

Galax City Council

Minutes

July 10, 2017

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on July 10, 2017 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: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

Councilman Helmick prayed the opening prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on June 12, 2017. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

This was the date set for City Council to appropriate the City of Galax FY2018 Budget which was approved at the June 12, 2017 meeting. The FY2018 Budget amounts:

- General Fund Budget (including DSS) - \$17,803,219
- Utility Fund Budget - \$ 5,542,790
- Stormwater Fund - \$ 129,500

Mayor Mitchell thanked Mr. Barker and staff for all their hard work on the budget. Councilman Garner made the motion to appropriate the City of Galax FY2018 Budget. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Mayor Mitchell announced that this was the date set for City Council to appropriate the City of Galax FY2018 Galax School Budget in the amount of \$15,131,020 with \$3,986,291 in local operating funds. The School Budget was previously approved at the May 8, 2017 Council meeting. Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to appropriate the City of Galax FY2018 Galax School Budget. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Mayor Mitchell welcomed Josh Lewis, Executive Director of Virginia Industrial Advancement Alliance (VIAA). Mr. Lewis gave Council an update on VIAA, formerly the Virginia A-Corridor.

Keith Barker informed Council that we announce that we have been approved for a number of VDOT grants we applied for which included:

- Sidewalk Replacement at McArthur St (Anderson St. to Swanson St) - \$294,028
- Traffic Signal Replacement at McArthur St and Swanson St. - \$395,052
- Paving on E. Stuart Drive (3 grants) - \$437,210

Mr. Barker informed Council the total grant awards were \$1,126,290 with approximately \$58,000 required as match on the sidewalk replacement project. Those match funds would come from the Stormwater Utility Fund in FY2018 and FY2019. The traffic signal and paving grants were funded at 100% with no local match. He said we had been waiting on agreements from VDOT before proceeding with any advertisements for engineering services. A budget amendment would be required for FY2018 when it is determined how the actual spending would occur during the fiscal year. Mr. Barker explained that in order to proceed with the paving projects, Council had been asked to adopt a resolution which would authorize the City Manager to sign all documents and also agree that the City would cover cost overruns on these projects. Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to approve the VDOT resolution. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Mayor Mitchell informed Council that a request from District III had been received asking Council to reappoint Councilman Garner to the board and to appoint an alternate. City Manager Keith Barker currently serves as the alternate. Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to reappoint John Garner to the District III board. Councilman Helmick seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea. Councilwoman Crouse made the motion to reappoint Keith Barker as alternate to the District III board. Councilman Helmick seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Keith Barker informed Council that waste hauler permit applications for 2017-18 had been received. The requests were from JDM, Grayson County, Waste Management, and Waste Industries to continue to provide solid waste dumpster service in Galax. Waste Industries showed a price change, however some fees were increased and others decreased from their 2016 approval. Fees for JDM, Grayson County, and Waste Management remained the same. Mr. Barker explained that some documents were still outstanding from a couple of the companies, but asked approval for all vendors contingent on all application items being received. Councilman Davis made the motion to approve all of the waste hauler application for 2017-18. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

Keith Barker informed Council of Councilman Helmick's request to discuss and consider abandonment of underdeveloped alleys within the City. Mr. Barker explained the current process for abandonment of an alley would be for an adjacent property owner(s) to make the request to Council. If Council was willing to consider the abandonment, the owner would have an attorney prepare all advertisements for public hearings and notifications. If Council approved the request, then the parcel would be abandoned and the owner and attorney would be responsible for deeds, any surveys, etc. The abandoned alley would then be split equally among all adjoining property owners. Mr. Barker stated he wasn't sure what the requirement would be for abandoning multiple alleys but he would check with the City Attorney as to if or how this would be done. He said there was no way to tell yet the number of alleys that would truly be eligible for abandonment due to non-use, lack of utilities, non-buildable, etc. but he was working on a map to determine what may be eligible. So far, 58 alleys totaling approximately 14 acres are being looked at. Mr. Barker said none of the downtown alleys were included in the 58 and wouldn't be considered. There was a brief discussion among Council members. Councilwoman Crouse asked if property owners had voiced a concern in obtaining abandoned alley property. Councilman Helmick said there was interest from some several property owners regarding the issue. Councilman Garner spoke against the issue. He said he felt that we should consider abandoning alleys as property owners make the requests known as in the past. He said that it would be an injustice to the property owners and the City by pushing the issue on everyone. He went on to say there may be property owners who are not interested in obtaining alley property adjacent to their property. Councilman Helmick said he and Mr. Barker had previously discussed the idea of possibly forming a committee and creating a policy to review the alleys that remain after narrowing down the list. Some alleys couldn't be closed due to utility right of ways, future utility construction, etc. Council agreed to carry the issue over to the next meeting in August for consideration.

Keith Barker informed Council that the City has requested that Council authorize a public hearing for the August 14, 2017 Council meeting in order to consider a FY2017 Budget Amendment. Mr. Barker explained with the completion of the bonds for the football field and fire truck, we needed to amend the budget to accommodate those funds coming in during FY2017. Since the increase was over 1%, he said we needed to advertise a public hearing. He closed by saying other revenue and expenditure items would be discussed at that time also. Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to set the August 14 meeting as a public hearing for an amendment to the FY2017 City Budget. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

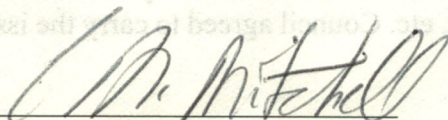
At 8:40 p.m. a motion was made by Councilwoman Crouse to enter into closed session under the following Codes of Virginia:

Prospective Business or Industry, § 2.2-3711.A.5 of the Code of Virginia - Discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community.

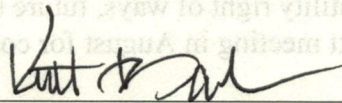
Councilman Garner seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

At 9:26 p.m. Council reconvened in open session. Mayor Mitchell certified that no items other than those allowed under the cited Virginia code section were discussed and no action was taken, with the following affirmation: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, Councilman Davis – yea, and Councilman Helmick – yea.

ADJOURNMENT at 9:26 p.m.



Mayor



Clerk