

CITY OF DAHLONEGA

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES July 1, 2013

The Dahlonega City Council met in regular session on Monday, July 1, 2013 at City Hall. Members present were Johnny Ariemma, Sam Norton, Terry Peters, Gerald Lord, Ralph Prescott and Bruce Hoffman. Also present was City Attorney Doug Parks. City Manager Ron Thomas was not present. Mayor Gary McCullough called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The prayer was led by Ralph Prescott and the Pledge to the American Flag was led by Bruce Hoffman.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

Mayor Gary McCullough asked for a motion to approve the revised agenda. Councilman Lord made a motion to amend the agenda to add the recognition of Lt. Col. Bob O'Brien and add under the Mayor Comments the approval of audits for hotel/motel tax and alcohol/food sales ratio, seconded by Councilman Norton. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to say aye, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

PROCLAMATION:

Councilman Prescott informed that it was his honor and privilege to present the proclamation to Lt. Col. Bob O'Brien and wife Michele. Councilman Prescott read the proclamation which spoke of Col. O'Brien's military career achievements and his great contributions to the City of Dahlonega.

CITIZENS:

Mayor McCullough informed Melissa Frady has applied for a package sales license as the registered agent for Dahlonega Discount Foods. Mayor McCullough asked City Clerk Lou Stewart if all documents were in order. Ms. Stewart informed that all paperwork was in order with no issues. Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to approve. Councilman Hoffman made a motion to approve the license, 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.

MINUTE APPROVAL:

Mayor McCullough asked for a motion to approve the minutes of June 3, 2013. A motion to approve as written 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:

Mayor McCullough informed Council that all department reports had been submitted and asked for any questions or comments. Finance Director Kimberly Stafford informed Council that effective June 6, 2013 the transition to a bi-weekly payroll was implemented. Ms. Stafford further informed the expanded version of the financial report will continue with remainder of funds and

welcomes Council's input on the new format. Councilman Ariemma stated that the new financial format was very good and gives a lot of information.

FINANCE DIRECTOR COMMENTS:

Finance Director Kimberly Stafford informed Council the request for approval of budget amendment #201304 is for the W. K. Dickson water supply study. Mayor McCullough asked for a motion of approval. A motion to approve the budget amendment was made by Councilman Prescott, seconded by Councilman Peters. Mayor McCullough asked for any discussion, hearing none, he asked for all in favor to say aye, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

MAYOR COMMENTS:

Mayor McCullough informed that due to the first Monday in September being Labor Day, Council had agreed to change the Council meeting to Monday, September 9, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. The time was changed to 5:00 p.m. instead of 6:00 p.m. because of a possible Planning Commission meeting at 7:00 p.m. A motion to approve the Council meeting date to September 9th at 5:00 p.m. was made by Councilman Prescott, seconded by Councilman Lord. Mayor McCullough asked for all in favor to say aye, all opposed like sign, motion carried unanimously.

Mayor McCullough requested approval from Council to start the procedures for an audit of the hotel/motel tax and the alcohol/food ratio. He further requested upon approval, that City Manager Ron Thomas proceed with the process for the alcohol audit after the annual reports are submitted in October.

Councilman Prescott made a motion to approve the hotel/motel audit, seconded by Councilman Norton. Mayor McCullough asked for any discussion. Councilman Hoffman informed that the City has a contract with the Chamber to pay them monthly revenues from the hotel/motel tax and to bill them for an audit cost is not within the current contract. City Attorney Doug Parks informed that the audit will take approximately three (3) to four (4) months to complete and a new annual contract with the Chamber can be revised for the new year. Councilman Ariemma informed that he felt the City should address issues when they arise and not randomly choose establishments to audit. City Attorney Doug Parks informed that hotel/motel is a tax and the City is responsible for proper collection. Councilman Hoffman stated he felt that an audit should be done on a complaint basis only or have GMA review the records and if they determine an issue then call for an audit. After further discussion, 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 was Ralph Prescott, Gerald Lord, Terry Peters and Sam Norton. Voting against the motion was Bruce Hoffman and Johnny Ariemma.

Councilman Peters made a motion to approve the alcohol/food ratio audit, seconded by Councilman Norton. Mayor McCullough asked for any discussion. Councilman Hoffman questioned if the audit will be conducted on the 50/50 ratio only. City Attorney Doug Parks informed it would also include tax revenue. Councilman Ariemma informed that if a restaurant ratio was not exactly 50/50, he felt it was unfair for them to be audited. Councilman Norton informed that the City has restaurants that sell alcohol, not bars and they were all made aware of the of the 50/50 ratio regulation. They agreed to abide by this regulation when the license was approved and by having audits the City is simply having them comply. Councilman Hoffman informed that he does not agree with an audit on a random basis but, feels it should be based on report issues or complaint basis. After further discussion, 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 was Ralph Prescott, Gerald Lord, Terry Peters and Sam Norton. Voting against the motion was Bruce Hoffman and Johnny Ariemma.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilman Lord informed that he would like to congratulate Councilman Norton for being elected as Chairman of the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission. All members of Council congratulated Councilman Norton for this achievement.

Mayor McCullough informed the GMRC Annual Meeting will be held in Dahlonega on September 26, 2013.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mr. Jim Lovell, owner of The Nut Shoppe questioned Council on the plans and direction the City was taking for the whole downtown area and was there any plans to include East Main Street. Mayor McCullough informed the City has a Downtown Master Plan that he could review at City Hall. He further informed that we have received a grant for approximately \$700,000 dollars and have applied for Tiger Five which is an eight million dollar grant to complete the Downtown Master Plan. A brick sidewalk will be constructed from Pueblo's to join Main Street however; there are no available funds for additional projects at this time. Councilman Norton informed that a crosswalk will be installed across Main Street also to help with pedestrian traffic.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor McCullough entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m. A motion was made by Councilman Lord, seconded by Councilman Prescott and approved by all members present.

APPROVED BY ME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2013.

Gary McCullough, Mayor

Attest:

Lou Stewart, City Clerk