

Galax City Council
Minutes
March 9, 2020

Galax City Council convened in regular session in City Council Chambers on March 9, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

At 6:00 p.m. Mayor Mitchell called the meeting to order with the following Council persons present and they are as listed: Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Greene, Vice Mayor Plichta, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White and Councilman Larrowe.

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

In special action Mayor Mitchell welcomed the following student athletes who recently received VHSL honors. Mayor Mitchell read aloud proclamations for each:

- Mia Llamas, State Champion of the 200 Yard Freestyle, runner-up of the 50 Yard Freestyle, 2020 Virginia High School League Group 1A-2A State Swim Championships
- Mia Llamas, Sarah Blevins, Rachel Hanks, Ryley Cocke - 200 Girls Free Relay, 5th Place, 2020 Virginia High School League Group 1A-2A State Swim Championships
- Brender Rojas, 2020 Virginia High School League Group 1A State Wrestling Championship, 185 lb. Division

Councilman Larrowe made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 24, 2020. 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, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilwoman White.

Keith Barker informed Council of the public presentation for the TG Vaughan Project. He said it was scheduled for March 30 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM at the Crossroads Institute. He explained that Zack Jackson, Economic Development Specialist with the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development would be present to give an overview of the VT study pertaining to the adaptive reuse of the facility. He said Rebecca Richardson with Virginia Community Capital, Inc. would then lead those attending through small group activities to solicit ideas and discussion on this possible project. Mr. Barker said we would work with the Gazette and our Tourism office to create public awareness for the project.

Mayor Mitchell welcomed Ms. Susan Tilley who was present to meet Council in her new role as Galax School Superintendent. She gave an overview of her vision for the school system and said she was excited and happy to be a part of our school system.

Dr. Sprinkle was present and gave an overview of WCC, current local enrollment, current offerings from WCC, the upcoming budget, etc. A budget request was made by Dr. Sprinkle which was comparable to last year's amount. He discussed the construction at Crossroads and said he hoped for it to be completed in the Fall.

Chief Cooper gave the annual GPD report with officers in attendance. It was announced that the auction which was recently held to raise money for a police drug dog raised \$14,000 and another \$3,500 has been donated otherwise. Matthew Laraviere and his family were crucial in helping to raise the funds through his auction business.

Keith Barker informed Council that we had been contacted by Mt. Rogers ASAP and asked to appoint two members to their board. He said the board would meet 4 times a year in March, June, September, and November; and the meetings were the first Wednesday in each month at 12:00 noon. Mr. Barker said he had spoken to Chief Cooper and he believed that Capt. Cox and Officer Kevin Hall were suitable appointments from the Galax Police department. He said Chief Cooper was asked to be the point of contact about meetings so he could verify that staff were available. Councilman Larrowe made the motion to appoint Capt. Cox and Officer Hall to the Mt. Rogers ASAP Board. 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, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilwoman White.

Keith Barker informed Council that our current contract with Robinson Farmer Cox had expired and our last audit was done off of a 1-year extension. He asked City Council if they would like for the City to issue a RFP to solicit firms for interviews and a multiyear agreement, or continue 1-year agreements. After a discussion among Council members, Councilman Larrowe made the motion to issue a RFP to solicit firms. 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, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilwoman White. There was a consensus among Council to appoint Councilman Larrowe and Mayor Mitchell to an Audit Committee. Councilman Greene made the motion to approve the appointments to the Audit Committee. Councilwoman Ritchie 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, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilwoman White.

Keith Barker gave the City Manager report which included updates on the many projects in the City he is overseeing.

Council Comments

Councilwoman White spoke on the success of the Addiction Symposium held at the Rex Theater. She said there may be plans of having these meetings quarterly going forward.

Councilman Larrowe suggested engagement with GES students by having them to come to lead the pledge of allegiance. He also spoke regarding looking at the goals in the Vision 2020 such as strategizing for certain key positions such as medical professionals in our community.

Councilman Haynes spoke on developing information that detailed the cost of living in our region vs. other larger communities to highlight the differences. He also suggested on creating a gift bag with Galax items that could be given by a Hospitality Committee which was suggested by Councilwoman White.

There was a consensus among Council to leave the agenda open for the next meeting on March 23rd so Vision 2020 could be discussed further.

With no further discussion, Mayor Mitchell announced the meeting was adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:05 p.m.



Mayor



Clerk