

MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
IN PERSON & ZOOM
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2020

Members Present:

Mayor Steve Lawrence
Dr. Sonny Proctor-zoom
Kirk Raffield
Anne Sneve
Jim Looney

Staff:

Brandon Douglas
Beverly Ragland
Lindsey Williams
Tara Benson
Lonnie Waters
Zachary Waters

Guests in Attendance:

Amberle Godfrey
Dr. Robert Keller
Haley Bouchie-zoom
Rebecca Keefer
David Root-zoom
Dale Morrissey
Rick and Marcia Jasperse
Parish Lowrie
Michael Ledford
Al Snow
Wesley Babcock
Lance Fried
Craig Meffert

Members Absent:

John Foust

Legal Counsel:

R. David Syfan-zoom

Press:

Mari Livsey-Know Pickens
Angela Rinehart-Pickens Progress

Mayor Steve Lawrence asked Councilmember Kirk Raffield if he recognized a quorum. See a quorum, Mayor Lawrence recognized meeting as opening. He requested Development Director Lonnie Waters to provide the invocation. He requested Councilmember Jim Looney to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Lawrence advised that an agenda is in front of them and he entertained a motion to adopt the agenda. Councilmember Raffield made a motion to adopt the agenda with Councilmember Looney providing a second. Motion to approve carried unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence stated that Council has the minutes from the October 5, 2020 Public Hearing, October 5, 2020 Regular Council Meeting and October 12, 2020 Special Called Meeting and entertained a motion to adopt all as presented. Councilmember Anne Sneve provided a motion with Councilmember Raffield providing a second. Motion to approve carried unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence brought forth Georgia House Representative Rick Jasperse and presented him with the Champion of Georgia's City award. The honor is bestowed by the Georgia Municipal Association upon legislators who have defended home rule principals in their communities and in the State Capital.

Mayor Lawrence brought forth city employee Zachary Waters for a special presentation to the City of Jasper. As the facilitator of the auction of surplus City property held on October 24, 2020, he presented a check to the City of Jasper in the amount of \$130,430.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the first item under new business (Item A) Consideration and approval of Parish Lowrie to serve on the Jasper Downtown Development Authority. Mayor Lawrence asked for a motion for approval with Councilmember Dr. Sonny Proctor making a motion for approval. Councilmember Anne Sneve provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously. Mayor Lawrence brought forth Mr. Lowrie and administered the Downtown Development Authority Loyalty Oath and the State of Georgia Loyalty Oath.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item B) Consideration and approval of the request for Reinhardt University to utilize Main Street for the 2021 Shamrock Stroll. Mayor Lawrence asked Dale Morrissey of Reinhardt University to bring forth information. The 4th Annual event will be held March 13, 2021 in downtown Jasper. The program provides scholarships for Pickens County students. Amberle Godfrey is the chair for this event. Pendley Creek Brewing will be hosting the event. The 2020 event was cancelled due to the pandemic. Mayor Lawrence asked for a motion for approval with Councilmember Looney making a motion to approve and Councilmember Raffield providing a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item C) Consideration of Ordinance 2020-24 for amendment of Chapter 94 – Zoning Ordinance and the addition of Chapter 95-Signs to the Official Code of the City of Jasper Georgia. City Attorney David Syfan was asked to bring forth information. There will be another final legal review. This is the first reading. Any changes made would be very minor with no changes likely. Rebecca Keefer from CPL presented a review/update of the Zoning Code for the City of Jasper. It included a Schedule of work done

to date on the project and outlined both chapters. After this first reading, there will be a public hearing held on

