

# **CITY OF DAHLONEGA**

## **WORK SESSION**

### **MINUTES**

**January 17, 2013**

The Dahlonega City Council held a Work Session on Thursday, January 17, 2013 at City Hall. Members present were Gerald Lord, Sam Norton, Bruce Hoffman, Johnny Ariemma and Terry Peters. Ralph Prescott was not present. Also present was City Attorney Doug Parks. Mayor Gary McCullough called the Work Session to order at 5:00 p.m.

#### **CHAMBER PRESENTATION:**

Chamber President Amy Booker gave a presentation on the Chamber activities during 2012. The presentation included Community Visioning, Events Production/Expo Enhancements, Delivery Value to Customers and Serving as a Voice for Business. Ms. Booker further informed that Old Fashioned Christmas and Six Gap continue to be an enhancement, with approximately six hundred (600) rooms being occupied and spending money in our local businesses. The Chamber also holds many programs such as Leadership Lumpkin, Business After Hours and approximately thirty (30) ribbon cuttings. Mr. Jay Markwalter, Tourism Director informed Council the Chamber was still working to attract the film industry. He further informed the festivals and events have made a tremendous impact on our tourism success and the Diving Bell has been the highlight of the year. Mayor and Council thanked the Chamber for all they do.

#### **BUDGET AMENDMENTS:**

Ms. Sabrina Cape, Financial Consultant informed Council the FY 2012 Budget Amendments had been made by taking the activity for the year and making adjustments in order for no audit findings. These amendments will be sent to the City auditors in order to complete the audit. Councilman Lord questioned the fund balance transfers from the General Fund. Ms. Cape informed a small amount of unbudgeted capital had been spent therefore; fund balance had declined from original budget of \$216,000.00 dollars to \$219,019.00. Councilman Ariemma questioned if we had met budget on alcohol tax revenue. Ms. Cape informed revenues were higher than expected. Mayor McCullough requested the budget amendments be placed on the February Council meeting agenda for approval.

#### **CHAMBER ALLOCATION PLAN:**

Ms. Sabrina Cape, Financial Consultant informed Council the Chamber Cost Allocation Plan was the same as in past years. Their estimate for Hotel/Motel Tax revenues was increased from \$149,000.00 last year to \$155,000.00 this year. All expenses seem to be in line with previous year and a compliance testing has been completed with no issues. Mayor McCullough requested the Chamber Cost Allocation Plan be placed on the February Council meeting agenda for approval.

#### **OLD WATER PLANT PROPERTY:**

City Attorney Doug Parks informed Council that he was working with GIRMA to identify if there were any liability issues with the transfer of this property to DDA. This finding will also determine the insurance policy position between the City and DDA and give an opportunity to set up DDA in the overall coverage if needed. Councilman Ariemma questioned whose responsibility

will it be to keep up the maintenance on the building? Mr. Parks informed when the note becomes due at year end; the City can have another interaction with DDA to make a decision at that time. He further informed that GIRMA's response will determine some decisions with the property in which more joint interaction will be needed between Council and the DDA Board. Mayor McCullough requested that this item be placed on the February Council meeting agenda for approval.

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

Mayor Gary McCullough asked for Council response on whether or not the City should require a one day event sponsor to have an off duty officer available. Councilman Lord informed that he did not feel this was needed for a one day event. Councilman Hoffman informed that an off duty officer should be required at events because of liability to the City. He further informed with Friday night music in the park, there was limited liability but, with movies in the park where there is a crowd of children, an officer should be present. Councilman Peters informed Council should discuss the need for a part time code enforcement officer. Mayor McCullough requested that further research be done to see if an umbrella policy could be purchased for these types of events and then charge a fee to the event holders to offset the cost.

Planning Director Chris Head requested Council direction concerning complaints due to traffic issues on West Main Street during festivals. Ms. Head questioned if closing West Main during the day of the festivals and detour down side streets could be an option. Councilman Lord informed he did not have a problem with detouring down side streets however; everyone needed to understand that the side streets are much narrower. Ms. Head also questioned if having an officer at the corner of the Chamber and Fudge Factory to direct traffic could be an option. Councilman Hoffman had concerns with citizens walking across on the cross walk with the street not being closed. Councilman Peters stated he was concerned with re-routing because this creates problems in other areas also. Councilman Norton stated he felt detour signs might be the best option.

**PARKING/NO PARKING SIGNS:**

Planning Director Chris Head informed Council there were concerns with overnight parking signs that were installed at Warwick and Choice. There have been complaints from residence that use these lots and also the City has no enforcement at night. Mayor McCullough informed the signs should be removed except for the one at Choice Street. Councilman Norton suggested leaving the sign at Choice Street and change the wording from no overnight parking to no overnight bus parking. After further discussion it was the consensus of the Council to remove all "No Overnight Parking" signs, except for the one at Choice Street and the wording would be changed to "No Overnight Bus Parking".

**SIGN ORDINANCE AMENDMENT/ROW SIGNS:**

Councilman Norton requested that an amendment be made to the Sign Ordinance 2008-4 Section 14.6, Line Item #4 which states, "Signs removed by the City will be destroyed after 14 days if they are not claimed. Councilman Norton requested that an amendment be added to state "however this holding period shall not apply to signs which were removed from any public right of way". Councilman Ariemma questioned if this could be a liability. City Attorney Doug Parks informed that Code Enforcement Officer Tim Martin takes pictures and documents these signs that are in the right-of-way before they are removed. After further discussion, Mayor McCullough informed this item will be added to the February Council meeting agenda for approval.

The Work Session was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.