

**DAHLONEGA CITY COUNCIL  
PUBLIC HEARING  
APRIL 7, 2008**

The Dahlonega City Council met at City Hall on April 7, 2008. Council members present were Michael Clemons, Sam Norton, Terry Peters, Guy Laboa and Bill Scott. Mayor Gary McCullough called the public hearing to order at 5:00 p.m.

City Attorney Doug Parks conducted a public hearing to discuss the current traffic flow and the possible change of some streets to one-way for the Mechanicsville area which includes the following streets: Choice Avenue, Maple Street, Martin Street, Arcadia Street, Ash Avenue, Riley Road, Schultz Avenue, Tolbert Street, South Meaders Street, South Grove Street, Alma Street, South Derrick Street, Stargel Street and Pine Street. City Engineer Ricky Stewart presented the proposal. Mr. Stewart advised that Arcadia and Martin Streets are very narrow and he proposed to widen them in order to accommodate two-way traffic. Other streets were proposed to be designed for one-way traffic. Mr. Stewart advised that all one-way streets would be only one block to reach two-way streets.

Citizens were asked to give their comments. Business owner Dudley Owens asked if there are any changes from the first proposal. Mr. Stewart advised that Choice Street is being proposed as a two-way street. Mr. Owens recommended that the council look at each street individually to see what the impact would be for businesses. He also recommended that Arcadia between South Park Street be a two-way street. Eddie Green, resident of South Derrick, requested that South Derrick be a two-way traffic street. Jim Kinnard, resident of Choice Street, stated that he is opposed to Choice Street being made one-way. Susan Southard, resident of Choice Street, stated that she is concerned about the proposed traffic flow for Choice Street. She was also upset with the manner in which residents were notified of the hearing. She stated that she did not receive a notice but was informed by her neighbors. Mike Young, Regions Bank employee, stated that the Regions Bank Drive-thru access would be cut off if the current proposal is enacted. He stated that other businesses in this area would also have a problem with the proposed traffic flow. Jeffery Knight advised that he is the co-owner of 4-Seasons Realty located at the intersection of Arcadia and South Chestatee. He advised that the proposal would adversely affect his customers. He recommended that no changes be made. Tim Richmond, resident of 83 Choice Street, stated that if the streets are widened they would become a major thoroughfare and change the entire area. He stated that he was opposed to giving any right-of-way to widen the streets. City Attorney Doug Parks advised that the council is not ready to make any decisions but to receive comments from all residents. Several hearings would be held before any decisions are made. Resident Bonnie Richmond stated that if Grove Street is widened it would result in truck traffic and tremendous damages to streets. Property owner Thomas Scanlin stated that he is concerned about changes to traffic flow. Widening streets would only result in increase speeding and drainage problems. Bob Roberts, resident of Arcadia Street, stated that he agrees with Mr. Scanlin that widening the street will result in more traffic and erosion problems. Sue O'Hanlon, resident of South Derrick Street, stated that the proposal would

result in confusion for older residents. In order for citizens to go to the hospital they would have to cross more traffic to enter the highway from Shultz. She stated that people already run stop signs and traffic will be faster if the street is one way. Other residents will have farther to drive just to get home. Becky Brown, resident of South Derrick Street, stated that this is a quiet neighborhood and one-way traffic would increase speed problems. Business owner, Cindy White, stated that the proposal would impact parking for her business. Dennis Brookshire stated that he had been a resident of the area for fifty years and the proposal would take off his front porch in order to widen the street. He urged the council to leave the streets like they are and to make no changes. Arcadia Street resident Jim Parks spoke in favor of changes for Arcadia due to safety concerns. He stated that developers will build in this area for rentals to college students and this will result in more traffic. He stated that he wanted to go on record that he wants to preserve the area but to also keep the area safe. Heather Adams stated that she was speaking for her Grandmother. She stated that her Grandmother is very upset with the proposal. There is no reason to widen the streets as this will only increase traffic.

Mayor Gary McCullough stated that all comments will be taken in consideration and another public hearing will be held before any changes are made.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

**REGULAR MEETING  
DAHLONEGA CITY COUNCIL  
APRIL 7, 2008**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Dahlonega City Council met in regular session on April 7, 2008 at City Hall. Council members present were Michael Clemons, Sam Norton, Terry Peters, Bill Scott and Guy Laboa. Mayor Gary McCullough called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and opened the meeting with prayer. Guy Laboa lead all present in the Pledge to the American Flag. Mayor McCullough welcomed students representing the NGCSU Governmental Classes.

**MINUTE APPROVAL:**

A motion was made by Michael Clemons to approve the minutes of the regular council meeting held on March 3, 2008. This motion was seconded by Sam Norton and approved by all members present. A motion was made by Bill Scott to approve the minutes of the special council meeting held on March 26, 2008. This motion was seconded by Terry Peters and approved by all members present.

**CITIZENS:**

Roger Jones, a resident of Calhoun Road, urged the council to work on speeding problems on Calhoun Road. He advised that he requested that speed breakers be installed seven years ago but this request was denied due to residents that were in opposition.

Colleen Green requested a beer, wine and distilled spirits license for the Rhapsody Grill. Council members were informed that all paperwork has been completed. The new background check has not been returned by the state but it was recommended that the license be approved as Mrs. Green is a current license holder for the Holly Theater and that background check showed no record. A motion was made by Michael Clemons to approve the licenses. This motion was seconded by Bill Scott and approved by all members present.

