

Galax City Council
Minutes
July 13, 2020

At 4:30 p.m. Mayor Mitchell called the meeting to order. Councilwoman White joined the meeting via conference call.

Mayor Mitchell accepted a motion made by Councilwoman Ritchie at 4:30 p.m. to enter into closed session under the following Code of Virginia:

Personnel Matter – Mayor and Vice-Mayor Discussion, Personnel Matter – § 2.2-3711 A.1 of the Code of Virginia - Candidates for employment; the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, discipline, salaries, compensation, or resignation of employees.

Councilman Haynes seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following spoken votes of “yea”: Mayor Mitchell – “yea”, Councilman Greene – “yea”, Councilman Haynes – “yea”, Councilwoman Ritchie – “yea”, Councilwoman White - “yea”, Councilman Larrowe – “yea”, and Councilman Warr – “yea”.

At 6:00 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 spoken affirmations: Mayor Mitchell – “yea”, Councilman Greene – “yea”, Councilman Haynes – “yea”, Councilwoman Ritchie – “yea”, Councilwoman White - “yea”, Councilman Larrowe – “yea”, and Councilman Warr – “yea”.

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

City Manager, Keith Barker, announced this was the date set for the election of Mayor and Vice Mayor by Council. Mr. Barker called for a motion to nominate a Council member to the office of mayor. After a brief discussion, Mayor Mitchell made a motion to nominate Councilman Greene. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion with the following unanimous votes of “yea”: Councilman Mitchell, Councilman Greene, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr. Councilman Mitchell announced that Willie Greene was the City of Galax Mayor and congratulated him.

Mayor Greene then called for a motion to nominate a Council member to the office of vice mayor. Councilwoman Ritchie made a motion to nominate Councilman Mitchell. Councilman Larrowe seconded the motion with the following unanimous votes of “yea”:

Mayor Greene, Councilman Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr. Mayor Greene announced that C.M. Mitchell was now appointed as the City of Galax Vice Mayor and wished him well.

Mayor Greene welcomed Judge Gerald Mabe who was present to administer the Oath of Office to Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr. Council members thanked Judge Mabe for his attendance.

Vice-Mayor Mitchell made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 15, 2020. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Greene, Vice-Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Mayor Greene announced this was the date set to appropriate the FY2021 Galax City Budget which was approved at the June 15 meeting. The approved budget was read aloud by Mayor Greene:

Councilman Larrowe made the motion to approve the appropriation of the FY2021 Galax City budget. Councilman Mitchell seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Greene, Vice-Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Mayor Greene announced this was the date set to appropriate the FY2021 Galax City Schools budget which was approved at the May 26 meeting. Mayor Greene informed Council the total budget was \$16,153,405 with local funds of \$3,986,291. Councilwoman White made the motion to approve the appropriation of the FY2021 Galax City Schools budget. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Greene, Vice-Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Mayor Greene announced this was the date advertised for the public hearings for the proposed 2020 Smart Scale project submittals to VDOT. Keith Barker explained that we had two Smart Scale applications that were in the pre-application stage with VDOT. He said the first application was for the East Stuart Drive Sidewalk Project, Phase 1. This project would involve approximately 5,000 feet of new sidewalk along US 58, improving major intersections with signalized legs for pedestrian controls at an estimated cost of \$1.56M. If approved, the project would begin in FY2025.

