

CITY OF DAHLONEGA

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES August 6, 2012

The Dahlonega City Council held the regular monthly Council meeting on Monday, August 6, 2012 at City Hall. Members present were Bruce Hoffman, Gerald Lord, Terry Peters, Sam Norton and Johnny Ariemma. Ralph Prescott was not present. Also present were City Manager Bill Lewis and City Attorney Doug Parks. Mayor Gary McCullough called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Prayer was led by Mayor Gary McCullough and Gerald Lord led the Pledge to the American Flag.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to amend the agenda in order to add an executive session for Council to discuss land purchase. A motion to add the executive session on the agenda as item number fourteen (14) was made by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Lord. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to raise their hand, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

MINUTE APPROVAL:

Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 2, 2012 Council meeting. A motion was made by Councilman Lord, seconded by Councilman Peters. Mayor McCullough asked for any corrections or additions, hearing none, he asked for all in favor to say aye, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Councilman Ariemma informed Council that the feasibility of mausoleums was discussed at the Retreat and questioned if there had been any research on this project. City Manager Bill Lewis informed that he had not included this on the project list because he did not think this item was a priority. He further informed if Council wanted this item moved up to a higher priority, he would be glad to move forward on the research. After further discussion, Mayor McCullough requested that this item be placed on the August Work Session agenda.

WIMPY MILL ROAD PARK:

Mr. George Butler informed Council that he was present to speak on behalf of Mr. Bill Cason and some residents of Sky Country concerning the proposed park to be located across from the entrance to Sky Country. He further informed that Mr. Bill Cason had expressed an interest in helping fund a non-traditional proposal for a concept study of the property. He and Mr. Cason also had met with City Manager Bill Lewis and City Attorney Doug Parks and discussed submitting a proposal and a letter was submitted to Council concerning this initial idea.

Mr. Butler stated that Mr. Lewis and Mr. Parks gave them valuable criticism, such as the proposal was not appropriate to create a visual park foundation due to problems with maintenance. Also, if an agreement was made, a reversion could be added for property to go back to the City if not maintained. He further informed Architect Mr. Richard Owens has been hired to do a concept drawing for this property and needs approximately six (6) months to finish the concept proposal. With no funds for this project, they were proposing funding through public and private partnership which could be used to relieve the City of maintenance obligations. They felt this particular location with active parking and picnic tables next to the water will cause an issue with trash and other undesirable activity. Mr. Butler requested that Council delay their vote and wait for Mr. Owens to finish his concept before moving forward with the plan that the City has proposed.

Mr. Alec Carlson, President of the Sky Country Home Owners Association requested that Council delay their vote for Phase 1 of the park on Wimpy Mill Road. He informed the HOA had concerns with parking and the proposed use of the park however; they were not in favor of Mr. Butler's alternate plan and had no input in this design. He requested that the vote be delayed until the October meeting so the Association can be given more time to design a plan that will work for residence and the City.

Councilman Norton questioned if taking down the fence and filling the basins would hinder any future design plans. Mr. Butler responded that their design included using the dirt from grading to fill in the basins. After further discussion, Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to defer the vote until a committee be formed with members from Sky Country, to meet with City Engineer Ricky Stewart and staff. After a plan has been agreed upon, the committee and staff needs to meet with Bill Lewis, Doug Parks, Richard Owens and Bill Cason. A motion was made by Councilman Ariemma for a Sky Country committee to be formed and to meet with City staff, seconded by Councilman Hoffman. Councilman Lord stated he was not in agreement, because he felt that all citizens should be able to use the proposed park. At this time, Councilman Norton informed that he does not want this site to further deteriorate and instead of delays, he suggested staying within keeping of the drawings the City has. Mayor McCullough informed that an agreement be made and this item be added to the October Council meeting agenda for approval. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor of the motion to raise their hand, all opposed like sign, motion carried by the following vote: Voting for the motion: Bruce Hoffman, Terry Peters, Sam Norton and Johnny Ariemma. Councilman Lord abstained.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Mayor McCullough informed all department reports had been submitted and asked for any questions. Councilman Peters questioned if all water and sewer revenues listed on the June financial statement were current. City Manager Bill Lewis informed that they were current. Councilman Ariemma questioned property taxes being at 96% collection. Mr. Lewis informed that other revenues were included in that figure, such as penalties and fifa charges.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS:

City Manager Bill Lewis informed Council he was requesting approval of Resolution 2012-7, which was to restrict funds to be used as a onetime cash injection in 2015 for debt relief. He

further informed this was discussed at the last work session and the amount to be restricted was \$426,000.00 dollars. A motion to approve Resolution 2012-7 was made by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Peters. Mayor McCullough asked for any discussion. Councilman Peters questioned if the legal issue had been resolved. Mr. Lewis informed yes, that it had been. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to say aye, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

