



**CITY OF DAHLONEGA WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 21, 2017, 4:00 P.M.
MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Dahlonega City Council met Thursday, September 21, 2017 in the Council Chambers in City Hall at 4:00 p.m. for a Work Session.

Council Members Roman Gaddis, Bruce Hoffman, Ron Larson, Mitchell Ridley and Mayor Gary McCullough were present.

City Manager Bill Schmid, City Attorney Doug Parks, Finance Director Melody Marlowe and City Clerk Kimberly Smith were present.

Review of Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Third Quarter Budget Amendment Resolution 2017-18

City Manager Schmid told the Mayor and Council that the materials relating to the third quarter budget amendment are in their packet and Finance Director Marlowe is present to answer any questions.

There were no questions.

Review of Resolution 2017-19, A Resolution of the City of Dahlonega, GA to Establish a Franchise Fee Applicable to Holders of Cable and Video Franchises Issued by the State of Georgia

City Manager Schmid introduced Greg Fender of Local Government Services, LLC who gave a presentation regarding franchise fees for small cell antennas and how many carriers are lobbying for control at the State level rather than locally.

Mr. Fender explained what small cell antenna are, how they operate and the model agreement Georgia Municipal Association recommends. Mr. Fender emphasized the importance of cities adopting a resolution to ensure franchise fees for any providers controlled at the state level.

Discussion of University of North Georgia's request for a traffic signal at the intersection of SR9 and Alumni Drive

City Manager Schmid said Ken Crowe Assistant Vice President for Facilities for the University of Georgia is present to discuss the City's approval of a traffic light installation at the intersection of Alumni Drive and SR9. Mr. Schmid said he has communicated with the University about their commitment to pay the costs of the light and their installation of sidewalks leading to the intersection. It now seems that the University wants to defer commitment to construct a sidewalk.

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Mr. Crowe said the University conducted engineer studies that show that the traffic signal is warranted at Alumni Drive and SR9 for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The University will pay all the cost of the traffic signal and maintenance. The University cannot execute an agreement with Georgia Department of Transportation for the signal. It has to be executed between the City and GDOT, so he is here requesting that approval from the City.

City Manager Schmid said when the signal was first considered Council asked that he discuss the sidewalk requirement with the University. He has done so and the University now does not want to commit to sidewalk construction along with the traffic signal.

City Manager Schmid reviewed plans with the Mayor and Council showing the proposed sidewalks and traffic signal.

Mr. Crowe said the sidewalk in question cannot be constructed now due to ongoing construction of the Convocation Center. The University wants to wait to construct the sidewalk to see how pedestrian traffic will flow once the Convocation Center is open.

Mayor McCullough asked how a determination could be made regarding pedestrian traffic if there is no sidewalk.

City Manager Schmid replied that this is often determined by the path worn into the grass from pedestrian traffic, however the City has discretion on where the sidewalk is constructed in relation to the traffic signal. Mr. Schmid said that this issue would not be before the Mayor and Council now if the University had provided a firm date for construction of the sidewalk.

Council Member Gaddis asked when the second entrance to the Convocation Center will be constructed. Mr. Crowe replied there are budget constraints for the second entrance at this time. Mr. Crowe said the anticipation was originally for two entrances and two traffic signals. Because GDOT has changed the requirement for signal distances between traffic signals from 1,000 feet to 1,300 feet, the second traffic signal may not be possible.

There was discussion regarding the University not being bound to city regulations regarding mandatory sidewalk construction.

Council Member Gaddis said this is a safety issue because when the Convocation Center is open and having events people will be parking and walking to the center and a sidewalk is necessary.

Council Member Ridley said there are many new crosswalks with no sidewalks and he would be inclined to require a commitment to the sidewalk before the City approves the traffic signal.

Mr. Crowe said that he was not aware the University would not follow the two-year commitment for construction of a sidewalk.

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City Manager Schmid said he has not received confirmation of a commitment to construct a sidewalk and asked Mr. Crowe if he could commit to construction of a sidewalk in two years if the traffic signal were to be approved by the City.

Mr. Crowe said that he could strongly say that a plan for a sidewalk would be in place in two years and the University will aggressively pursue a sidewalk in that area.

Council Member Larson asked Mr. Crowe to state exactly what he is committing to regarding construction of a sidewalk now. Mr. Crowe replied that would be just the construction of a sidewalk from the proposed traffic signal to West Main Street.

Council Member Ridley said the University owns all of the property across the street except Jim Cone's property and all that would be required to construct a sidewalk on that side of the street is permission from Mr. Cone.

Council Member Ridley said if the City came to the University with a reverse offer and said we may get you a traffic signal in two years if you build a sidewalk it would not work very well.

Council member Larson said the City works very hard to have a good work relationship with the University. It is frustrating to have something like this to come forward when the university knows what the City requires even though the University is not bound to meet those requirements. Due to safety issues, a commitment from the University that the sidewalk will definitely be constructed should be required prior to the City approving the traffic signal.

