



**CITY OF DAHLONEGA
WORK SESSION MEETING
AUGUST 17, 2017, 4:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

Members Present

Mayor Pro Tempore Bruce Hoffman, Council Members Michael Clemons, Roman Gaddis, Ron Larson and Sam Norton were present.

Members Absent

Mayor Gary McCullough and Council Member Mitchell Ridley were absent

Staff Present

City Manager Bill Schmid, City Attorney Doug Parks, Finance Director Melody Marlowe, Public Works Director/Professional Engineer Mark Buchanan and City Clerk Kimberly A. Smith were present.

Call to Order

Mayor Pro Tempore Bruce Hoffman called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Presentation of Wayfinding Proposals

Joel Cordle of Georgia Downtowns deferred presentation of wayfinding signage proposals to Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority Chairman Tony Owens and Vice Chairman Hal Williams.

Mr. Owens said he has been on the DDDA for eight years, this project was active when he became a member. The program is a pay to participate program where merchants pay a fee to have a sign on the wayfinding signage posts. The program was a priority in the development of the Dahlonega Master Plan and most recently the Visioning Study and Program. The wayfinding signage has the potential to grow the downtown dining and merchant area up to four blocks from the square.

Mr. Williams said the concept of wayfinding signage goes back to the 1990's and has always been put aside due to funding. This type of signage is found in other historical towns as well as shopping areas. The proposed signage would be similar to those currently in the County at intersections. This signage would more for the direction of pedestrian traffic.

Council Member Clemons asked for explanation of what is being asked of the City by the DDDA.

Mr. Cordle said the DDDA is seeking final approval and authorization from the City to move forward with the signage. The DDDA will bear the cost of the posts and the merchants will pay for the shingles for their businesses.

Mr. Cordle said assistance from the City Public Works Department with setting the posts would be appreciated.

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There was discussion regarding the City assisting with installation of posts either by installing them or making provision for installation during Streetscapes.

There was discussion of the size of the proposed signage compared to similar signage in Madison, GA.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman said he is supportive of the wayfinding signage, but the City will need to keep the pedestrian crosswalks marked well.

Public Works Director Buchanan said the crosswalks will be marked with a new plasticized material that will last much longer than paint and be more visible.

Council Member Larson asked if the merchant will have to maintain their sign or replace it when it becomes worn.

DDDA Chairman Owens replied that it has been considered to add an amount to the cost of the sign for maintenance.

Council Member Norton asked who will maintain and manage the wayfinding signage.

Mr. Cordle replied the signs will be maintained and managed by the DDDA. The shingle type signs are 24" by 6" and will be placed on a post that is 8 feet high once installed.

There was discussion regarding sight distance obstruction; posts for wayfinding signage highlighting the fact that other signposts in the downtown area are not in good shape and other aesthetic improvements bringing to the fore front more items that need improving or refurbishing.

City Manager Schmid said it is his intention to stretch Streetscapes funding to get as much downtown improvement as possible.

There was discussion regarding reserving a portion or percentage of the wayfinding signage space for businesses that are off the square; design of the signs and the city doing other things to grow downtown such as development of parks.

Review of Ordinance 75-1 Water and Sewer Rates, Amendment 46

City Manager Schmid gave a review of Ordinance 75-1 Water and Sewer Rates, Amendment 46 and stated there will be no increases in residential rates only to industrial, institutional and commercial customers.

Council Member Larson asked who would be impacted by the change in institutional rates. City Manager Schmid replied, the City, County, churches and the college.

Council Member Norton said he would like to reiterate that there is no increase in rates, fees or taps for residential customers and that revenue will cover expenses.

Review of Resolutions for Contracts Related to Budget for Fiscal Year 2018

Finance Director Marlowe said the contract for Tourism Services will be executed by resolution at the September 5, 2017 meeting and has no significant changes.

Interim Chamber President Stephanie Jones questioned a change in terminology in the contract regarding the payment for lodging tax audits.

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Finance Director Marlowe said the change in payment would only be for new audits, not the ones currently underway.

There was discussion regarding the change in Section 8 of the agreement for tourism services including budgeting issues for the chamber; if no deficiency is detected in audits there is no fee for conducting them and the City not holding 5% of lodging tax for administrative costs as the County does.

City Manager Schmid said this is not a significant issue, we could consider capping the amount the Chamber would be required to pay at \$5,000.

Discussion of Bid awards for Transportation Enhancement Grant and Local Maintenance Improvement Grants for Streetscape Projects

Public Works Director Buchanan explained the necessary bid awards for Transportation Enhancement Grant and Local Maintenance Improvement Grants for Streetscape projects.

There was discussion regarding all LMIG projects underway and upcoming including the difference in off-system grants and those that cover DOT roads. Consideration of approval of the bid awards is on the agenda for the Special Called Meeting immediately following.

Dollar General – Permission to install well

Public Works Director Buchanan reviewed Dollar General's request for permission to install a public water service well at their proposed location 400 feet south of the intersection of Morrison Moore Parkway East and U.S. Highway 19 Business referring to a memo included in the agenda packet detailing the cost of installation of service line to the location or the city installing a well.

Council Member Larson asked for an explanation of city service area as opposed to inside the city limits. Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman explained that the service area extends past the city limits but does not necessarily have service lines installed to serve customers that may be out of the city limits, but still in the service area.

There was discussion regarding the well only being used by Dollar General and if service lines are installed near their location they would have to connect to city water service.

City Manager Schmid said this brings up the issue of the City implementing an extension plan that would allow budgeting annually for extension of service lines into the portions of the city service area that currently has no lines.

Vietnam Veterans Helicopter Association's visit to Dahlonega July 4, 2018

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman said the visit to Dahlonega July 4, 2018 will only be a side trip for spouses and he will advise if it turns into something that warrants recognition by the City.

Discussion of SPLOST list for discussion with Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners

City Manager Schmid advised that the Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners is ready to move forward with SPLOST meetings with the City and he has developed a list with staff input for Council to consider.

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There was discussion regarding the anticipated SPLOST collection amount and percentage the City may receive.

Council Member Norton said the last SPLOST the City received was to renovate the waste water treatment plant and he would like to see a large portion future SPLOST funds committed to expansion of the water system in an effort to lower rates.

Council member Clemons said the largest problem the City is facing is parking and he would like to see a large portion of SPLOST funding committed to parking improvements.

City Manager Schmid said the categories on the proposed list are intentionally broad with the intention being that the City is not restricted to specific projects.

Council Member Gaddis said the new SPLOST will require negotiation with the County. We should make our list for 7 million dollars and specify 1.2 million for water system improvements.

Council Member Norton said the SPLOST is not a given, it is approved by vote and if the citizens that vote are given an opportunity to give input on what it will be utilized for they may be more willing to vote for it. It is also wise to have some catch-all projects on the list that are not too defined.

City Attorney Doug Parks said the County typically caps the City's portion of SPLOST at population percentage which is 17.

Resident Joanne Taylor said if new water lines are installed, the City should consider installing conduit for fiber optics installation in the future.

City Manager Schmid said the Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners will meet September 5, 2017 to present their list of SPLOST projects. The City will then be asked to meet with the County to present a list of projects.

Discussion of Purchase of a Pump for the Wimpy Mill Pump Station Upgrade

City Manager Schmid said the pump purchase has been funded through Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority and will be on the special called meeting immediately following for approval.

The work session ended at 5:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly A. Smith
City Clerk