



**CITY OF DAHLONEGA
WORK SESSION
JULY 25, 2016
4:30 PM
MINUTES**

The Dahlonega City Council met Monday, July 25, 2016 at 4:30 p.m. for a work session. Council Members Michael Clemons, Ron Larson, Sam Norton, Mitchell Ridley and Mayor Pro Tempore Bruce Hoffman were present. (Council Member Roman Gaddis arrived at 4:35 p.m.)

Staff Members in attendance were City Manager Bill Schmid, DDA Director, Finance Director Melody Marlowe, Planning Director Chris Head, Public Works Director Mark Buchanan and City Clerk Kimberly Smith. Also present was DDA Director Rebecca Shirley.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman said discussion of item 2. d. Ordinance 2002-7 Amendment 1, an Ordinance to Control Noise Pollution will be postponed for additional review by the City Attorney and the agenda will have addition of items 4. City Manager Comments and item 5. City Council Comments.

DDA - Review DDA 2016-2019 Economic Development Strategy Implementation Plan & Goals

DDA Director Shirley gave an overview of the seven goals developed for the Down Town Development Authority for the 2017 – 2019 period. Those goals are:

1. Increase in-town housing (quantity, variety and affordability)
2. Develop a parking management plan
3. Increase the number of hotel rooms/break out space in downtown
4. Expand the footprint of downtown
5. Position Dahlonega as the film production hub of the Georgia Mountain Region
6. Create environment for entrepreneurship
7. Maintain Organizational Excellence

DDA Director Shirley reported that two of the seven goals are on for discussion today, with the first being parking management.

DDA Goal 2 - Parking Management

There was discussion regarding the recommended members for the Parking Committee that will be on the agenda for approval at the regular meeting August 1, 2016. Suggested members for this committee are: DDA Member and Downtown Property Owner Hal Williams; Manager of Shenanigan's and Bourbon Street Grille Deb Rowe; Co-owner of Pueblo's Mexican Cuisine Laura Estrada; Council Member and Owner of Pic Nic Café, Dahlonega Dessertery and Humble Candle Sam Norton; Donna Logan of Adams Insurance; Mike Miller of Hall House Hotel; Co-owner of Dahlonega Square Hotel Catherine Ariemma; Park Place Hotel Owner Creston Warner; and Downtown Property Owner Kevin Ashe. Ex-officio members suggested are DDA Director Rebecca Shirley, City Manager Bill Schmid, City Ambassador Nancy Lovingood and one representative from the Chamber of Commerce.

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DDA Director Shirley directed everyone to the executive memo from Tim Haahs & Associates regarding parking study services. DDA Directory Shirley referred to seven key recommendations from the memo:

1. Establish Parking Committee.
2. Research parking management software.
3. Research paid parking systems.
4. Maintain an updated inventory of all parking spaces and uses.
5. Draft paid parking implementation policy (to include phases if necessary).
6. Conduct an inventory of signage and banner placement to ensure user friendliness.
7. Ensure parking management philosophy maintains ADA compliance.

Council Member Larson asked if the Parking Committee would look at all these and other options. DDA Directory Shirley replied, "Yes, the first step is to educate the Parking Committee then the committee will look at a variety of options".

There was discussion regarding implementation of an escalating fine schedule for repeat parking violation offences. MAYOR Pro Tempore Hoffman asked if escalating fine amounts would first be reviewed by the Parking Committee. DDA Director Shirley replied that the committee can review the suggested escalating fines prior to the Council adopting them or the Council can take action to adopt escalating fines when they and in the amounts they deem necessary.

Council Member Norton asked if the Parking Committee will be appointed or recommended by Council. City Manager Schmid said it will start as a Committee, but it could recommend a Parking Authority or Parking Utility in the future.

Council Member Clemons expressed his support for escalating fines for repeat parking violations by the same offenders.

Council Member Norton said if the parking restrictions were to be more strictly enforced things would change regarding repeat offenders.

DDA Director Shirley told the Council that the escalating fine schedule that was in their packet was just included as an example not as a recommendation of fine amounts.

There was discussion regarding PILOP – Payment in Lieu of Parking which requires developers to pay in to a fund for future parking or infrastructure if they are not able to provide the number of parking spaces required for what is being constructed in a specific zoning.

Council Member Norton and Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman expressed support of a PILOP program. Council Member Clemons said he would like the Parking Committee to look at all options that could be available if a developer or expanding business could not provide required parking per zoning.

There was discussion regarding the cost of constructing a parking space versus the value of a parking space in terms of retail monies spent.

There was further discussion regarding other uses of PILOP funds, such as encouraging bicycle travel, trolley or shuttle service and providing optimal space to cars that have multiple occupants.

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Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman asked if there is a time line or time limits for completion of goals for the Parking Committee. DDA Director Shirley replied that there are both short-term and long-term goals.

DDA Goal 4 - Expanding the Footprint of Downtown

There was discussion regarding expanding the footprint of Downtown with the use of funding from special tax districts. DDA Director Shirley gave a brief over view of Business Improvement District (BID) and Community Improvement District (CID) tax districts.

