

Galax City Council  
Minutes  
May 28, 2019

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on May 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 Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larrowe. Councilman Greene was absent.

Vice Mayor Plichta prayed the opening prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Mitchell congratulated Mike Brown, Chief Operator at the Galax Water Treatment Plant. Mr. Brown was in attendance with the 2018 Excellence in Waterworks Operations Silver Award.

Mayor Mitchell congratulated Captain James Cox who was in attendance representing the Galax Police Department with a Zero Traffic Fatalities in 2018 Award. The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles commended 20 Virginia cities and counties that reported zero traffic fatalities in 2018. These cities and counties were honored at a ceremony in May during the 2019 Virginia Highway Safety Summit in Roanoke.

Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 13, 2019. Councilwoman Ritchie seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larrowe.

Mayor Mitchell announced this was the date Council set to conduct the public hearing for the Galax FY2020 Budget. Keith Barker spoke briefly explaining the draft budget included the 4.5¢ tax levy increase on real estate as recommended for the next step towards funding the Galax Elementary School Project. Also included was the \$1 per month increase in sanitation rates.

The Proposed Budget:

• General Fund Budget	\$26,798,477 (including DSS)
• Utility Fund Budget	\$ 9,569,790
• Stormwater Fund Budget	\$ 329,500

The Proposed tax rates:

• Real Estate	\$0.845 per \$100 (4.5¢ increase)
• Personal Property	\$2.25 per \$100 (no change)
• Machinery & Tools	\$1.50 per \$100 (no change)

Mayor Mitchell opened the floor for public comments. With no additional comments, the hearing was declared closed.

Mayor Mitchell announced this was the date Council set to conduct a public hearing on the proposed revisions to the Sanitation Ordinance. Keith Barker explained the draft ordinance showed the proposed revisions to the individual household rate and how that rate worked into the tier charges for more than the typical service or multiple pickups per week. Mr. Barker said the Carroll-Galax-Grayson Solid Waste Authority (CGGSWA) was raising rates by \$5 per ton for disposal of waste as part of a long-term financial assessment. He said the rate increase was needed at the CGGSWA to keep the authority financially viable for the next 20+ years. The City's rate modification would be based on \$1 per month increase for a standard household service, which would bring our rate from \$13 per month to \$14 per month. Mayor Mitchell opened the floor for public comments. With no additional comments, the hearing was declared closed. Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to approve the revision to the Sanitation Ordinance raising the rate from \$13 to \$14 per month with an effective date for the July 1 water billing. Councilwoman White seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larrowe.

Mayor Mitchell announced the floor was open for a motion by Council concerning the Galax FY2020 Budget. Councilman Larrowe made the motion to approve the Galax FY2020 Budget. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larrowe.

Keith Barker explained that he had attended the VDOT Public Hearings in Roanoke on May 7 and spoke on our two proposed projects to construct sidewalks along E. Stuart Drive. He said at this time, the Salem District had revised their original recommendations to include our Phase II E. Stuart Drive Sidewalk Project for consideration and approval by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. Mr. Barker said the CTB would make final decisions in June on if the project would be funded, however the feeling was hopeful this would occur. He closed by saying the project was estimated at \$2,000,000 with no match, and the engineering would not occur until August 2023 with construction to begin in October 2026.

Keith Barker informed Council that he and Zoning Administrator, Daniel Riegel had met to discuss our zoning ordinance and to see if Council and the Planning Commission wanted to consider implementing a mixed residential/business zone district. Mr. Barker explained the Comprehensive Plan (Page 84, item #6) called out the development of a mixed-use district that would by right have a mix of residential and commercial, and our thought was to consider if something like this might be used in some of our current mixed neighborhoods. He said this new district could permit a residence to remain and be in compliance as an approved use, or permit a business to be located in the district that would be an approved use.

Mr. Barker noted that a draft ordinance was developed a number of years ago and presented by the Planning Commission, but it was never formally adopted by City Council. He closed by saying that any changes to the zoning ordinance must first be considered and approved by the Planning Commission. Councilman Larowe made the motion for the Planning Commission to move forward by studying this issue then present their findings at a future meeting. Councilwoman White seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larowe.

Mayor Mitchell opened the floor for public comments. Ms. Birmingham addressed Council. She thanked the City for working on the alley behind her house on Parkwood Drive. She said that she appreciated the City's efforts.


With no further public comments, Mayor Mitchell accepted a motion made by Vice Mayor Plichta at 8:10 p.m. to enter into closed session under the following Code of Virginia:

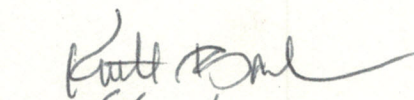
- **Prospective Business or Expansion of an existing Business or Industry - § 2.2-3711 A.5 of the Code of Virginia** - Discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's 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.

Councilwoman Ritchie seconded the motion and it was approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Mitchell, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larowe.

At 8:25 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 Plichta, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, and Councilman Larowe.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:25 p.m.

  
Vice - Mayor

  
6/10/19  
Clerk

