

CITY OF DAHLONEGA

WORK SESSION MINUTES June 21, 2012

The Dahlonega City Council held the regular monthly Work Session on Thursday, June 21, 2012 at City Hall. Members present were Bruce Hoffman, Terry Peters, Sam Norton, Ralph Prescott, Gerald Lord and Johnny Ariemma. Also present were City Manager Bill Lewis and City Attorney Doug Parks. Mayor Gary McCullough called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT:

Councilman Bruce Hoffman informed Council the City had a Law Enforcement Contract with the County from 1995 through 2003 with the exception of a couple of years. He further informed in speaking with Sheriff Stacy Jarrard he learned that the City zone can be controlled as the City wishes. This in no way means the City can control the law enforcement powers or duties of the officer however; the City can modify their hours, assignment suggestions such as festivals, concerts in park and other types of events that need security. Also by security standards, the City could be held liable for public events if no security is present. Most cities have a certain number of officers per person attending such events. He also informed he had met with Dr. Jacobs, NGCSU President and felt it was very important to utilize the college campus security when possible. At this time, City Manager Bill Lewis advised the Council to consider whether the City should be charging festivals a fee to cover the charge of the officer for security. Mr. Hoffman stated that Sheriff Jarrard had informed that per the Law Enforcement Contract that the City Manager has the power to move officers around as needed and use the control for the City's benefit. At this time, City Attorney Doug Parks informed the contract needed to create a wording for flexibility that will leave the City the right to a control clause to satisfy our insurance carrier. After further discussion, Councilman Hoffman advised Council if they chose to make changes to the contract, to take this time now to do so, before renewal in November.

CITY LOGO/CHAMBER SALE OF MERCHANDISE:

Mayor Gary McCullough informed Council that the Chamber had inquired about using the City logo on merchandise to sale at the visitors' center. Councilman Ariemma questioned if the logo needed to be trademarked or licensed before letting someone use it. Councilman Prescott asked what the cost would be to trademark the logo. City Attorney Doug Parks informed this was a relatively nominal process. After further discussion, it was the consensus of the Council that the logo be trademarked before allowing the use on merchandise for sale.

PARKING COMMITTEE:

Councilman Norton informed Council the parking committee met multiple times to review the parking study and to look at parking surveys in other areas. He further informed that the studies show that all aspects of the downtown area should be managed, and one of those is parking.

The Haas parking studies number one (1) recommendation was enforcement however, the committee did not want to set the level of enforcement. At this time, the committee is recommending the City Manager look at the following:

1. Signage – Paint a Ⓢ at intersections/highways to direct everyone where parking lots are located.
2. Time Limits – On critical areas and primary parking zones on the square. Use suggested parking study limit of two hours. The enforcement time would be from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and will still be free parking.
3. Monitored Enforcement – To check time limit of parking, whether it be marking tires or hand held readers.
4. Enforcement – Need to hire someone to work approximately 30 hours a week, with no benefits. Could possibly use the City bubble car for transportation.

Councilman Norton stated that the City needs to start somewhere to increase awareness of free parking and decide if we are at a point to implement a parking enforcement system. Councilman Lord stated that if tickets are given he feels this will only irritate visitors and it would not be worth the cost. Councilman Ariemma stated he feels the City should utilize the kindergarten property for parking. Councilman Peters stated this may not be the focus needed for today but what will be needed years later. He further stated it is better to plan for this now rather when it is needed. Councilman Norton recommended hiring someone to manage our parking issues, using a three hour limit on parking from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and increase signage on the streets and highways. He further recommended that City Manager Bill Lewis look at options for funding. At this time, Mayor McCullough requested that these recommendations be put in a letter to Mr. Lewis and be placed on a Council meeting agenda for approval. Councilman Hoffman requested that statistics for cost be given before going to Council for approval.

RECYCLE REQUEST:

Mayor McCullough informed Council that Gary Osley had presented an agreement to provide a dumpster and pick up the City's recyclables at no cost. The City will pick up the recyclables in the same manner and take to the old transfer station with no requirement of the City to sort the recyclables. Mr. Osley will then pick them up and take to the County site on Red Oak Flats Road. Councilman Norton stated the City would save on fuel cost with this agreement due to not having to take the recyclables to the County. Mayor McCullough advised Council this was something to consider and asked staff to review this agreement and obtain more statistics.

At this time, Councilman Hoffman questioned at what stage are we with the recycle bins that was presented by Deb Rowe, as a Lumpkin Leadership project. City Manager Bill Lewis informed the recycle bins should not be wood containers because of the cost for continued maintenance and also they need to be in keeping with the streetscape plan. Mayor McCullough requested that Mr. Lewis get in touch with Ms. Rowe with the concerns of the recycle bins.

ENTERPRISE PRELIMINARY BUDGET:

City Manager Bill Lewis presented a summary of the 2013 Water and Sewer Fund Budget by department. Mr. Lewis informed Council of the 2012-2016 projections that were performed by a rate consultant. These figures are to be used annually and will become effective October, 2012. After further discussion on the City's Bond and GEFA debt, Mr. Lewis further informed that staff could possibly have some in house recommendations to bring before Council at a later date. These recommendations would be a way to help with the revenue shortfall in 2015, due to the end of SPLOST proceeds.

At this time, financial consultant Sabrina Cape requested Council direction on the General Fund millage rate. Ms. Cape informed Council with the new regulations from the Department of Revenue, the advertisement of the five year tax levy does not need to state a tax increase. After further discussion, Councilman Norton stated he felt it was the consensus of the Council to post the five (5) year levy history, with a roll up of the millage rate to 4.632.

The Work Session was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.