

Galax City Council
Minutes
April 23, 2018

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on April 23, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.

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

Mayor Mitchell recognized the following Galax High School students:

- Jack Haga – 2017/2018 VHSL 2A Swim/Dive Championships, 50 & 100 Yard Freestyle, 8th Place
- Savanna Lumpkin – 2017/2018 VHSL 2A Swim/Dive Championships , Girls 100 Yard Breast Stroke, 5th Place
- Elijah Funk, Eagle Scout, Boy Scout Troop #188

Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on April 9, 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, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

Mayor Mitchell announced this was the date set by Council to hear public comments on revisions to the parking ordinance. Keith Barker explained we had recently begun the enforcement of the revised parking regulations downtown and were questioned about who had the authority to issue citations. Mr. Barker said historically we had used Police Department administrative staff, in addition to officers, in the enforcement of this ordinance. He explained the City ordinance permitted a police officer to write a citation, however the state code was vague and our attorney believed that administrative staff were also permitted. Mr. Barker said currently our administrative staff had been noting violations but an officer reviewed and issued the actual citation. The amendment to the ordinance would permit a police officer, or other appointee of the Police Chief, to issue such citations. Mr. Barker closed by saying if Council approved the ordinance revision, the amendment would be in place at that time. With no public comments, Mayor Mitchell declared the public hearing closed. Councilman Helmick made the motion to approve the parking ordinance amendment. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following "yea" votes: Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

Keith Barker informed Council that he had spoken to School Superintendent Bill Sturgill regarding the Galax City Schools FY2019 Budget. He said the School Board had requested that City Council set May 14 as the public hearing for the budget. He said the school board would meet on May 8 to consider and approve their budget based on the most conservative state budget available at that time. The state had not approved a budget yet, the school board felt it must move ahead with approving a budget in order to issue teaching contracts. Mr. Barker closed by saying if revenue forecasts were better with a different state budget, the schools would seek an amended budget after July 1. Councilwoman Crouse made the motion to set May 14th as the public hearing for the FY 19 School Budget. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

Mayor Mitchell welcomed Dr. Dean Sprinkle who gave the annual update on Wytheville Community College and their current budget request.

Judy Taylor-Gallimore, Director of Finance was present to give an update to Council on offering online utility bill payments. She said she had been working with our software company, as well as working on steps of how to receive the payments. She said there would be a proposed \$3.95 convenience fee applied to payments up to \$300, a \$1.95 e-check fee, and a \$1.00 automated phone use fee in addition to the \$3.95 fee. There would be no fees for face to face transactions. Councilman Helmick made the motion to approve the fee proposal. Councilman Garner seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

Susan Clark, Director of Social Services gave presentations regarding Child Abuse Prevention Month (April), Adult Abuse Prevention Month (May), and Foster Care Month (May). Ms. Tammy Smith, our new DSS Director was also present and was introduced during the meeting.

Ms. Clark also gave an update on CSA costs and to make an additional budget amendment request. Ms. Clark explained in projecting costs for the current fiscal year, CSA and Medicaid costs were far more than anticipated even with the recent addition of \$50,000 to that budget line item. The request was that the City allocate an additional \$25,000 to the CSA line item 4350.5660. In the discussion with Council, it was noted that in reviewing the budget, there were additional funds in the Debt Service line item 9101.9110 due to the refinancing that occurred this year. The recommendation from staff was to move \$25,000 from 9101.9110 to 4350.5660.

Keith Barker informed Council that he and Edwin Ward, City Engineer, had been in discussion with our engineering firm concerning the Swanson/McArthur Street traffic signal project that was funded through VDOT. He said we were in the early phase of design, however the engineer was making a recommendation that the one-way traffic on Swanson Street be reversed to enter at this intersection and exit on Calhoun Street.

This would reduce the number of traffic signal poles and lights in the intersection. Mr. Barker said we also had two prior studies conducted with the same recommendation and this option would work within the budget we had been given for the project. He said the recommendation was to refer this to the Traffic Safety Committee for presentation and a recommendation back to Council. Mr. Barker closed by saying since the committee included members from Council, police, fire, EMS and schools; the thought was that they would be in a better position to view the proposed changes from a traffic flow and safety point of view. Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to refer the matter to the Safety Traffic Committee. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

Keith Barker reminded Council of a previous discussion and request at the budget planning session regarding a proposed Jake Brake Ordinance. A draft ordinance was presented to Council which concerned the use of jake brakes on tractor-trailers in the City. After a brief discussion regarding where to put signs if passed, it was decided to set a public hearing for consideration of the proposed ordinance. Councilman Helmick made the motion to set a public hearing on May 14th to consider the ordinance. Vice Mayor Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

Mayor Mitchell informed Council that May was Building Safety Month. He said our regional Building Officials had put together a program and training that would occur at Lowes (a sponsor) in conjunction with their contractor appreciation day. The City of Galax was asked to adopt a regional proclamation in recognition of May being Building Safety Month. It was noted that last year over 350 contractors attended and there would be speakers from the State and International Code Council in attendance this year. Councilwoman Crouse made the motion to adopt the proclamation. Councilman Garner seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

Mayor Mitchell informed Council of a number of current appointments which would expire in June that included:

- Recreation Board (2 term limit, 2 year term)
 - Stephen Archer, 2nd term, not eligible for reappointment
 - Larry Spangler, 2nd term, not eligible for reappointment
 - Eugene McCurdy, 1st term, eligible for reappointment
- Board of Zoning Appeals (no term limit, 5 year term)
 - Doug Williams
 - Roger Neal
- Library Board (2 term limit, 4 year term)
 - Dr. Sam Luague, eligible for reappointment

After a brief discussion, there was a consensus among Council to advertise for all of the appointments and to inquire if the individuals who were eligible for re-appointment would like to be considered.

With no public comments, Mayor Mitchell accepted a motion made by Councilwoman Crouse at 8:40 p.m. to enter into closed session under the following Codes of Virginia:

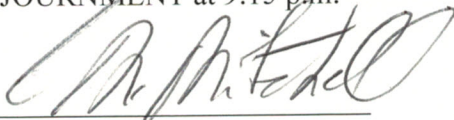
- Prospective Business or Industry § 2.2-3711 A.3 of the *Code of Virginia* 5. Discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community.
- Real Property - § 2.2-3711 A.3 of the *Code of Virginia* - Discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.
- 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 of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

At 9:13 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, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

Councilman Garner made the motion to authorize BRCEDA to move forward with a land sale at Wildwood Commerce Park for Project Keep on Trucking. Councilwoman Crouse seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Greene, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilwoman Plichta, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

ADJOURNMENT at 9:15 p.m.



Mayor



Clerk