

GALAX CITY COUNCIL
Minutes
July 12, 2010

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on July 12, 2010 at 7:30 pm.

At 7:30 p.m. Mayor Mitchell called the meeting to order with the following council persons present and they are as listed: Councilman Lazo, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilwoman Crouse, and Councilman Webb. Councilman Garner was not in attendance.

Councilwoman Plichta prayed the opening prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Manager Keith Barker called for nominations from council for the appointment of Mayor. Councilman Webb motioned that C.M. Mitchell be appointed to another term as Mayor. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Councilman Lazo-yea, Councilman Plichta-yea, Vice Mayor Greene-yea, Councilwoman Crouse-yea, and Councilman Webb-yea.

Mayor Mitchell called for nominations from council for the appointment of Vice-Mayor. Councilwoman Plichta motioned that Willie Greene be appointed to another term as Vice-Mayor. Councilman Webb seconded the motion and is was unanimously approved by the following votes: Councilman Lazo-yea, Councilman Plichta-yea, Mayor Mitchell-yea, Councilwoman Crouse-yea, and Councilman Webb-yea.

Councilman Webb motioned to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on June 14, 2010 and the minutes of the called meeting on July 1, 2010. Vice-Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Councilman Lazo-yea, Councilman Plichta-yea, Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice Mayor Greene-yea, Councilwoman Crouse-yea, and Councilman Webb-yea.

A Public Hearing was held regarding the USDA/Rural Development for funding of Courtroom Security Measures. This was the advertised date for the public hearing. Mayor Mitchell opened the floor for comment. No comments were made and Mayor Mitchell closed the public hearing. Council was not required to take any action regarding the funding.

A Public Hearing was held regarding the USDA/Rural Development for funding of a Galax Volunteer Fire Department Ladder Truck. This was the advertised date for the public hearing. City Council approved application for this grant at the May 24, 2010 meeting. The application is to replace the 1971 Quint Ladder truck currently in use. The total grant application is for \$500,000 with \$200,000 in grant funds and \$300,000 in loan funds from USDA. Mayor Mitchell opened the floor for comment. No comments were made and Mayor Mitchell closed the public hearing. Council was not required to take any action regarding the funding.

Chief Ron Passmore of the Galax-Grayson EMS briefed City Council on the possibility that the City may need to provide funding to the service each quarter. Efforts have been made over the last 6 months to reduce operating costs as revenue and transports reduce. This year's operating budget represents a 10% reduction in operating costs and revenue projections. Councilman Webb noted that this is a service that is very important and we must continue to provide support.

Keith Barker presented Council with a request to declare American Electric Power as sole source provider for the East Stuart Drive. He briefed Council that in 2008, City Council approved a series of projects for VDOT to pursue in the City. One included the replacement and upgrade of lighting fixtures along Rt. 58/E. Stuart Drive. VDOT has proceeded with the design and believed at the time that they had a contract with AEP to perform the work. They have discovered however that they do not have a contract for this type of work with AEP and have requested that funds be spent through the City. In order to meet procurement law and let the project proceed, AEP must be declared a sole source provider on the project. As they own the poles, it would restrict other contractors from performing this work, and they can perform the work at a much lower cost than other companies. The City's attorney has advised us that we can declare AEP to be a sole source provider on this project. The estimated cost is \$600,000. He asked that City Council declare AEP to be a sole source provider on this project so VDOT can complete the design and construction drawings. Councilman Lazo questioned if the project was needed. Mr. Barker explained that the project will benefit the City, especially in areas that are currently without lighting. Councilwoman Plichta asked how it would affect the City's power bill. Mr. Barker explained that the City pays a flat rate for each fixture that is currently in place, and the project would essentially be replacing these fixtures. Councilman Webb motioned to name AEP as a sole source provider for this project. Vice-Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Councilman Lazo-yea, Councilman Plichta-yea, Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice Mayor Greene-yea, Councilwoman Crouse-yea, and Councilman Webb-yea.

Keith Barker asked City Council to appoint a new council representative to the planning commission to replace former Councilman Davis. Councilwoman Crouse stated she would be interested in serving on the planning commission. With no objections it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Councilman Lazo-yea, Councilman Plichta-yea, Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice Mayor Greene-yea, and Councilman Webb-yea.

Keith Barker explained that Rooftop of VA Cap has advised that Council needs to appoint a new council representative to the Rooftop of VA CAP Board of Directors to replace Councilman Davis. This board meets the third Monday of every other month with the next meeting on July 19 at 12:00 pm. Vice-Mayor Greene stated he would serve on the board. With no objections it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Councilman Lazo-yea, Councilman Plichta-yea, Mayor Mitchell-yea, Councilwoman Crouse-yea, and Councilman Webb-yea.

Keith Baker explained that CM Mitchell's appointment to the Crossroads Board of Directors expired July 1. Mayor Mitchell served as the representative from Galax and he has agreed to serve another term if desired by council. Vice-Mayor Greene motioned to re-appoint Mayor Mitchell to the Crossroads Board of Directors. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Councilman Lazo-yea, Councilman Plichta-yea, Vice Mayor Greene-yea, Councilwoman Crouse-yea, and Councilman Webb-yea.

Chief Rick Clark of the Galax Police Department asked Council to approve the closing of Grayson Street on August 3 for National Night Out. He explained that the event has grown and received both state and national recognition (1st in Virginia, #11 nationally). The coalition has asked that City Council approve closing off a larger area in order to provide sufficient space for the event. He asked that Main St from Oldtown to Center, and Grayson St from Jefferson to Rex Ln., be closed for the event. Councilwoman Plichta motioned to approve the road closure for the event. Vice-Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes:

Councilman Lazo-yea, Councilman Plichta-yea, Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice Mayor Greene-yea, Councilwoman Crouse-yea, and Councilman Webb-yea.

Mayor Mitchell read a resolution proclaiming August 3, 2010 as National Night Out in Galax, Virginia. Vice-Mayor Greene motioned to accept the resolution. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Councilman Lazo-yea, Councilman Plichta-yea, Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice Mayor Greene-yea, Councilwoman Crouse-yea, and Councilman Webb-yea.

Keith Barker spoke to council concerning use of funds that have been set aside for the Revolving Loan Housing Program (RLHP) and making them aware of a use for them for a downtown structure. The funds in question are received as part of the North Central Housing Project and per DHCD, must be used for approved projects. City Council approved the RLHP a few years ago, however only one applicant has made use of the funds. Staff had approached DHCD about using the funds for façade improvements in our downtown project, however that request was denied. The building known as the Colonial Theater was no longer eligible for our façade program due to lack of funds, however DHCD was approached about using the RLHP funds towards apartment renovations provided the owner matched those funds on a dollar for dollar basis for exterior work. DHCD accepted this use of funds. Bids were received in the amount of \$30,000 for the interior work and the owner has agreed to escrow \$30,000 with the City to use towards exterior façade work. The City will contract with the contractor and owner to complete the work. Vice-Mayor Greene motioned to approve the use of the funds towards this project. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Councilman Lazo-yea, Councilman Plichta-yea, Mayor Mitchell-yea, Vice Mayor Greene-yea, Councilwoman Crouse-yea, and Councilman Webb-yea.

At 8:30 p.m. the meeting was adjourned.

Mayor

Clerk