Mr. Barker said the second application was for a Traffic Signal Modification at the Food City intersection. He said this project would modify the signal at the intersection of East Stuart Drive and the Food City Shopping Center to signalize turn movement at the north side of the intersection and provide a lead green light to the entrance that serves County Line and the other businesses along E. Stuart Drive. The estimated cost would be \$300,000. If approved, the project would begin in FY2025. Also, Mr. Barker informed Council of a requirement by VDOT to consider the adoption of a required resolution and capital improvement plan which Council had reviewed. He said these were necessary for the 2020 Smart Scale project application process. Mayor Greene opened the floor for public comments. With no comments made, Mayor Greene declared the public hearing closed. Councilman Haynes made the motion to approve the adoption of the VDOT resolution and capital improvement plan. Councilman Warr seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Greene, Vice-Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Keith Barker spoke to Council regarding the draft Vision 2020 Communications Plan. He said the draft plan was presented at the June 15 meeting for Council's review and comments. Ms. Emily Brown was present to review and receive feedback on a revised plan that addressed emergency communications. After Ms. Brown spoke to Council, there was a consensus for a committee to meet to continue discussions with Ms. Brown at a later date. The committee chosen consisted of Councilwoman White, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Mayor Greene informed Council with receipt of the CARES Act funds, and to provide necessary adjustments to the FY2020 budget, he asked that Council set August 10 as a public hearing date for amendments to the FY2020 and FY2021 budgets. Mayor Greene noted that because the amendments represented more than 1% of each budget, a public hearing was necessary. Vice-Mayor Mitchell made the motion to set August 10 as a public hearing date for amendments to the FY20 & FY21 budgets. Councilman Larrowe seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of "yea": Mayor Greene, Vice-Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Mayor Greene informed Council the delinquent tax payer list for real estate as of June 30, 2020 had been presented to Council for consideration for approving for publication in the Gazette. The list would be amended to reflect any additional payments received prior to the ad going to the paper. Councilman Haynes made the motion to approve the delinquent tax payer list for publication in the Gazette.

Councilman Warr seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Greene, Vice-Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Councilman Larrowe gave Council an update on the T.G. Vaughan Project and the virtual meetings with Summit Design.

Keith Barker informed Council that the Dept. of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) had revised the Non-Discrimination Policy for the Bottom Area Community Development Block Grants. Mr. Barker clarified the revised policy pertained only to the grants that were currently under contract or that were being negotiated to go under contract. He stated the adoption of the revised policy was not required; however, we were still obligated to follow all standards they had set. After a brief discussion among Council members, Vice-Mayor Mitchell made the motion to approve the adoption of the revised policy. Councilman Haynes seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Greene, Councilman Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

Keith Barker informed Council that Dr. Shelton, with the Virginia Dept. of Health - Mt. Roger’s Health District, had offered to have a conference call with each community’s Council or Board of Supervisors to discuss the Covid-19 issues. The consensus was to proceed with a conference call with Ms. Shelton on July 23.

City Manager Report

Keith Barker informed Council if there were any questions or comments regarding the City Manager Report provided to Council, he would be glad to address them. The report gave Council an overview of the various projects and initiatives that are underway with the City or regional boards that Mr. Barker is a part of. There was no discussion.

Council Comments

Vice-Mayor Mitchell inquired about the current status of a resolution of support presented to Council by Twin County Regional Hospital and adopted on August 12, 2019. The resolution supports the introduction and passage of any and all legislation in the Virginia General Assembly for a Supplemental Medicaid Payment Program which promotes the general welfare of the citizens of Galax. Keith Barker said there was no legislation in place with this resolution which was adopted last year. He explained that a draft document had been sent to the City’s attorney to see how the program would work and he would follow up at a later meeting.

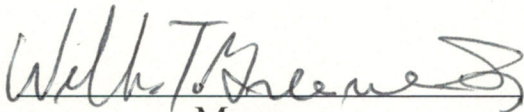
With no public comments, Mayor Greene accepted a motion made by Vice Mayor Mitchell at 7:07 p.m. to enter into closed session under the following Code of Virginia:

- **Personnel Matter – § 2.2-3711 A.1 of the Code of Virginia** - Candidates for employment; the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, discipline, salaries, compensation, or resignation of employees.

Councilman Haynes seconded the motion and it was approved by the following votes of “yea”: Mayor Greene, Vice-Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

At 7:26 p.m. Council reconvened in open session. Mayor Greene 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 Greene, Vice-Mayor Mitchell, Councilman Haynes, Councilwoman Ritchie, Councilwoman White, Councilman Larrowe, and Councilman Warr.

ADJOURNMENT at 7:27 p.m.



Mayor



Clerk

