

CITY OF DAHLONEGA

WORK SESSION MINUTES July 17, 2014

The Dahlonega City Council held a Work Session on Thursday, July 17, 2014 at City Hall. Members present were Mitchell Ridley, Sam Norton, Terry Peters, Bruce Hoffman, Michael Clemons and Roman Gaddis. Also present were City Manager Bruce Georgia and City Attorney Doug Parks. Mayor Gary McCullough called the Work Session to order at 3:15 p.m.

Mount Hope Cemetery Mapping Project – GMRC – Faith Bryan:

Ms. Faith Bryan and Mr. Joe Rothwell from GMRC gave a slide presentation on the Mt. Hope Cemetery Mapping Project which will include a searchable database and photo links. Staff can use this database to update records and it can also be used for online searches.

MuniCode Presentation – Faye Creel:

Ms. Faye Creel gave a slide presentation on codification of ordinances. Ms. Creel informed they will go through all the City ordinances and correct any discrepancies and make sure they are in line with State Statues. These items would then be discussed with the City Attorney and City Council, then a book would be completed with all ordinances in order. The ordinances would also be put on the website and they would be searchable. The original cost would be \$15,000.00 dollars, payable over a two year period, with an annual cost of \$550.00 for website support. This process would take approximately one year to complete.

Streetscape Update – Robert & Company:

Mr. Robert Benson gave a slide presentation of the Streetscape project areas and the different phases. Phase 1 will include two blocks on West Main Street and one block of South Chestatee Street. Phase 2 will include South Chestatee Street down to the first entrance to NGC. Phase 3 will be the remainder of South Chestatee Street, Main Street and some smaller street such as Church and Waters. Mr. Benson informed that the underground utilities cost of 1.2 million had been reduced to \$250,000.00 by using the highest strung cables from Georgia Power and only the lower wiring areas will be underground. He further informed that the sidewalks will be wider, street will have bicycle lanes and the project will work only on one side of the street at a time and will make useable before moving to the other side.

Scope of Work for Wastewater Treatment Plant – W. K. Dickson:

Mr. Trey Wingate distributed documents which included the process to meet with EPD for them to provide how to address the demand of water consumption and give a long range plan of processing wastewater. The process also includes meeting with USDA and GEFA for funding of the Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades and application would need to be made by October or November. The second phase of the process would be the infiltration analysis in order to be proactive in maintenance and management of the system which will help in grant and low interest funding.

Budget – Including Tax Millage – FY 2015 – Sabrina Cape:

Interim Finance Director Sabrina Cape informed Council that Tax Commissioner Rachel Pruitt had submitted the property tax digest and that last year one mill was worth \$179,000.00 dollars and this year

it is worth \$181,000.00 dollars. After further discussion of a slight roll up in the tax millage to 4.806 which would generate approximately \$13,000.00 dollars it was the consensus of the Council to have no roll up and leave the tax millage at the same rate as last year, which is 4.739. Ms. Cape further informed there will be a .25 cent increase in the water rate schedule but, no increase in the base rates. She further informed there was good improvement in water sales due to the replacement of meters and development. The Solid Waste department had budgeted for a new garbage truck and she recommended a lease of no longer than four to five years instead of a purchase due to shortage of funds.

GMA Services for Collecting Outstanding Utility Account Balances – Sabrina Cape:

Ms. Cape informed that the Utility Billing department will send an excel spreadsheet for collection of uncollected water bills. She explained the customer termination process and that they were given ample time to pay. There is also no fee associated with this service unless funds are collected. It was the consensus of Council to move forward with this service.

Cash & Equity Reserve for Capital Projects – Sabrina Cape:

Ms. Cape informed that each of these funds is to set a value for fund balance. The general fund is your fund balance and the water and sewer fund is your net assets. The City fund balance policy is now set at a six month reserve and the fund balance is at \$2.6 million dollars with \$1.4 million remaining unrestricted which decreases each time it is used for budget balancing. Ms. Cape recommended leaving the fund balance policy at a six month reserve and unrestricting the funds set aside for the construction of a new City Hall instead of changing the reserve policy to three months. Mayor McCullough asked that this item be placed on the August 4th Council Meeting agenda for approval of unrestricting the City Hall funds.

Travel Policy:

Interim Finance Director Sabrina Cape informed Council the Travel Policy submitted was in draft form and was distributed only as a baseline for discussion. Council consensus was that travel approvals for staff should be handled by the Manager and approval for Council should be the Mayor. It was requested that this item be included on the August 21st work session agenda for further consideration.

Tap Fee Consideration – Student Housing:

Mr. Dean Stroker discussed how student housing is currently an issue. Mr. Stroker feels there is an opportunity for more students to live here and therefore spend their money here. However, the structure of the tap fees is a financial burden and would like the consideration of one master meter, managed by the owner. Two proposed projects will be under the same consideration – one off Happy Hollow Road at Leger Road (Stroker) and one across from Charlie’s Grocery (Johnny Dixon). The consensus of Council was one master meter per building. It was requested the Ordinance Update be placed on the August 4th Council Meeting agenda for approval.

Request for Qualification for Residential Property:

Downtown Development Authority Director, Joel Cordle, reported the 1st draft of the RFQ is ready for review and approval. It was requested that this item be placed on at the August 4th Council Meeting. The property will also need a quit-claim deed from the City to the DDA in order to move forward.

Ordinance 85-2 – Amendment for Wine Tasting With Wine Package Sales License:

Mr. Curtiss requested an Ordinance amendment for package sales in order to have wine tasting for package wine sales only. He further asked for a waiver of the \$1,500.00 monthly food sales requirement. It was the consensus of the Council to amend the Ordinance to include wine tasting however; no waiver

of the \$1,500.00 monthly food sales requirement. Mayor McCullough requested this item be placed on the August 4th Council meeting agenda for approval.

Alcohol Reporting:

City Clerk, Lou Stewart, reported she will be conducting a class on the new electronic reporting process for all consumption on premises alcohol license holders.

September Council Meeting Date:

September Council Meeting will be held September 3, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

The Work Session adjourned at 7:00 PM.