

CITY OF DAHLONEGA

WORK SESSION MINUTES March 21, 2013

The Dahlonega City Council held a Work Session on Thursday, March 21, 2013 at City Hall. Members present were Sam Norton, Gerald Lord, Johnny Ariemma, Bruce Hoffman, Terry Peters and Ralph Prescott. Also present was City Manager Ron Thomas and City Attorney Doug Parks. Mayor Gary McCullough called the Work Session to order at 3:00 p.m.

Mayor McCullough requested an amendment to the agenda in order to move Item #4 – Discussion of Closing Block of South Meaders Street to Item #1.

DISCUSSION OF CLOSING BLOCK OF SOUTH MEADERS STREET:

Mayor Gary McCullough asked Dr. Jeff Ross Pastor of Dahlonega United Methodist Church to inform Council of their request. Dr. Ross informed Council that the Church had purchased additional property on the corner of Martin Street and wanted to open discussion with Council concerning closing a block of South Meaders Street to help control traffic flow. Council asked City Engineer Ricky Stewart of staff concerns. Mr. Stewart informed a sewer line was located on the street and would require an easement. He further informed this closure could cause issues with no outlet to get back to Park Street. Mayor McCullough informed there were approximately fifteen (15) parking spaces on this street and expressed concern with losing some of the spaces, with this street closure. Councilman Lord questioned if they had plans to replace any of the lost spaces. Dr. Ross informed at this time, they had no plans and were just beginning the discussion stages. Councilman Ariemma informed he had some safety concerns with people crossing the street and would like to see a short term plan for safety issues. After further discussion, Mayor McCullough informed Council will be open to more discussion at a later time, when plans are submitted.

SOUND SYSTEM PROPOSALS:

City Manager Ron Thomas informed that the current sound system had poor audio quality and needed to be replaced. He further informed staff had contacted several companies with three (3) responding to give an assessment of the issues with the current system. Staff received proposals from two (2) of those companies, Ace Wiring Systems and W. H. Platts, with staff recommending the proposal submitted by W.H. Platts. Councilman Lord questioned what were the warranties submitted. Mr. Thomas informed that Ace Wiring Systems gave a lifetime warranty on craftsmanship and W. H. Platts gave equipment warranties ranging from three (3) years to (5) years. Councilman Ariemma informed with the large difference in cost, he felt Council needed more information before making a final decision. Councilman Prescott informed he felt this should be put back out for bid. After further discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to consider the proposal submitted by W. H. Platts and be added to the April 1, 2013 Council meeting agenda for approval.

PROJECTS LIST:

Public Works Director Ricky Stewart informed Council he had included additional description on

each item however; the sidewalks was an on-going project, with each identified by priority. Councilman Lord requested that a schedule be included in the report that listed each sidewalk to be replaced and the date of completion. He stated this was not a complaint on the employee but, the list does not tell him what he needs to know. He further requested that a list also be given of the size and location of all the water meters that are being replaced. Mr. Stewart informed it was difficult to give an exact date for a project completion due to unforeseen weather conditions. Councilman Prescott informed he only wanted to see a project list by priority. City Manager Ron Thomas informed with the number of staff labor compared to the number of projects; with vacations and other issues that come up, these things will impact the list. After further discussion, Mr. Thomas informed Council he would work with Mr. Stewart to restructure the list to add all the requested items.

NOTEBOOKS, IPADS and LAPTOPS:

City Manager Ron Thomas informed that Council had requested staff to research the cost and feasibility of purchasing notebooks, ipads or laptops for meetings. Mr. Thomas further informed that a laptop with programs pre-loaded could be purchased at a lower cost. With the tablets being smaller, maps and other documentation being sent for review will use a lot more space. Also, most of them are Wi-Fi only and a data plan would need to be purchased. Councilman Ariemma informed that he had already tried his ipad for the meeting packets and it did not work well. He further informed that laptops were less expensive and would be more flexible with the type of documents they are reviewing. After further discussion, the consensus of the Council was to purchase laptops for use in the meetings, which will replace paper packets.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE RFP:

City Attorney Doug Parks informed the document was received from Chamber President Amy Booker and was a joint project for Lumpkin County and the City of Dahlonega with planning efforts from GMRC. Ms. Booker informed the RFP was for the development of a County and City wide ten (10) year strategic plan for a twenty (20) year vision. She further informed through the research of the committee information was gained for other potential visions, such as walking trails. Councilman Peters stated the RFP was very thorough and questioned the estimated cost of this long range plan. Ms. Booker informed it would be a range from \$25,000.00 to \$45,000.00 dollars with a broad array that could be negotiated. Councilman Ariemma informed that the Chamber should seek help from the private sector to fill this vision. Ms. Booker informed she did feel with the private sector having input in the project will help support the investing to see this vision be completed. Ms. Booker further informed more information on cost and outlines will be accomplished during future committee meetings.

CHAMBER CONTRACT REVISIONS:

City Attorney Doug Parks informed the Chamber Board of Directors met and approved the changes to the 2013 Tourism Contract by-laws in which an annual audit will be completed. With the fiscal year ending dates of the City and Chamber being different, this created the Chamber audit to fall every eighteen (18) months instead of annually, as the contract states. This has been amended in order for the Chamber audit to be on an annual basis in conjunction with the City's audit. Councilman Lord questioned if this audit would be available for public review. Ms. Booker informed yes, that the Chamber will be glad to share any information of the audit.

Mayor McCullough adjourned the Work Session at 4:51 p.m.