

CITY OF DAHLONEGA

SPECIAL CALLED MEETING/WORK SESSION MINUTES April 19, 2012

The Dahlonega City Council held a Special Called Meeting and Work Session on Thursday, April 19, 2012 at City Hall. Members present were Bruce Hoffman, Ralph Prescott, Gerald Lord and Terry Peters. Sam Norton and Johnny Ariemma were not present. Also present was Bill Lewis City Manager and Doug Parks City Attorney. Mayor Gary McCullough called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

Mayor McCullough requested a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made by Councilman Lord to approve the agenda as written, seconded by Councilman Prescott. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to say aye, motion carried unanimously.

PENDING LITIGATION:

At this time, Councilman Lord made a motion to suspend the City Council meeting until approximately 4:30 p.m. until all paperwork is provided, seconded by Councilman Prescott. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to say aye, motion carried unanimously.

Mayor McCullough informed due to the Council meeting being in a suspended status, Council would move into the Work Session at this time.

All Council members stated above were present and Councilman Johnny Ariemma also joined the Work Session at this time.

LUMPKIN YOUTH LEADERSHIP:

Ms. Rebecca Shirley informed Council she was approached by the Chamber requesting the City participate in the Youth Leadership Program. Ms. Shirley further informed there will be eleven (11) students that have been chosen to participate. They learned about City government and Downtown Development. Some of the topics discussed were leadership qualities, roles of government officials and DDA revitalization effort. They were given four life scenarios to complete a project and presentation.

At this time, Mayor McCullough welcomed all the students and informed Council was looking forward to their presentations.

The first group of students gave a presentation on what should the City do to assist with business start ups. The students suggested to help with advertisements, lower property taxes for the first five (5) years, build parking lots and fiber optics.

The second group of students gave a presentation on what should the City do about high traffic speeds in pedestrian areas. The students suggested increased fines, speed tables and additional signage.

The third group of students gave a presentation on how can the City retain young people to live and work downtown. The students suggested continuing to have recreational things for young people to participate in such as hiking, tubing, canoeing and cycling. They also thought it was important to continue our unique culture with the festivals, arts and history.

The fourth group of students gave a presentation on how can the City keep it's unique character for years to come. The students suggested continuing the music in the park, maintain the historical buildings, keep strict zoning regulations and keep the small town atmosphere.

Mayor McCullough thanked all students and expressed how proud the City was of them for their efforts and appreciated the time they put into these projects.

At 4:30 p.m., Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to reconvene the Special Called Council Meeting. A motion was made by Councilman Lord, seconded by Councilman Peters. Mayor McCullough asked for any discussion, hearing none, he asked for all in favor to say aye, motion carried unanimously. Councilman Norton was not present.

Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to move into executive session. Councilman Lord made a motion to suspend the Work Session and move into executive session for the purpose of pending litigation, seconded by Councilman Prescott. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to say aye, motion carried unanimously. Councilman Norton was not present.

The Special Called Meeting was reconvened at 5:45 p.m. Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to suspend the executive session until Council could speak with their attorney. Councilman Lord made a motion to suspend the executive session, seconded by Councilman Prescott. Mayor McCullough asked for any discussion. Councilman Peters informed he had a concern because, due to a matter of this importance; there is one Council member still not present. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to suspend the executive session, raise their hand, all opposed like sign. Motion carried by the following vote: Bruce Hoffman, Ralph Prescott and Gerald Lord. Voting against the motion: Terry Peters.

At this time, Mayor McCullough requested that Council move back into the Work Session.

GENERAL FUND REVENUE – 2013 BUDGET:

City Manager Bill Lewis informed Council the City had been advised by the County Tax Commissioner of a decline in the property tax digest of approximately \$98 million dollars. Mr. Lewis further informed at this point we do not know to what extent this will affect the City digest. With reduced property tax collections, reduced fees from development and needed revenues for capital projects, this will create significant 2013 budget issues for the General Fund. The projected shortage of revenue is \$427,360.00 dollars. Mr. Lewis advised Council of revenue and fund balance recommendations to consider in order to help with the lost revenues. He also made recommendations to reduce expenditures without reducing services. Mr. Lewis further informed

the reason these items are being brought before Council at this time is, the State digest approval procedure requires the City to complete the documents needed in which tells the Tax Commissioner the millage to use for the City property tax bills. This must be submitted to the Tax Commissioner by July 1st in order for her to include it with her digest packet by August 1st. Therefore, the City must estimate the millage requirement soon in order for advertisements and public hearings to meet State law. Mayor McCullough informed Council there would be additional Work Sessions to discuss the revenue projections.