November 24, 2020, a public hearing, second read and adoption on December 7, 2020. Mayor Lawrence asked for a motion for approval of the first reading of Ordinance 2020-24 for the amendment of Chapter 94-Zoning Ordinance with Councilmember Sneve making a motion to approve. Councilmember Proctor provided the second. Motion to approve passed unanimously. Mayor Lawrence asked for a motion for approval of the first reading of Ordinance 2020-24 for the addition of Chapter 95-Signs with Councilmember Raffield providing the first and Councilmember Sneve providing the second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item D) Consideration and approval of the bid for the raw water intake replacement. Mayor Lawrence asked City Manager Douglas to bring forth information. Ads were placed for bids for upgrades to the raw water intake pump at Long Swamp Creek. The one and only bid received was for only one item listed in the bid and not the entire project. It was discovered there was reluctance for vendors to take on the whole project. It is staff's desire to re-bid the items needed with professional services obtained for elements of the construction outside of staff's abilities. The new bid opening will be presented for approval at the December 2020 regular meeting. Councilmember Looney made a motion to approve a new bid as requested for approval at the December meeting with Councilmember Sneve providing the second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item E) Discussion of City of Jasper Property and Casualty Insurance. Mayor Lawrence asked City Manager Douglas to bring forth information. Finance Director Beverly Ragland was asked to provide information. A brief explanation was given of what is covered by the annual insurance policy. A quote was solicited from Georgia Municipal Association for price comparison to the current policy through a local vendor. There were benefits in both price and product by switching to GIRMA and those were discussed. The current policy has a requirement to provide a notice of non-renewal by November 30, 2020. City Manager Douglas elaborated on the potential savings in legal fees by going to the GIRMA policy through GMA. A motion was made by Councilmember Raffield to accept the quote from GIRMA for 2021 and proceed with the notice of non-renewal to the 2020 broker. Councilmember Sneve provided the second. Motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item F) Consideration of request for reduction in associated fees for Gateway at Grandview. Mayor Lawrence asked City Manager Douglas to bring forth information. There has been a lot of grading and dirt moving for some time. There is a desire for the development to be a success because it is a gateway into Jasper. The project has been broken up into stages and is currently in stage two. There has been a request to consider reduction in the cost of construction fees for this stage due to assumptions of current owner believing those had been paid by previous owner. Developer/owner of the property, Michael Ledford provided more information. He explained the property was purchased as a failing development with the understanding that \$75,000 had been agreed upon with the City and paid by the previous owners as the impact fee. The City has a Cost of Construction Aid fee in place at \$3,500 per unit. An overview was given on the status of construction and the multi-state interest in the property that was acquired by new owner in December 2018. They did not become aware of the \$3,500 per unit fee until August 2020. They are asking for a reduction of the \$365,000 due based upon their construction plans. Councilmember Raffield made a motion that this be tabled until the next regular council meeting. Councilmember Sneve provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously. In further discussion, Mr. Ledford asked about the fees required before the December meeting as they anticipate getting started with construction before then. City Manager Douglas suggested those fees could be credited back if a decision is made by council to reduce the standard fee under these circumstances.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item G) Consideration and approval for a Reverse Christmas Parade down Stegall Drive. Haley Bouchie of the Jasper Merchants Association brought forth information. Initially the idea was to have the parade in Lee Newton Park but there were too many obstacles. Stegall Drive was a good alternate because it is a one-way street with more than one lane to allow social distancing among the stationary floats. Councilmember Raffield made a motion to approve the request for the JMA to hold a Reverse Christmas Parade and Councilmember Looney provided a second. Motion to approve passed unanimously. Discussion was had about the need to close Richards Street in addition to Stegall.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item H) Consideration and approval of alcohol licenses for renewal. City Manager Douglas was asked to bring forth information. Assistant Finance Director Lindsey Williams provided a list of applicants that have submitted their applications and paid their fee for the upcoming year and asked for approval to grant their licenses. Councilmember Sneve made a motion to approve the alcohol licenses for the list of applicants presented and Councilmember Raffield provided a second. The motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the next item under new business (Item I) Consideration and approval of supplies needed for the Worley Crossroads Water/Waste-Water Project. City Manager Douglas brought forth information.

Quotes were received from two vendors by Water/Waste-Water Director David Hall for supplies needed. The quotes were over \$10,000, requiring council approval. Staff is asking for approval to purchase items from Core & Main as quoted for \$12,660 and not to exceed \$15,000. Councilmember Sneve provided the first and Councilmember Looney provided a second. The motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence asked for a motion to go into executive session to discuss legal. Councilmember Raffield provided the motion and Councilmember Sneve provided the second. The motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence asked for a motion to come out of executive session. Councilmember Raffield provided a motion and Councilmember Looney provided a second. The motion to approve passed unanimously.

Mayor Lawrence recognized Committee Reports.

Development Committee – Councilmember Proctor commented he had met with someone the prior week interested in a cottage style community close to town. Councilmember Raffield asked for staff to get a bid together to replace the vehicle used by Development Director Lonnie Waters to be presented at the December 2020 meeting.

Street/Parks Committee – Councilmember Sneve commented on the younger children’s playing equipment being ordered and thanked Assistant City Clerk Tara Benson for her help in getting it ordered.

Administration Committee – Councilmember Looney commented he had nothing to present.

Water/Waste-Water Committee – Councilmember Proctor commented bids would be coming in January for the new waste-water treatment plant.

Police/Fire Committee – Councilmember Looney has met with Assistant Fire Chief Von Headrick about the need for an additional fire station in preparation for the upcoming budget hearing.

Financial Report – Finance Director Ragland provided highlights from the financial report. City Manager Douglas gave an overview on how much fund balance has been used in 2020 versus what was budgeted.

Development Report – Development Director Lonnie Waters provided highlights from the development report that included four requests to annex into the City.

Police Report – Police Chief Greg Lovell provided highlights from police activity for the month of October. New assignments in the Police Department were announced following the retirement of Assistant Police Chief Jim Gleason. There will be two additional retirements in December 2020.

Mayor Lawrence recognized the Fire Report. City Manager Douglas commented it was included in the packet. Since Chief Roper did not have anything else to present on the evening’s agenda, he was asked to not attend in attempts to keep participation light due to COVID.

Mayor Lawrence asked if there was anyone present that wanted to bring forth information before the meeting was closed. Mr. Perry New who resides at 133 Connell Street came forward to address council. He claimed to have an on-going issue with a sewer line that crosses his property according to a plat but has not been able to be located by City staff. He has had a couple of trees that have died. He wanted to do landscaping and asked to have a locate done. He has holes in the yard that he has been putting yard debris in for four years. A die test across the street from him did not produce results. It appears the property in question was purchased by the City in 1997 as right of way property. If it is City property, he wants to know so he can get the holes fixed. Mayor Lawrence took copies of documents presented by Mr. New and said he would be back in touch after review.

Mayor Lawrence asked for a motion to adjourn with Councilmember Sneve providing a motion and Councilmember Looney providing a second. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.



Steve Lawrence

Mayor



Beverly Ragland

Finance Director/City Clerk