Lumpkin County Literacy Coalition representative Diane Stephenson spoke to the council concerning the coalition's prevent illiteracy program. Ms. Stephenson advised that approximately 7,500 Lumpkin County citizens do not have a high school education and that approximately one half of those citizens cannot read, write, or do simple math. The goal of the Literacy Coalition is to teach kids to read before they enter school through supplying age appropriate books to each child at no cost. Currently the cost for this program is \$48.00 per child and there are currently 600 children enrolled. The Literacy Coalition is requesting assistance with funding. They are proposing to hold A Bear To Remember Festival. This Festival will be held April, 2009 which is the same date as the Bear on The Square Festival. An auction will be held in the fall of 2009 and the coalition is requesting to display 25 to 30 bears in different businesses. Mayor

McCullough advised that the council will add this request to their next work session agenda.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

Mayor McCullough advised that reports have been received from the Dahlonega Planning and Code Enforcement Departments for the month of March, 2007. A report was also submitted by the Dahlonega Corridor Committee and Dahlonega Historical Preservation Commission for activities during the month of March, 2007. Dahlonega Chamber of Commerce Director Gary Powers advised that the chamber is the second busiest chamber in the State of Georgia, second only to Savannah. Forty articles have been written concerning Dahlonega this year alone. Mr. Powers announced that volunteers are needed to assist with Tour de Georgia which will be held April 25. This event will be televised world wide. The Bear on the Square Festival will be held April 18-20. Mr. Powers recommended new signs to replace the current No Skateboarding Signs. Mayor McCullough advised this item will be considered at the council's next work session.

The Hancock Park Pavilion Design Committee presented a sketch of the proposed design for a new pavilion for Hancock Park. A public hearing will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15. This design will also be presented to the Dahlonega Historical Commission for their recommendation.

**FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2008-2-UNSANITARY CONDUCT ORDINANCE:**

A motion was made by Michael Clemons to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2008-2-Unsanitary Conduct Ordinance. The motion was seconded by Bill Scott and approved by all members present.

**FIRST READING AMENDMENT 1-ORDINANCE 2080-10-95:**

A motion was made by Michael Clemons to approve the first reading of Amendment 1 to Ordinance 2080-10-95-Speed Zone Enforcement Ordinance. This motion was seconded by Sam Norton and approved by all members present.

**CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS:**

City Manager Bill Lewis presented an investment report for new bank accounts associated with the issuance of bonds. A motion was made by Guy Laboa to approve the opening of four new accounts associated with the issuance of bonds as follows: Bond Series 2008-Capitalized Interest, Bond Series 2008-Project Fund, Bond Series 2008-Debt Service Reserve Fund and Bond Series 2008-Renewal and Extension Fund. Also approved was the closing of the 1973 Bond Account. This motion was seconded by Terry Peters and approved by all members present. A Comprehensive Finance Policy was presented to the council. A motion was made by Michael Clemons to approve the policy. This motion was seconded by Bill Scott. Guy Laboa recommended that the policy be more specific. After discussion the motion was denied. Council members stated that they would like to postpone the adoption of the policy to give more time for amendments. The council was informed that .937 acres was acquired from the GADOT.

This property is located below the Post Office and was originally obtained as right-of-way property for the connector. A motion was made by Sam Norton to give City Attorney Doug Parks authority to dispose of the property by sealed bids with the right to reject any and all bids. This motion was seconded by Guy Laboa and approved by all members present. The council was informed that Georgia Power is requesting that an easement be signed in order for Georgia Power to install an additional power pole to supply electricity to the Catholic Church's new facility. A motion was made by Michael Clemons to approve this request. The motion was seconded by Bill Scott and approved by all members present. Sam Norton requested that the council consider going underground with all utilities whenever feasible. In this case the parking lot would have to be torn up to install underground utilities.

**MAYOR'S COMMENTS:**

Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority Representative Rebecca Shirley requested that a Resolution be adopted concerning the Preserve America Program. DDA is applying to become a Preserve America Community. The benefits of the designation include: White House recognition, A certificate of recognition, A preserve America Community road sign, eligibility for Preserve America grants, Authority to use the Preserve America Logos, Listing in a Web-based Preserve America Community directory, National and regional press releases and enhanced community visibility and pride. A motion was made by Sam Norton to approve the attached Resolution. The motion was seconded by Bill Scott and approved by all members present. Council members complimented Ms. Shirley's work with the DDA as an NGCSU Intern.

**CITY ATTORNEY'S COMMENTS:**

City Attorney Doug Parks advised that Bill Hardman has requested that the council approve a corrective deed to clarify an original deed easement instead of fee simple title to the property. This would give Mr. Hardman unimpeded access to his property. A motion was made by Michael Clemons to approve this request. The motion was seconded by Terry Peters and approved by all members present.

**COUNCIL'S COMMENTS:**

Sam Norton made a motion that the City Engineer personally interview all property owners between South Park Street and Riley Road on Arcadia concerning their desires to make Arcadia Street One-Way. He also asked that a cost analysis and inventory of all sign changes be made and that this information be presented to the council for action. This motion was seconded by Bill Scott and approved by the following vote count: Voting for the motion were Clemons, Laboa, Norton and Peters. Bill Scott voted against the motion.

Bill Scott requested that the Dahlonega Nugget print a report concerning the financial condition of the city. The Dahlonega Nugget failed to print any information concerning the city's FY 07 Audit Report. Mr. Scott announced that during the week of April 28 he plans to resign his position as Council Member in order to run for Lumpkin County Commission District One. Mr. Scott stated that his eleven years as a council member has been a good experience.

Guy Laboa asked when the Watershed Protection Plan needs to be approved by the council. Mr. Laboa stated that the total burden for monitoring will fall on the city and there are many cost implications associated with these requirements.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by Guy Laboa to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. This motion was seconded by Sam Norton and approved by all members present.

APPROVED BY ME THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2008.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY CLERK