

Galax City Council

Minutes

March 26, 2018

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on March 26, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

At 6:30 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 Plichta, and Councilman Davis. Councilman Helmick was absent and Councilwoman Crouse arrived later in the meeting.

Mayor Mitchell accepted a motion made by Councilman Garner at 6:30 p.m. to enter into closed session under the following Code of Virginia:

- **School Board Appointments - Personnel Matter § 2.2-3711 A.1 of the Code of Virginia**
Candidates for employment; the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, discipline, salaries, compensation, or resignation of employees.

Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Plichta, and Councilman Davis. Councilwoman Crouse arrived after the vote.

At 7:35 p.m. Council reconvened in open session. Mayor Mitchell certified for the closed session 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, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Plichta, and Councilman Davis.

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

Mayor Mitchell welcomed newly hired Officers Eduardo Mata and Sarah Patton. Mayor Mitchell administered the Oath of Office to the new officers.

Councilwoman Crouse made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on March 12, 2018. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, and Councilman Davis.

Keith Barker gave an update regarding the Caldwell Cemetery. A letter was sent to the family members of the Caldwell Cemetery making the request for the City to take the cemetery over. Mr. Barker stated in the letter that was sent, there were conditions that the City felt needed to be met in order to consider taking over the cemetery. The family had reviewed the letter and were in agreement with the terms, but the signed letters had not been received at the time of the meeting. Mr. Barker said the family also understood that if Council agreed to take on maintenance, we would not begin the work until the survey and transfer of property occurred. Council agreed to address the Cemetery Policy which was the next item on the agenda before making any comments on the update given by Mr. Barker.

Keith Barker presented Council an outline for a possible cemetery policy for when we are asked to take over operations for a private family cemetery. Mr. Barker said he had tried to see what may be required to consider other cemeteries, but believed the remaining few would very difficult to consider maintenance on. He looked at accessibility for equipment, where the cemetery resides, if it was still actively in use, etc. Also, he located 16 existing cemeteries of which 2 were relocated and 1 was outside of the City. Two were City operated, while others were church owned or privately operated. He was unable to locate one of the cemeteries. After a brief discussion, there was a consensus among Council members that it would be in the City's best interest for a cemetery policy to be adopted. The cemetery policy and consideration of taking over the Caldwell Cemetery was carried over to the next meeting.

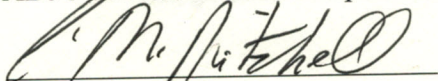
Keith Barker gave an update on the Galax Recycling Center located behind Galax Public Works. He said he hoped the center would be open within the next couple of days. Mr. Barker said the City rented a recycling dumpster until a new one that Grayson County had ordered would arrive. Recycle material would be limited to cardboard, plastic and aluminum/tin for now, but the new dumpster would be a four-bin setup and allow for paper to also be deposited. Mr. Barker said it depended on usage if we made modifications to those items at a later date. He said if there seemed to be great interest in the program, we do have the ability to add another gate and set two recycling dumpsters in the fenced area.

Demi Sexton, Family Financial Management Extension Agent, Twin County Financial Empowerment Network, gave Council an update on the financial empowerment network, upcoming events, and plans for 2018. Ms. Sexton manages the financial services that we fund through United Way of SWVA.

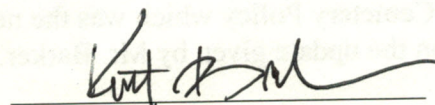
Keith Barker informed Council that we were notified by USDA that they required the elementary school property to be owned by the City. He explained when the title search was performed, the 1941 original deed was between the Grayson County School Board and the Town of Galax School Board. He said this appeared to be sufficient for USDA, however they now required that the deed be revised so ownership resides with the City. The Galax City School Board met on March 21 and adopted a resolution which authorized the transfer of the property and deed. Mr. Barker said the proposed resolution must be adopted by City Council to complete the process. Councilman Garner made the motion to adopt the resolution which would authorize the transfer of the school property to the City of Galax. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, and Councilman Davis.

Mayor Mitchell informed Council that we had received a draft contract from US Cellular for the equipment location on the GHS light pole. A review by our attorney determined that the City needed to hold a public hearing prior to signing the agreement. Mr. Barker said we had also asked for revisions to the agreement as presented. Councilman Davis made the motion to set April 9th as the date for a public concerning the lease of the light pole tower at Galax High School. 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, and Councilman Davis.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:40 p.m.



Mayor



Clerk