After a brief discussion Mr. Goolsby withdrew his motion to waive the permit fee.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the permit without waiving the fees and with the understanding that they only sale beer, wine, or malt beverages. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of temporary permit for the sale of alcoholic beverages for Fall Line Brewing Company.**

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to deny the approval of the temporary permit to sale alcoholic beverages. Seconded by Mr. Dodd.

Mayor Wilson advised the reason that could not obtain a temporary permit is because the ordinance states if a business does not have a license inside the City of Forsyth, they could not obtain a temporary permit.

Mr. Cody Ellis, Economic Development Director, advised that some businesses obtain temporary business licenses to conduct business in the city. He asked if a motion could be made to approve if they get a temporary license.

Mr. Goolsby withdrew his motion to deny the approval of the temporary permit to sale alcoholic beverages.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to approve the permit to sale alcoholic beverages if Fall Line Brewing obtained a business license by Friday, September 22, 2023. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of proposal to revise city ordinance governing temporary alcohol licensing.**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to table the approval of the proposal to revise the city ordinance governing temporary alcohol licensing until October 16, 2023, council meeting. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Wilson advised Mr. Mims, the City Manager, to schedule a work session to discuss the city ordinance.

**Update on Landscape needs in downtown area.**

Ms. Takemia Childs, Main Street Coordinator, advised that the downtown area around the square needs a little work and Lee Street Park needs a lot of work. She advised the irrigations need to be fixed and the park needs to look more inviting. Ms. Childs advised she is obtaining quotes and pictures to present to the council.

**Georgia Department of Transportation Project 0017177**

Mayor Wilson advised that he received a letter from Mr. Eric Duff, GDOT State Environmental Administrator, asking for input on the proposed project to install crossing signals on Tift College Drive which would include resurfacing and repaving; and to install concrete island that will be placed along Tift College Drive restricting trucks traveling eastbound from turning left onto Railroad Ave.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to consent to writing a letter responding to GDOT input request. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby; the motion carried unanimously.

**Davenport Public Finance, Doug Gebhardt to review investment options for funds at Truist Bank.**

Mr. Doug Gebhardt presented the different investment options for the funds that are held at Truist Bank. He advised they offer a Truist Institutional Advantage option which is a non-collateralized account with an interest rate of 4.7%, the Collateralized Deposit option with a fixed rate of 3.55%, investing in U.S. Treasury that provide higher yields from 5% to 5.4%, Insured Cash Sweep option with a 4.9% interest rate, and the various money market accounts with risk of loss of principal. Mr. Gebhardt recommended collateralized deposits with a rate of 3.55% or a liquid money market which is secured by U.S. governmental bonds.

After a brief discussion Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to use the collateralized deposit option for the funds held at Truist Bank. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of the GOV App proposal.**

Mr. Cody Ellis, Economic Development Director, presented a proposal for a city app that would give citizens inside the city better ways to communicate with city officials and the different departments regarding outages, street closures, traffic delays, and upcoming events. He advised that each department could update the app with information that citizens would need to know. It is a more effective version of see click fix. He advised it would take ten weeks to get the app up and working. Mr. Ellis advised it be around $20,000 for the design and development of the app and around $8,000 annually for maintenance.

Mr. Howard offered a motion to approve the proposal for the GOV App. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**Tabled agenda items from the September 5, 2023, meeting.**

1. **Bank of Dudley - Street Closure request.**

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to remove the Bank of Dudley-street closure request from the tabled items. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Howard offered a motion to approve the street closure request for Bank of Dudley. There was no second motion.

Mrs. Virgina Remick, from 626 Maynard Church Road, advised that the Circle of Care is limited on parking and requested they close Church Street.

Mr. Goolsby questioned if Dublin Construction needed the street closed or if he could fence the lot in.

Mr. Chris Norris, from Dublin Construction, advised he has a gas line, power line, and water line, going under N Phelps Street he would need access to it at some point and that he could fence in the lot.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to deny the request for closure of N Phelps Street for the Bank of Dudley construction; and request that the city of Forsyth close the eastern side of N Church Street from Adams Street to Morse Street with the stipulation that Dublin Construction erect a chain link fence connected to the bank construction site and down the center of N Church Street allowing thru traffic on the western side of Church Street; this does not give Dublin Construction use of the First Baptist Church parking lot however, the public will always have access when not in use. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby; the motion carried unanimously.

1. **Walter Goodson - unmaintained Street from Powell to Sharp.**

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to remove Walter Goodson-unmaintained Street from Powell to Sharp from the tabled items. Seconded by Mr. Howard; the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Walter Goodson questioned if the city could sale the unmaintained road or if it would be fixed.

Mr. Bobby Melton, the City Attorney, advised six people own property along the side of the unmaintained road. He advised that the Georgia Code Section, the city could close unmaintained road if everyone wanted it closed; and offer the property to each abutting owner. He advised that the city could set a price for the property and sell being that it is an unusable property.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to get a price associated with each piece of property that is abutting someone else’s property on the unmaintained Street from Powell to Sharp and present it to the owners. Seconded by Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

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

1. **Gresco - $15,483.68**
2. **Davis Plumbing - $49,873.00**

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve requisitions as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

**City Manager’s Report**

-Mr. Craig Mims, the City Manager, advised that:

-He and Mrs. Ivie met with MEAG to discuss the city’s supplemental power needs.

-The City’s new website has been updated and published.

-Monroe County has approved the repair of the radio system. The city’s cost is approximately 63k. The repair time is approximately four weeks.

-The Fire Department was awarded a FEMA grant in the amount of 55k, to purchase fire protection gear.

-Officer Bell and Officer Walker are now on shift and engaged in patrol activities.

-Our three-man electric crew returned safely after providing mutual aid to the city of Quitman during the most recent hurricane.

**City Attorney Report**

Mr. Bobby Melton, the City Attorney, advised several ordinances are being advertised in the Reporter for the October 2, 2023, council meeting: A city-initiated rezoning for Smith Road, N. Frontage Road parcel for Capitol Ridge Homes, and Trio Flex Group on Industrial Park Drive.

**Mayor’s Report**

Mayor Wilson invited everyone to come out and celebrate the City of Forsyth at the Bicentennial Celebration. He congratulated Coach Nelson on his 100th win that occurred on September 8, 2023. Mayor Wilson advised he attended the joint GMA - ACCG Legislative Policy Council in Lagrange from September 6-8, 2023.

**Additional Business**

Mr. Hewett advised that the hospital board will be meeting at the Hospital on Thursday September 28, 2023, at 5:30p.m.

Mr. Goolsby advised DDA held a meeting last week and swore in three new members: one including himself. He advised the city should consider planting some Forsythia’s around the square. They had an Eagle Scout that presented a presentation; he is taking on the park at Lee Street for his Eagle Scout Badge. Mr. Goolsby stated that we need to look into ways to utilize Lee Street Park.

**Public Comments**

Dr. Hambric Brooks advised The First Baptist Church is having a congregational hymn sing on Sunday, September 24, 2023, at 7:00p.m.

**Executive Session**

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to go into executive session at 7:09p.m. to discuss personnel matters and pending litigation and to include Attorney Ashley Brodie. Seconded by Mr. Goolsby; the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Goolsby offered a motion to end the executive session at 7:29p.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 7:32p.m. Seconded by Mr. Howard; the motion carried unanimously.

Minutes Submitted by:

Shayla Furlow, Executive Admin. Assistant