

Galax City Council
Minutes
April 25, 2016

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on April 25, 2016, 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, and Councilman Davis. Councilman Lazo was absent.

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

Vice Mayor Greene made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on April 25, 2016. 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, and Councilman Davis – yea.

Keith Barker addressed Council regarding the FY2017 Budget. He said that part of the FY2017 Budget included borrowed funds for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Design as a bond, with funds being recovered when we secure the final DEQ loan for the project. He said that we were proceeding to finalize items needed for that bond. This bond would be re-paid between August and September 2017 when the final loan is secured from DEQ for the WWTP project. Mr. Barker asked for Council's permission on behalf of the City to seek bond funds to complete the Rt. 58 Reserve Blvd. Safety Improvement project and our FY2017 paving. The current FY2016 budget included language to pursue bond funds for the Rt. 58 project, however the delays with VDOT pushed the project from completion in FY2016 to FY2017. Council was asked for permission to also add funds for the FY2017 paving with the hope that we would be able to combine paving for the Rt. 58 project and the regular paving in order to secure a better price. Mr. Barker explained that a portion of this bond would also go to begin making our regular payments to the Galax Schools in September. He said over the last few years we have delayed making our regular payments to the schools until November when tax revenue became available. With changes and delays in state funding, and capital needs from the schools, the recommendation from Mr. Barker and Ms. Taylor-Gallimore was to begin making our payments in September. The total bonds pursued would be General Funds 1.5 M and Utility Fund \$600,000. This item was carried over to the May 9th Council meeting.

Bill Sturgill, Galax Schools Superintendent, was present to discuss the proposed FY2017 Galax City School Budget. With Council's approval, a public hearing could be scheduled on May 9. Once the public hearing has been held with Council being satisfied, the budget could be approved at that meeting so the schools can issue teacher contracts. Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to set May 9th for the public hearing for the Galax School FY2017 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, and Councilman Davis – yea.

Bill Sturgill discussed the replacement of the Galax High School football field as a continuation of the budget discussion earlier. Mr. Sturgill updated Council on work the school board had undertaken in looking at a conversion of the current football from natural turf to artificial turf. He said the current field had moved from a field that essentially was used for football games only to a field that now serves multiple sports as a practice and playing field. He noted with 3 football teams, 3 soccer teams, band, P.E., etc. using the field; there was little time for recovery of the grass. While final pricing was to be determined through bids, the estimated cost was \$700,000 and would be paid from the schools capital account over a three year period.

Bill Sturgill informed Council that the Galax Schools have elected to use the higher alternate VRS rate for FY2017 in their budget. Since this was not the recommended VRS Rate, the School Board and City Council must both adopt a resolution for an alternate rate. The rate they selected was 8.88% vs. 7.39% set by VRS. Councilman Garner made the motion to approve the resolution as presented. 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, Councilwoman Crouse – yea, Councilwoman Plichta – yea, and Councilman Davis – yea.

Crystal Cregger, Wytheville Community College, gave an update on WCC and presented their FY2017 Budget Request.

Aaron Sizemore, Executive Director – MRPDC, gave an update on MRPDC and the services they provide to our region.

Judy Taylor-Gallimore, Director of Finance, gave a presentation to City Council concerning our current decal program and the possibility of eliminating vehicle decals in FY2017. She said changes had been made in our Finance Office now that would assist in collecting unpaid fees associated with the decal program. These changes were not in place before when decals were eliminated and we saw a drop in collection revenue. She felt now that we are better prepared to eliminate the decals and move towards a December collection for personal property tax and the decal fee. She also felt mechanisms were in place to recover unpaid fees. Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to approve the elimination of vehicle decals in FY2017. 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, and Councilman Davis – yea.

Susan Clark, Dir. Of Galax Dept. of Social Services, was present and gave an update on the CPS Program and to recognize April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Keith Barker informed Council of the following board appointments which were set to expire on June 30. All are eligible for reappointment:

- Planning Commission – Margo Crouse
- Board of Zoning Appeals – Roger Martin
- Recreation Advisory Board – Larry Spangler, Steven Archer

- IDA – Mandy Archer
- Library Board – John Nunn

Mr. Barker said with Council's permission, we would reach out to all the individuals listed and see if they were interested in reappointment. If not, we would begin running advertisements and seeking letters of interest for appointment. All were in agreement to contact the board appointments.

At 9:10 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 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, and Councilman Davis – yea.

At 9:20 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, and Councilman Davis – yea.

ADJOURNMENT at 9:20 p.m.



Mayor



Clerk

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