

Galax City Council
Minutes
October 8, 2018

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on October 8, 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 Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, and Councilwoman White.

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

Mayor Mitchell congratulated Rick Clark, who retired on September 30th, after being employed as the Galax Chief of Police for 16 years. He was given a plaque and watch as a token of appreciation. Council thank him for his service to the community.

Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on September 10, 2018. Councilman Greene seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, and Councilwoman White.

Mayor Mitchell announced this was the advertised date for a public hearing concerned amendments to City Code Section 66-8.7. Keith Barker explained this code section currently required renewal of the permit for approved commercial waste haulers every year. The proposed revision would allow the permit to be valid for 36 months (or another time period as Council may determine). Any rate changes within that 36-month period would still need to be approved by Council. If Council elected to adopt the ordinance revision, it would go into place immediately and we would notify the approved waste haulers. Mayor Mitchell opened the floor for public comments. There were none. Mayor Mitchell declared the public hearing closed. Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to amend the code section as presented with 36 months being the renewal period for approve commercial waste hauler permits. Councilman Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, and Councilwoman White.

City Manager Keith Barker explained that recently Council had approved the acceptance of the cul-de-sac at the end of Jack Guynn Drive to the City as part of the deed review conducted by AEP for the parcel at the end of the industrial park. He said if approved, the proposed resolution, map, and form U-1 would be submitted to VDOT which would request that the cul-de-sac at the end of Jack Guynn Drive be brought into the VDOT calculated road maintenance. Councilman Davis made the motion to approve the resolution. Councilwoman Ritchie seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, and Councilwoman White.

City Manager Keith Barker gave an update on the recent flooding in Galax. He informed Council that he had spoken with Kevin Heath of the Lane Group concerning the PER that was authorized at the September Council meeting. He said base mapping had been completed and Dalton Walker would begin surveying specific drop inlets, drains, pipe locations with inverts, etc. starting the week of October 8. He said a final report may possibly be complete in November.

City Manager Keith Barker informed Council that he had spoken with Kevin Heath of Lane Group concerning a review of the property on E. Stuart Drive that was recently donated to the City. He provided an estimated cost of \$36,500 to perform a topographic survey of the property, soil borings over the commercial portion of the property, utility review of the property, preliminary design of an entrance and crossover, and preliminary cost estimates. Mr. Barker said this information was critical in order to plan for the property and market it accordingly. A draft site plan was prepared as part of the E. Stuart Drive Sidewalk Project that was submitted to VDOT for the Smart Scale Program. To show the scale of the property, the current footprint of the Hampton Inn and Creek Bottom Brewing Company Restaurant (formerly Bogeys), was included along with their parking. Mr. Barker explained the property was sufficiently sized for a potential large commercial prospect. Brenda Marrah, Grants Administrator, told Council that grant possibilities were aggressively being sought after. Mr. Barker asked Council to consider amending the budget by moving \$40,000 from our capital reserves to revenue and expenditure in order to move forward with this project. He closed by saying the property had great potential and if Council elected not to proceed at this time, we would wait until later in this fiscal year to see if we were in a position to proceed with our current funding or we would budget this project for FY2020. Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to approve the budget amendment. Councilwoman Ritchie seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, and Councilwoman White.

City Manager Keith Barker informed Council that Ms. Tammy Smith, Director of Social Services, had requested \$2,000 in additional funding from the City in order to make a new DSS position a supervisory position in addition to the regular duties. Mr. Barker said the remaining increase in salary would come from the DSS state funding. The proposed funding could be allocated from line item 9900-1140 Contingency to 4530-5699 Department of Social Services. Councilman Davis made a motion to approve the DSS budget amendment. Councilman Travis Haynes seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, and Councilwoman White.

City Manager Keith Barker announced the City had historically provided a Christmas gift to employees based on years of service, with gifts ranging from \$25 for 1 year of service to \$200 for 20 or more years of service. He said the gift has been a long-standing practice for 30 or more years. Mr. Barker spoke with the City's auditor, and confirmed with the City attorney, and this practice was considered a bonus and required an amendment to our City Code. He said basically, the amendment could be made in the City Code, but nothing would be changed in regards to this practice. A draft ordinance modification that called out the gift and that it was provided during the holiday season between Thanksgiving and the end of the year was presented to Council.

Mr. Barker asked Council's consideration in conducting a public hearing on this ordinance modification. Councilwoman White made the motion to approve the request to hold a public hearing for the ordinance modification. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, and Councilwoman White.

City Manager Keith Barker explained that representatives from BRCEDA recently met with a number of local legislators to seek their support for transfer of the Southwest Virginia Training Center facility property to BRCEDA. The discussion was that our legislators would introduce legislation that would allow the transfer of the training center property and facilities to BRCEDA, permit BRCEDA to market the property as an economic development project, but the state would continue to maintain the property at their cost for four years. A resolution was presented to Council that would permit BRCEDA to market the SWVATC to various private healthcare and other professional services providers, while the Commonwealth remained in place as a partner and owner of record of the facility and providing the required maintenance on the property, thereby alleviating distress created by closure of the facility and the resulting loss of employment. Mr. Barker closed by saying that BRCEDA approved the resolution and Carroll County adopted this resolution in September. Councilman Greene made the motion to approve the resolution. Councilwoman Plichta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, and Councilwoman White.

City Manager Keith Barker informed Council that after the City was approached earlier this year concerning safety measures along E. Stuart Drive, specifically at the area near the shopping center with Roses and Grants. Staff had spoken to VDOT and while we did not have enough information for a construction application, we could apply for grant funds for an engineering study to determine a location for pedestrian safety islands or other pedestrian safety features. Council was asked to consider adopting a resolution so that we could move forward with this application. He said the application was due by November 1 and these were typically 100% grant funds. Councilwoman Plichta made the motion to approve the adoption of the HSIP project resolution. Councilman Davis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Davis, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, and Councilwoman White.

With no further comments the meeting adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:20 p.m.



Mayor



Clerk