Mayor McCullough said if the City puts a two-year commitment for a sidewalk on the contract and Frank McConnell, Senior Vice President for Business and Finance for the University signs it then it will be funded. Mayor McCullough asked if Mr. Crowe has any problem with the City having a two-year requirement as a condition of approving the traffic signal. Mr. Crowe replied he would not.

Discussion of Proclamation for Red Ribbon Week, October 21 – 31, 2017

Mayor McCullough asked if there were any objections to this proclamation. Council Member Hoffman asked who requested the proclamation. City Clerk Smith replied it was requested by the Greater Rome Young Marines.

Discussion of Proclamation for Lumpkin Library Centennial Day

City Manager Schmid told the Mayor and Council that this proclamation which is in their packets is a joint proclamation between the City and County. It is in conjunction with the ten-week celebration of the Lumpkin Library's Centennial.

Discussion regarding appointment to Historic Preservation Commission

City Manager Schmid said this item was placed on the agenda last week prior to the September 11, 2017 meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission being cancelled due to inclement weather. There is a matter currently ongoing with the H. P. C. and this appointment should be deferred until that matter is completed.

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Mayor McCullough said the appointment to City Commissions and Boards used to occur upon recommendation of the Mayor and Council. Now the City requires any person desiring to be on a Commission or Board to complete an application.

Discussion of Call for Special Election

City Attorney Parks referred the Mayor and Council to recommendation made by outside council who are election specialists. Mr. Parks said the recommendation is to call for a special election to fill the unexpired term in Post 2.

Mr. Parks said he is still in conversation with Lumpkin County Elections regarding their ability to hold this election for the City.

Mr. Parks said elections are not as flexible as they once were. When a special election is called it has to be advertised in the legal organ then you have to wait twenty-nine days to hold qualifying. The City knew that former Councilmember Norton would be resigning to run for Mayor early enough to do the call for the special election required to fill that unexpired term and to have his name put on the electronic ballot. Since former Council Member Clemons did not announce his resignation from Council Post 2 until the last day of qualifying, quorum issues and the meeting cancellations caused by inclement weather have delayed this call.

There was discussion regarding possible changes to the City Charter to allow for appointments to fill short unexpired terms of office and changes in voting quorum requirements. Mayor McCullough directed these items be on the October 19, 2017 Work Session agenda.

Mr. Sam Norton asked if the cost to conduct a special election is known. City Attorney Parks replied, if we can merge it in with the general and special election we have contracted with Lumpkin County to hold, it would be minimal. I do not know the cost if we have to hold a separate election.

There was discussion regarding the call of the election for Post 2 being done in a manner that the term would be the unexpired amount of the current term and the new term that begins January 1, 2018. City Attorney Parks said the call was not done in that manner because it was not known that former Council Member Clemons would be resigning.

Council Member Gaddis said the person elected to fill the unexpired term of Post 5 will begin serving as soon as elected. City Clerk Smith replied, that is correct. The winner of the special election for Post 5 will take office as soon as the election results are certified.

Council Member Gaddis said because of the potential of happening again is why the City Charter needs to be changed. Posts 1, 2 and 3 election dates coincide with the election date for Mayor, so if someone in either of those posts resigns to run for Mayor we could have to have another special election for a term that only lasts a little over a month.

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Update of status of codification of City Ordinances by MuniCode and go live date

City Manager Schmid reported that a soft start for use by Mayor, Council and City Staff to use for two months and then it will go live. Council Member Gaddis asked when that would occur. Mr. Schmid replied most likely January or February.

S.P.L.O.S.T. Update

City Manager Schmid said the City has committed a quorum for a meeting Tuesday September 26, 2017 at 4:30 p.m. and are waiting for the County to confirm. It is anticipated at that time there will be an intergovernmental agreement for the 2020 for a split of twenty-one percent to the City with seventy-nine percent to the County.

Mr. Schmid said the City has prepared a project list for the 2020 S.P.L.O.S.T. that will need to be pared down in time for the call for the election which should be around January 2018. There were options the County could proceed with. One being for the County to proceed without an agreement with the City. That would have provided the City with proceeds based upon population which is just over seventeen percent. Since we have agreed to an intergovernmental agreement, the S.P.L.O.S.T. can be for six years and there is no cap on what the City can receive. The anticipated total collection county wide is \$18,900,000. If that amount grows the City will continue to collect proceeds based upon the agreed upon twenty-one percent for the six-year period.

Water Conservation Plan and Drought Contingency Plan

City Manager Schmid said there are recommended changes to the City's Drought Contingency Plan, Water Conservation Plan and Reservoir Management Plan. They will be taken to a meeting with E. P. D. for informal comments and changes that will be incorporated into the plans which will then be prepared for review by Mayor and Council for submittal in the first quarter of next year.

The work session ended at 5:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Smith
City Clerk