

Galax City Council
Minutes
August 12, 2013

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on August 12, 2013 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, Councilman Webb, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, and Councilman Lazo.

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

Mayor Mitchell recognized Sgt. Chris Brown on his retirement from the Galax Police Department. Chris served for 26 years, from 1987 to 2013.

Councilman Webb made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on July 8, 2013. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

Keith Barker, City Manager, briefly discussed new legislation which requires that we provide disability insurance to new full-time employees hired after January 1, 2014. VRS is the default provider unless we opt out and seek coverage elsewhere. The rate from VRS is currently listed at almost 1% of salary (\$.91 per \$100) which is high based on the opinion of our consultant. At this time our insurance consultant is recommending that we delay our decision until November as he is soliciting quotes through the private sector.

Gary Dillon, Dept. of Criminal Justice Services presented the Galax Police Department re-accreditation. Mr. Dillon told council that only 87 of the 300 departments receive this honor. This is the 3rd re-accreditation under Chief Rick Clark.

Galax Grayson EMS was recognized and awarded the Outstanding EMS Agency for the Southwest Virginia Region of Office of EMS. Chief Ron Passmore was present to explain that GGEMS is now 1 of possible 11 agencies statewide that are now eligible for this same award at the state level and will be awarded at the Governors Awards Ceremony held in Norfolk this November.

Mike Ayers was introduced by Keith Barker as the Recruitment & Retention Officer for the Galax Fire Department. This position is funded through a SAFER Grant for 4 years. Mr. Ayers spoke on his duties and activities that he is undertaking as part of this grant.

Keith Barker informed Council that Judy Taylor-Gallimore, Director of Finance, has provided a list of delinquent real estate taxes and is requesting authorization to move forward with

publication. Mr. Barker told Council that State Code requires that City Council authorize the Director of Finance to proceed with publication of the delinquent real estate tax list. The list reflected values as of June 30, 2013. Councilwoman Crouse made the motion to approve the publication of the delinquent real estate tax list. Councilwoman Crouse made the motion to approve the request. Councilman Webb seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

Council was informed by Keith Barker that the City of Galax and Chestnut Creek School of the Arts have been approved for a \$75,000 Rural Enterprise Grant (RBEG) from USDA for the purchase of equipment for the proposed woodworking shop. Council was asked to approve the USDA resolution that was presented in order to complete the paperwork for the grant. Councilman Garner made the motion to approve the resolution. Councilman Webb seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

Keith Barker asked Council to review and consider a joint resolution which was explained by Mr. Barker and Chestnut Creek School of the Arts Director, Chris Shackelford. The CCSA Woodworking Studio grant application through the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is being reviewed at the federal level. They asked that we verify all funding sources by early September, including the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification Commission (VTIC) funding request of \$125,000. Mr. Barker explained that we have received favorable responses from VTIC staff on our application, and have spoken to Sen. Carrico to seek his support as chairman of the funding committee; however the VTIC does not meet until September 26 to award final approval. By adopting the proposed joint resolution, this does not commit the City to provide funding from our budget, but says that we will work with CCSA to secure the remaining funding necessary to complete the project. CCSA had a called meeting to consider the same resolution. Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to approve the 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, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

Keith Barker announced to Council that the City has received a SRTS Programs grant from VDOT which will pay for a part-time SRTS Coordinator (18 months); 30 bikes and helmets for bike safety training and a bike “lending library;” consultant services to develop a Galax School Zone Plan with a uniform traffic control plan; and traffic vests and lighted wands for police crossing guards. The award is for \$54,750 and there is no match. Council approved the grant application and Galax School Travel Plan on Sept. 10, 2012 and authorized the City Manager to execute any required documents. Mr. Barker asked Council to amend the revenue budget the revenue budget (10.3240.0334) by \$40,000 and expenditure budget (10.7211.0000) by \$40,000 for FY2014 to reflect funding that will occur in this fiscal year. Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to approve the budget amendment. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea,

Councilman Garner – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.


Keith Barker reported to Council that the City has been awarded 4 grants from Mount Rogers PDC. One is an infrastructure and planning technical assistance grant for a preliminary engineering report for improvements to the Wastewater Treatment Facility. The other three awards are for construction projects, which are the Creekview Drive Pressure Reducing Valve Station Replacement, McArthur Street Waterline Replacement, and an Emergency Portable Generator Connection at the Water Treatment Plant. The grant awards total \$57,625 and require an equal cash match. Council budgeted for these projects and expenditures in the current budget. No action was required of Council.

Council was informed that Mr. Bob Kirby has resigned from the SREC Board as he has been hired as the new SREC Counselor in the Wythe/Bland offices. His term was through June 30, 2015 so approximately 2 years still remain on his term. Councilman Webb made the motion to appoint City Manager, Keith Barker to the SREC board. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

Council was asked that we consider adopting A Day of Service Resolution proposed by the MRPDC. This resolution encourages individuals to provide a day of service to their community by assisting to feed the hungry, protect and enhance the environment, as well as strengthening our communities. The proclamation encourages these activities to happen between September 15-29, 2013. Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to adopt the proposed resolution. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell – yea, Vice Mayor Greene – yea, Councilman Garner – yea, Councilman Webb – yea, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Lazo – yea.

Council adjourned at 8:10 p.m.


Mayor


Clerk

