

Galax City Council
Minutes
April 27, 2020

Galax City Council convened in regular session by conference call on April 27, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

At 6:00 p.m. Mayor Mitchell called the meeting to order.

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

Councilman Greene made the motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 13, 2020. Councilwoman White seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the following spoken affirmations: Mayor Mitchell – “yea”, Councilman Larrowe – “yea”, Councilwoman White – “yea”, Vice Mayor Plichta – “yea”, Councilman Greene – “yea”, Councilwoman Ritchie – “yea”, and Councilwoman Haynes – “yea”.

Mayor Mitchell announced this was the date advertised to hear comments on the Galax City School Budget for 2021. City Manager, Keith Barker gave a brief overview of the school’s budget. Galax School Superintendent, Susan Tilley joined the conference call meeting. Ms. Tilley informed Council the projected budget was still being worked on. Ms. Tilley spoke briefly and said once the budget was completed, the City would receive it. Mayor Mitchell declared the budget public hearing open from April 27 to May 7 for public comments. As part of the new protocol and Governor’s executive orders, a public hearing could not be held in person but has been advertised. Public comments could be sent by letter, by phone call to the City Manager’s office, or by email to public_comment@galaxva.com. Any comments received would be brought back to the May 11 City Council meeting.

Mayor Mitchell announced this was the time set by Council to make an appointment to the Galax City School Board. The appointment was advertised and a candidate was interviewed for one seat for the term of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023. Vice Mayor Plichta made the motion to re-appoint Larry Spangler. Councilman Greene seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following spoken affirmations: Mayor Mitchell – “yea”, Councilman Larrowe – “yea”, Councilwoman White – “yea”, Vice Mayor Plichta – “yea”, Councilman Greene – “yea”, Councilwoman Ritchie – “yea”, and Councilwoman Haynes – “yea”.

Keith Barker gave a brief overview of MOOG Expansion Project. He explained the City Public Works Utility Crew had completed the majority of the sewer line relocation and all of the water line relocation for the MOOG company expansion. The project was designed internally by the City’s Engineering Department and all work was performed with City staff. The final project was part of the City’s deliverables for the project and would allow the expansion of MOOG in our community. Mr. Barker thanked Edwin Ward, City Engineer, and Mike Woodel, Asst. Public Works Director, along with his staff (David Flippen, Mike Funk, Levi White, James Anders, Mark Taylor) for their work on the project. He said their work saved the City over \$100,000 in contractor costs to install approximately 400 l.f. of water line and 700 l.f. of sewer line. Mr. Barker said the construction company, Lionberger Construction was on site now beginning the work on the project for MOOG.

Keith Barker informed Council of an easement request from AEP. He explained the easement would involve the area across the rear portion of Monta Vista Cemetery behind the mausoleum. Mr. Barker said the area indicated adjoins the land where a new substation was to be constructed in the industrial park. A public hearing was required prior to approval due to it being use of a public property. Mr. Barker said with Council's permission, City staff could advertise the public hearing comment period to begin on May 4 through May 14. Councilwoman Ritchie made the motion to approve the request. Councilwoman White seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following spoken affirmations: Mayor Mitchell – "yea", Councilman Larrowe – "yea", Councilwoman White – "yea", Vice Mayor Plichta – "yea", Councilman Greene – "yea", Councilwoman Ritchie – "yea", and Councilwoman Haynes – "yea".

Keith Barker gave an overview of paving projects for FY2020 currently underway and will be completed in May. He explained the City was currently under the budget tonnage of asphalt and would add more streets to finish near the budgeted amount. He explained that the streets were reviewed prior to and after the winter season to develop the paving schedule. He said the final selection was based on budget, traffic count, and costs. Also taken into consideration were possible primary paving grants, streets that may be eligible for funding, as well as other upcoming projects that may include paving.

Mayor Mitchell discussed the May 5 elections being moved to May 19th and made comments briefly on absentee voting. Keith Barker spoke regarding the General Assembly not agreeing to move the May elections to November as the Governor had proposed and the new election date. He explained the City was working with the registrar to make sure polling locations are safe and workers are separated per the Governor's executive order. Council commented on the ease of absentee voting.

Keith Barker reminded Council of the 3rd budget work session which was planned for May 4th at 6:00 PM. Mr. Barker spoke briefly regarding the upcoming meeting.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Ritchie asked if there were services for people that had tested positive and who would provide assistance so they can self-quarantine. She also asked about food resources. Keith Barker said he'd reach out to our DSS and other communities. Councilwoman White asked to be informed of community support information when available. Keith Barker discussed a food distribution event. Councilwoman White stated some local non-profits were doing food support. She said that Backpack buddies was still operating, the Soup kitchen was delivering 120 meals on Monday and Thursday, the schools were supplying food – 2 meals, 5 days per week. Councilman Haynes commented that PUSH Ministries could get food to people who needed it.

Mayor Mitchell said that we needed to reinforce that now was the time to be careful and thoughtful about what you are doing. Wash hands, social distancing, stay 6 feet away from folks. He said the problem with this virus was that you can be infected and not have symptoms for 5 days and shed the virus for 5 days. He said unless everyone was protected, no one was protected. Mayor Mitchell noted with our population we could have a devastating event if it was widespread. He also said it was difficult to be home all day but be safe and be kind, think about

our actions and how they could affect other people. He closed by saying to urge folks to keep up with social distancing.


Councilman Larrowe spoke regarding a meeting about the audit and provided the questions that were discussed during the interview.

With no further discussion, Councilman Greene made the motion for the meeting to adjourn. Councilman Larrowe seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the following spoken affirmations: Mayor Mitchell – “yea”, Councilman Larrowe – “yea”, Councilwoman White – “yea”, Vice Mayor Plichta – “yea”, Councilman Greene – “yea”, Councilwoman Ritchie – “yea”, and Councilwoman Haynes – “yea”.

ADJOURNMENT at 7:05 p.m.



Mayor



Clerk