City Manager Bill Lewis informed Council he was requesting approval of the meter replacement program in which funds of \$122,523.00 were to be used for this project. He further informed this

will be approximately fifty-two (52) meters, ranging from a 2" meter to a 4" meter. These meters have not been replaced with radio read meters and we believe this will enhance water revenue. Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to approve the use of these funds for meter replacement. A motion was made by Councilman Peters, seconded by Councilman Norton. Mayor McCullough asked for any discussion. Councilman Peters asked what the time frame was to replace the meters. Mr. Lewis stated this was a high priority and informed the completion should take approximately six (6) to eight (8) months. After further discussion, Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to raise their hand, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

City Manager Bill Lewis informed Council that he was requesting approval for Resolution 2012-4 which extends the DDA boundaries to include property located on Alicia Lane. The request for this property to be included in the DDA boundaries was made by the property owner Jimmy Anderson. Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2012-4. A motion was made by Councilman Peters, seconded by Councilman Norton. Mayor McCullough asked for any discussion, hearing none, he asked for all in favor to say aye, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY:

City Attorney Doug Parks informed Council the request for adoption of Resolution 2012-8 was to initiate the rezoning of certain parcels along South Chestatee Street to be consistent with the Downtown Master Plan. Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2012-8. A motion was made by Councilman Ariemma, seconded by Councilman Hoffman. Mayor McCullough asked for any discussion. Councilman Lord questioned if there will be rezoning of individuals properties and if so, the property owners need to be notified before rezoning. Mr. Parks informed Council there was no need to involve property owners until recommendations are made. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor of the motion to say aye, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

City Attorney Doug Parks informed Council the request for adoption of Resolution 2012-9 was to authorize Council to proceed with the process of rezoning to a category that is consistent with the recommendations from GMRC and Planning Staff. Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2012-9. A motion was made by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Hoffman. Mayor McCullough asked for any discussion. Councilman Ariemma questioned the potential use for the old water plant property in order to use it to take silt out of the reservoir. City Manager Bill Lewis informed that he met with Sky Country residents and in order to initiate drawing silt from the reservoir, would require extensive engineering and piping expenses. These expenses would be greater than the benefit, due to usage only being every five (5) to ten (10) years. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor of the motion to raise their hand, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilman Gerald Lord informed that he had worked very hard to improve the relationship between the City and County since being on Council but, had little success. He further informed this is a new day and with a new Chairman and Commissioner this gives a new chance to improve this relationship. He further informed that he would like to see everyone working together to accomplish the things to make Dahlonga and Lumpkin County a better place to live and work.

Mayor McCullough informed that the new Chairman called him and wanted them to meet at least once a month and the Mayor stated he was looking forward to the new transition.

DISCUSSION:

Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to authorize the City Manager to proceed with the research to determine if outsourcing of the operations of the Water Treatment Plant should be considered. He further informed that this had been discussed in a Work Session but had not been voted on by Council. A motion was made by Councilman Norton to authorize the City Manager to investigate outsourcing of the O&M of the Water Treatment Plant and to have research completed in sixty (60) days, seconded by Councilman Ariemma. Councilman Peters questioned what is the level of investigation, is it preliminary or whole. City Manager Bill Lewis informed if Council was looking for a level of detail to whether or not it would profitable to privatize the operations, this will be a very detailed process. However, if Council is looking for information from other cities and communities to see what their problems or successes are, this could be accomplished in sixty (60) days. To determine if profitable or not, this would be a very detailed and intensive RFP process. Councilman Norton informed he did not feel they were ready for an RFP, but rather to investigate the feasibility of privatizing the O&M of the City Water Treatment Plant and make determinations as the information is given to Council. City Manager Bill Lewis informed he will do what Council wants; he just needs very specific directions. Councilman Ariemma informed that the City had a new expensive facility and he had concerns about turning it over to someone who might not take care of it however, he was optimistic to move forward with a preliminary research of the results from other municipalities. City Manager Bill Lewis informed Council that he could do research and make notes from talking to other cities to put into a preliminary report and present it to Council in sixty (60) days. If Council feels this is not enough information to make a decision, then we can go further at that time. After further discussion, Mayor McCullough asked for approval of a motion for Bill Lewis to proceed with obtaining information for a preliminary report to be presented to Council within sixty (60) days. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor of the motion to raise their hand, all opposed like sign, motion carried by the following vote: Johnny Ariemma, Sam Norton, Terry Peters and Gerald Lord. Voting against the motion was: Bruce Hoffman.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to move into executive session for possible land purchase. A motion was made by Councilman Lord, seconded by Councilman Norton. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to raise their hand, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

The executive session was adjourned at 7:35 p.m. and the regular Council meeting was called back to order.

Mayor McCullough asked for a motion from Council. Councilman Lord made a motion to authorize staff to purchase two (2) pieces of properties in the City of Dahlonega, seconded by Councilman Norton. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to raise their hand, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

Mayor McCullough entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVED BY ME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2012.

Gary McCullough, Mayor

Attest:

Lou Stewart, City Clerk