City Manager Schmid said that both types of tax districts are more complicated than the outline provided. Not many towns the size of Dahlonega use special tax districts, but since Dahlonega is a tourist destination and university town it may be an option worth exploring.

There was discussion regarding BID and CID not being imposed by government, but being a property owner driven tax.

Planning – Dahlonega Trail Fest

Dahlonega Trail Fest Organizer Tom Lamb and Bryan Powell of R.E.I. were present to address the council regarding this year's festival.

Planning Director Chris Head said the festival is a recurring festival that is approved along with the required alcohol permit. The applicants have asked to amend the application by adding a mini pump track for mountain bike riding at Hancock Park and paddleboard lessons at the reservoir.

Mr. Powell explained the use of the pump track. Mr. Powell said Hancock Park is the preferred area for the track and should not cause any damage to the grass as long as the track gets relocated each day. There was agreement that the contract provided by R.E.I. would include language any damage to the park, including grass, will be repaired.

Mayor Pro Tempore Bruce Hoffman directed the approval of Dahlonega Trail Fest amended application be on the consent agenda August 1, 2016.

Event Organizer Tom Slavic addressed the Council regarding changes to the First Night event for 2016. Mr. Slavic explained the charity that the event funds, Jeremiah's Place, is a transitional home for homeless families.

Planning – First Night

There was discussion regarding the application for First Night on December 31, 2016 including reasons for closing the square, times for closure, parking and the venue changes that take place during the event.

Council Members Clemons, Larson and Norton all expressed concern regarding closure of the Square early on New Year's Eve and how it could affect merchants. There was discussion regarding how to keep the Square open later without impeding the event and notification to the merchants and restaurants on the Square about the event and closure times for traffic and parking.

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Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman directed this discussion to continue at the Work Session on August 18, 2016 in anticipation of approval at the Regular Meeting September 6, 2016 to provide time for notification to merchants and restauranteurs and give them opportunity to give comment.

City Attorney Doug Parks explained the procedure necessary to adopt the Consolidated Zoning Ordinance and Official Zoning Map at the Regular Meeting August 1, 2016. Attorney Parks said this ordinance is in an adoptable format and includes all zoning changes made over the years. Attorney Parks said all zoning in place now will remain the same and the only changes are to procedures and standards for zoning changes. Attorney Parks said both the map and ordinance were reviewed by the Planning Commission July 11, 2016 and recommendation was for approval.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman reported that discussion of Ordinance 2002-7 Amendment One, an Ordinance to Control Noise Pollution, will be postponed to allow additional research by the City Attorney.

Public Works – Recycling Contract

City Manager Schmid told the Council their packet contained the current Recycling Contract in place and a new month-to-month contract.

There was discussion regarding recycling costing the city approximately \$40,000.00 per year versus the amount it cost when done in house which was approximately \$83,000.00 per year. Discussion continued regarding the number of customers using recycling, the cost per customer if the annual cost were to be passed on to all customers, and the potential use of a drop-off location for recycling costing more than the current curbside pickup provided by the Sanitation Solutions.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman directed the contract for recycling services with Sanitation Solutions to be on the consent agenda for approval at the Regular Meeting on August 1, 2016.

City Manager Comments

City Manager Schmid said that the consent agenda on August 1, 2016 will include approval of the addition of Finance Director Melody Marlowe as a signer on all City of Dahlonega bank accounts.

City Manager Schmid recognized guests Doug Sherrill of Land Development Professionals and Don Huff and Robert Whittington of the Huff Company. City Manager Schmid explained that the guests are involved in a development, in the planning stages, that will be located in the county, utilize city utilities and most likely require an intergovernmental agreement between the city and county with regard to inspections.

Doug Sherrill said the project plans are being drafted to city specifications and the county will conduct all inspections at the development, except utility inspections. The development which will have eighty units will be located off Highway 60 on the right near Pizza Hut. Mr. Sherrill said there will be a forty-foot sound mitigation buffer and the only portion of the development that will be visible from Highway 60 will be the entrance.

City Council Comments

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman asked for Council comments specific to outstanding item or unfinished business.

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Council Member Norton – Mount Hope Cemetery property identification. Planning Director Chris Head said there will be an article in the *Nugget* this week seeking information from property owners.

Council Member Gaddis – Expansion of Park Street Historic District. City Manager Schmid said this is included in the FY 2017 budget.

Council Member Clemons – Striping project in Downtown area and on Square. City Manager Schmid replied that the city is looking at alternatives other than paint and have explored using thermoplastic that will last longer when driven over.

Council Member Norton – Wimpy Mill Park – City Manager Schmid said this was not included in the fiscal year 2016 budget, what was budgeted was the existing picnic area across Morrison Moore from the Water Treatment Facility.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman – Clean-up and a picnic table in the area on the reservoir across from the Water Treatment Plant

Council Member Ridley – Development of an ordinance regulating Jake breaks. City Manager Schmid said this has not been pursued due to the liability because of rough terrain and angles of ascent and descent in this area.

Council Member Clemons – Early retirement options. City Manager Schmid replied that Melody and Kim are currently working on this.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly A. Smith
City Clerk