At this time, Mr. Lewis informed Council that the City is aware of the hard work and cooperation of County Tax Commissioner, Rachel Pruitt. She has been a valuable member our budget team and on behalf of Council and staff, we thank her.

QUOTES FOR COUNCIL LAPTOPS:

City Clerk Lou Stewart informed Council the two quotes for six laptops that were presented are from Dell and Best Buy. These quotes were given on equipment that was similar in options such as screen size, hard drive and memory. After further discussion, Councilman Prescott requested further research on prices or consideration for Council to be given a monthly allowance to use their own personal laptops. Mayor McCullough informed Council they would not be allowed to give themselves this allowance therefore; it would not be put into effect until after the next election. Councilman Lord informed he did not want the City to purchase him a laptop in the current economy.

SEXUALLY ORIENTED BUSINESS DISTANCE MODIFICATIONS:

City Attorney Doug Parks informed Council the document in their packet identifies the regulations to be adopted. Section 1.6 states that adult entertainment establishments shall be located on properties in the City of Dahlonga that are zoned in the industrial zoning classification. It also states it must be located four hundred (400) feet from any residential zoning, church, school, college, public park or children daycare facilities. Also the same distance is required from any other parcel of land containing an adult entertainment establishment and from any parcel of land which any establishment licensed by the City to sell alcoholic beverages or malt beverages or wine for the consumption on premises. Councilman Lord asked if there was a reason for the distance to be set at four hundred (400) feet. Mr. Parks informed the law requires that the distances be reasonable, but not to exclude this type of business all together. After further research, it was found four hundred (400) feet to be the maximum distance.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ORDINANCE UPDATES:

City Attorney Doug Parks informed the HPC ordinance has not been amended or updated for some time. Some amendments and clarifications have been made and none of which, should be controversial. Also, the HPC will receive new guidelines and by the end of 2012 the HPC ordinance should be upgraded and clarified completely. Councilman Peters asked how involved the HPC members had been in this process. Mr. Parks informed they were not so much involved in this process however; they were deeply involved in other aspects of these updates. Mr. Parks further informed these are responsive HPC issues that have occurred and feels HPC members will be very pleased with these changes.

LANDSCAPE CONTRACTS:

City Manager Bill Lewis recommended for Council approval to take the two existing landscape contracts in house. These duties will be given to City employees and in doing this there will be a savings of \$47,000.00. Councilman Prescott asked if additional employees will be hired. Mr. Lewis informed it would be performed by existing staff. Councilman Hoffman questioned the expenses that the City would incur in doing this. Mr. Lewis informed the expenses had already been deducted from the contract prices which was a total of \$55,000.00. The Mayor questioned if this needed to be added to the May agenda for approval. Mr. Lewis informed that both contracts expired May 1st and would not need approval.

WIMPY MILL ROAD PRELIMINARY CITY PARK PHASES:

City Engineer Ricky Stewart presented the preliminary plans for a City Park on Wimpy Mill Road in three different phases. Mr. Stewart informed Council this was the same design throughout each phase with more extravagant levels in each phase therefore; it could be built in phases as funds allowed. City Manager Bill Lewis informed Council that Rebecca Shirley was researching for grants that might be possible for this type of park. After further discussion, Council requested staff to present a cost for this project and to inquire with the Department of Natural Resources to see if it was a possibility for the City to donate the property and have DNR to build the park.

The Work Session was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

At this time, Councilman Lord made a motion to move back into executive session, seconded by Councilman Prescott. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor raise their hand, motion carried unanimously. Sam Norton was not present.

Council members returned to Council chambers at approximately 7:25 p.m. At this time, Councilman Prescott made a motion to continue the City Council meeting on Monday at 1:00 p.m. and suspend the executive session in the same process, seconded by Councilman Lord. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to raise their hand, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously. Sam Norton was not present.

APPROVED BY ME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2012.

Gary McCullough, Mayor

Attest:

Lou Stewart, City Clerk