

Galax City Council
Minutes
January 28, 2019

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on January 28, 2019 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 Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larrowe.

Mayor Mitchell prayed the opening prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Judge Gerald Mabe administered the Oath of Office to recently appointed Councilman Michael Larrowe.

Councilman Haynes made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on January 14, 2019. Councilman Greene seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larrowe.

Mayor Mitchell welcomed Corbin Stone from Robinson Farmer Cox. Mr. Stone presented the FY2018 audit findings and commended the City for an overall good audit. Mr. Stone indicated that the City reserve account has recovered from 2009 and is reaching an acceptable level. In his presentation, he included information on an accounting update by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board regarding GASB no. 83, which pertains to certain asset retirement obligations.

Mr. Kevin Heath, P.E., Lane Group, presented to Council an in-depth overview of the preliminary engineering review which concerned the stormwater system that serves the west side of town, mainly from Chestnut Creek to W. Stuart Drive. There were at least three generalized locations that were impacted by each of the 2018 flooding events which included:

- South Main Street which includes Bartlett Street, Calhoun Street, Swanson Street and Parkwood Drive.
- South Main Street which includes the areas between Oldtown Street and Grayson Street.
- North Main Street which includes areas from Rt. 58 and W. Stuart Drive, to the areas between Washington Street and Webster Street.

The following observations/recommendations/conclusions were presented during the overview:

- Mr. Heath informed Council that during the engineering review, video inspections of selected pipes revealed locations with pipe obstructions and/or other defects. Pipes were also determined to be located underneath multiple buildings in the downtown area. A large portion of areas seem to be due to private development over the decades.

- The Virginia DEQ's minimum design requirement for piped stormwater conveyance systems was for the pipes to be able to contain and convey a 10-year frequency storm event. Analysis of the existing system indicated that a majority of the pipe segments are undersized.
- Cost estimates were prepared to improve the stormwater conveyance system in the identified areas in order to convey a 10-year design storm. The estimated cost of the proposed improvements totaled approximately \$10.6 Million. The majority of the proposed improvements would need to be completed by private contractors due to pipe size and construction constraints.
- A number of short-term improvements were identified which could largely be completed by City staff. Those identified improvements would not eliminate flooding potential, but would serve to alleviate some of the deficiencies identified.

After a discussion between Mr. Heath and Council, Mr. Barker stated that the review would be used by Council to develop future capital plans in regards to stormwater upgrades as part of the long-term budgeting process. Possible funding options were also discussed. Mayor Mitchell thanked Kevin Heath and the Lane Group for their work on project.

Mayor Mitchell announced with the resignation of Councilman Davis, the board seats for Galax-Grayson EMS and BRCEDA Alternate were open for appointment. After a discussion among Council, the following recommendations were made:

- BRCEDA Alternate & District III - Michael Larrowe
- GGEMS – Travis Haynes
- Rooftop – Beth White

Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to approve the recommended board appointments. Councilwoman Richie seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larrowe.

Keith Barker informed Council that an order was submitted and approved with the Grayson County Circuit Court which requested a special election be set for November 5, 2019 for Councilman Larrowe's seat.

Keith Barker informed Council that we had been assigned a FEMA Representative to begin our recovery process for funds expended during and after Hurricane Michael. He said this would include the work on Stockyard Road, Fox Run, cleanup of E. Stuart Drive, etc. A FEMA representative was planning to be in Galax on January 31 to meet with staff.

Keith Barker gave an update regarding HB1840. At the last Council meeting, a resolution was approved in support of HB1840. Mr. Barker explain the bill would direct the SCC to authorize Appalachian Power and Dominion to develop pilot projects that would design and construct the

higher capacity energy lines to business parks. Wildwood was one of the possible sites and we met all criteria listed in the bill. Mr. Barker traveled to Richmond on January 24 and was one of the speakers before the House Labor and Commerce Subcommittee that heard this bill. The subcommittee had approved the bill to move forward to the full committee. Once it was considered there, it could move to the full house to be read 3 times before passing. Mr. Barker said it must then move over to the Senate side and repeat the process. Council noted that it would be very beneficial to the Wildwood project.

Keith Barker informed Council of an email he received from DSS Director Tammy Smith which concerned foster care/cps spending this fiscal year. Mr. Barker explained the fiscal year began with a local budget of \$137,858 for local csa costs, but with increases in children in care and with more expensive out of area placements, our funding was not sufficient for the remainder of the year. Ms. Smith had been working with the state to determine that approximately \$113,000 in additional local funding was required for the remainder of the fiscal year. Mr. Barker requested City Council make a partial amendment to the budget with reductions in spending only. Mr. Barker said unfortunately he did not think we could amend the total request from the spending side of our budget only. He said he was working with Ms. Judy Taylor-Gallimore, Finance Director, to review our revenue. He said we would bring a second budget amendment request to Council at a February meeting. Mr. Barker requested that Council amend the budget by moving \$15,000 from Contingency 9102.6017, \$15,000 from Economic Development 9102.5680, and \$20,000 from Capital Contingency 9900.1140; to Comprehensive Services 4530.5660 making that line item \$187,858. Councilwoman Ritchie made the motion to approve the request from DSS. Councilwoman White seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larrowe.

Keith Barker informed Council of a meeting with Chief Busick of Galax Grayson EMS concerning MedStar-1, the Ford Expedition that was used as a backup vehicle for assistance on GGEMS scenes. He explained a recent repair had shown that the 2008 vehicle was no longer safe to drive due to excessive rust issues. Chief Busick had spoken with Enterprise Fleet Management concerning leasing a new Ford Explorer, similar to the lease program that we just approved for the Galax Police Department. The GGEMS Board approved the lease option at their 1/25 meeting with the understanding that the payments would be from GGEMS revenue. He closed by saying Galax was the owner of the GGEMS vehicles, so any agreement to lease the vehicle must be approved by City Council. Councilwoman White made the motion to approve the lease proposal and direct the City Manager to proceed with completion of the lease documents. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Greene, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larrowe.

Keith Barker informed Council regarding the VDOT Smart Scale, E. Stuart Drive Sidewalk Projects, we did not score well enough to be included in the list of recommended projects. He explained we would still review the scoring with VDOT staff, but since we had submitted these projects twice, it did not appear these projects would score well enough to be included in future Smart Scale funding. Applications for future projects cannot be submitted until June 2020.

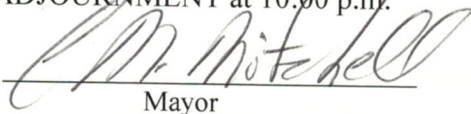
Mayor Mitchell opened the floor for public comments, however there were none.

At 9:35 p.m. Councilman Greene made the motion to go into executive session per § 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. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Greene, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White and Councilman Larrowe.

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 taken, with the following affirmation: Mayor Mitchell-yea, Councilman Greene – yea, Councilman Haynes – yea, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White- yea, and Councilman Larrowe – yea.

With no further comments the meeting adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT at 10:00 p.m.



Mayor



Clerk