

Galax City Council  
Minutes  
May 29, 2018

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on May 14, 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, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick. Vice Mayor Greene and Councilwoman Plichta were absent.

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

Mayor Mitchell recognized the following employees for their retirements and outstanding service:

- Clyde Wilson, Public Works, 40 years (5/22/78 to 5/31/18).
- Susan Clark, Galax Department of Social Services, 40 years 4 months (2/1/78 to 5/31/18).
- Chief Rick Clark, Galax Police Department, Received a "Zero 17" award from the VA Dept. of Motor Vehicles for their highway safety efforts having no traffic fatalities in 2017.
- Galax Water Plant, Gold Award, Mike Brown & Jerry Lawson were present to accept a Gold Award for clarification, filtration, and backwash in 2017.

Councilwoman Crouse made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on May 14, 2018. Councilman Garner seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

Mayor Mitchell announced this was the date Council set for the FY2019 School Budget Public Hearing. Mayor Mitchell opened the floor for public comments. Superintendent Bill Sturgill gave a presentation on the budget and answered questions. Mr. Sturgill thanked Council for supporting the long term vision that was required for the school system to excel. He also thanked Councilman Garner for his service to Council and the schools over the years. Mr. Sturgill informed Council that many capital school projects had been funded with carryover funds such as roofs, GHS athletic field, GES ground breaking with design, and buses that were in compliance. Mr. Sturgill explained that the Galax School System had been a good example to other school systems in the following areas:

- Calendar changes
- State Championships in sports and in forensics.
- Teacher evaluation tools
- Lower costs per Galax student at \$10,612 - compared to Grayson at \$12,470, Carroll \$11,332, and Fairfax \$14K.



Mr. Sturgill said funds that were requested from the City was \$3,986,291 in operational funds and \$138,968 in debt service. He said the total school budget was \$15,337,570 and there was no request for increased funding from the City. Mr. Sturgill stated the proposed budget would provide 2% raises to all staff and salaries may be paid from multiple categories depending on federal/state/local/grant funding. He said the budget was also based on the senate version of the budget, which was the most conservative of the state budgets that had been proposed. As no state budget had been put forward at this time, Mr. Sturgill said it was anticipated that the schools would come back after the beginning of the new fiscal year with an amended budget that would reflect changes in state support. Mr. Sturgill closed by answering various questions by Council. Mayor Mitchell declared the public hearing closed after there were no other public comments made. Councilman Garner made the motion to approve the FY2019 Galax School Budget. Councilman Helmick seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

Mayor Mitchell announced this was the date Council set for the FY2019 City Budget Public Hearing. Mayor Mitchell opened the floor for public comments. Keith Barker discussed details of the budget. He said there were no tax rate or fee increases as part of this budget and final approval and adoption of the budget would not occur until the June 11 meeting. Mayor Mitchell thanked staff and Council for working together to make the budget work. The proposed budget included the following:

- General Fund Budget (including DSS) - \$24,821,056
- Utility Fund Budget - \$ 9,542,790
- Stormwater Fund - \$ 129,500

Proposed tax rates represent no change to the current rates:

1. Real Estate - \$0.80 per \$100
2. Personal Property - \$2.25 per \$100
3. Machinery & Tools - \$1.50 per \$100

There were no public comments. Mayor Mitchell declared the public hearing closed.

Mayor Mitchell announced this was the date that had been set for a public hearing on a conditional use permit request of HK Development LLC for their property at 403 N. Main Street. He opened the floor for public comments. Daniel Riegel, Zoning Administrator, informed Council that the request was to remodel the former chiropractic office so that office space would be retained in the front on Main Street and two (2) apartments would be constructed in the rear of this building, accessible from the alley side of the property. He said the owners remodeled the current apartments in the last few years and feel there was an additional demand for more apartments. Mr. Riegel said the Planning Commission met on May 24 to hear the request and made the recommendation to Council to approve the conditional use permit request. Information regarding the request was given to Council prior to the meeting for review. After a brief discussion between Mr. Riegel and Council, there were no further public comments. Mayor Mitchell declared the public hearing closed. Councilman Garner made the motion to approve the conditional use permit request. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, and Councilman Davis. Councilman Helmick abstained due to a conflict of interest.



Mayor Mitchell welcomed Beth Dixon, Director of the Twin County Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Dixon provided an update on the Chamber which included the focus on workforce development, internal restructuring, upcoming activities, and future plans.

Mayor Mitchell informed Council of a planned DHCD Visit regarding the Virginia Main Street Program on June 6 from 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

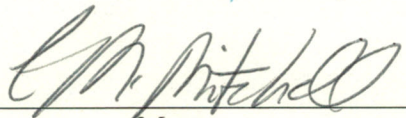
With no public comments, Mayor Mitchell accepted a motion made by Councilwoman Crouse at 8:20 p.m. to enter into closed session under the following Codes of Virginia:

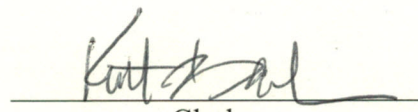
- **Real Property - § 2.2-3711 A.3 of the Code of Virginia** - Discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.
- **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.
- **Legal Matters - § 2.2-3711 A.7 of the Code of Virginia** - Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body.

Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

At 10:00 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, Councilman Garner, Councilwoman Crouse, Councilman Davis, and Councilman Helmick.

ADJOURNMENT at 10:00 p.m.

  
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Mayor

  
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Clerk