



**CITY OF DAHLONEGA
WORK SESSION
AUGUST 18, 2016, 4:00 PM
MINUTES**

The Dahlonega City Council met for a Work Session on Thursday, August 18, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Room in City Hall. Council Members Michael Clemons, Roman Gaddis, Ron Larson, Sam Norton and Mayor Pro Tempore Bruce Hoffman were present.

Staff members City Manager Bill Schmid, City Attorney Doug Parks, Finance Director Melody Marlowe, Planning Director Chris Head, and City Clerk Kimberly Smith were present. Downtown Development Authority Director Rebecca Shirley and Consultant Charles Trammell were present.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman called for a motion to amend the agenda by moving item ten to item one, because Mr. Charles Trammell has another meeting following this one. Motion made by Council Member Norton, seconded by Council Member Larson. Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman called for a vote with all in favor saying aye, same sign for those opposed. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Memorandum of Understanding for Transportation Enhancement Grant with Georgia Department of Transportation

After brief review, all Council members present indicated they were in agreement with Memorandum of Understanding for Transportation Enhancement Grant with Georgia Department of Transportation, which will be on the consent agenda September 9, 2016.

First Night Dahlonega

Discussion regarding First Night Dahlonega with regard to closing of parking lots and the Square included the following. Council Member Norton's concern with closings prior to 5:00 p.m. Notices sent to all merchants from the Downtown Development Authority regarding the event. Contacts made with merchants and restaurants by the coordinators at a Merchants' Association meeting and by the coordinators going to each restaurant to encourage them to stay open later to feed the event attendees.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman directed approval of First Night Dahlonega be placed on the September 6, 2016 consent agenda.

Contract to Provide Professional Franchise Fee Review Services Relative to Windstream

City Manager Schmid reported that execution of the contract to provide professional franchise fee review services relative to Windstream discussed at a previous meeting would require a resolution.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman directed Resolution 2016-11 authorizing the City Manager to execute a Franchise Fee Review Compliance Service Agreement be placed on the consent agenda September 6, 2016.

Dahlonega – Lumpkin County Chamber & Visitors Bureau Second Quarter 2016 Report

Chamber President Amy Booker and Tourism Director David Zunker gave the Dahlonega – Lumpkin County Chamber & Visitors Bureau Second Quarter 2016 Report verbally detailing the report that was included in the agenda packet. Ms. Booker touched on how the Chamber utilized the Main Street Award for advertising Dahlonega. Ms. Booker previewed the newly published Visitor Guide and Wedding Planner.

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Mr. Zunker went over marketing and promotion portions of the second quarter report and gave details on the upcoming Wine Trail event. Mr. Zunker reviewed increases in bed tax that were up 15% from last year overall throughout the city and county.

Michelle Codrington – Nugget Memorial

Resident Michelle Codrington discussed a request for space to place a memorial statue of the dog Nugget. Ms. Codrington thanked everyone who attended in support of this memorial request. She then gave a brief history of Nugget's life in Dahlonega and said that the dog had received recognition in the *Dahlonega Nugget, Atlanta Constitution Journal*, had a Facebook page that had followers from all over. Ms. Codrington said this could be a shining example of the type of caring people in Lumpkin County who cared for Nugget.

John Roberts Nugget's attorney since 2011, stated fact that the City of Dahlonega is 178 million square feet and all that is required for the memorial is sixteen square feet. Mr. Roberts said he has kept watch over financial matters and legal requirements for Nugget since 2011. Roberts said he would handle any compliance issues for the memorial. Mr. Roberts said no money is being sought from the city, only a space to place the memorial statue.

There was discussion regarding what the statue would be made of, the size of the statue, if it would be on the ground or on some sort of base or pedestal and liability issues.

John Melfurbur from the University of North Georgia said the memorial will be sculpted by students and be a life size statue that looks exactly like Nugget.

Discussion continued concerning placement of the memorial due to property on the square around the Gold Museum belonging to state and most city owned property on the Square being sidewalks and roadways. There was suggestion to place the memorial at Hancock Park.

Mayor Pro Tem Hoffman said in order to choose a spot that will be feasible, draft renderings of the statue and several suggestions for location need to be provided to the City Manager and Downtown Development Authority so the sites can be investigated and a staff recommendation can be made to Mayor and Council.

Old Water Treatment Plant System Upgrade Engineering Design Services

City Manager Schmid said while this is not the largest of the twenty-seven pump stations that the city owns, it is one of the most important by way of the flow that comes to it and its location next to Yahoola Creek on the North side of Wimpy Mill Road. The pump station is having difficulty and there is a stand-by pump station located next to it in case of failure. This pump station will require re-design because technology has changed since it was built. City Manager Schmid said his recommendation is to use the design services of G. Ben Turnipseed Engineers, who have been in Georgia for thirty to forty years and have a good reputation with local governments particularly with wastewater and pump stations. The proposal is for nine percent of the construction costs.

There was discussion regarding when approval would come before the Mayor and Council.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman directed this item to be on the September 6, 2016 consent agenda.

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Owens Farm Lift Station Proposal for Capacity and Feasibility Study

City Manager Schmid said that this is work he would proposed being done at the same time as the pump station work because there are advantages to doing so. City Manager Schmid said that this is not a city project but is for Highland Trace, a development being done in the county with intent to annex into the city. The proposal for capacity and feasibility study will be done for the city, but since it is a production cost of the developer the cost will be borne by the developer not the city.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman directed this item be on the consent agenda September 6, 2016.

Three Hour Parking at Choice Street Lot

There was discussion regarding signage at the Choice Street Parking lot changing to indicate a three-hour parking limit before classes resume at UNG. Discussion regarding what UNG is doing in an attempt to assist with the parking issue was favorable. Council Member Larson commended the college's willingness to work with the city and likewise. Further discussion ensued regarding repeat parking violators and the powers of the Parking Committee potentially changing from an ad hoc committee to a parking authority or some other form with more power to allow for necessary changes without the need for Council approval.

Bratzeit Outdoor Alcohol Sales

City Clerk Smith explained that Bratzeit has received approval to construct an enclosed patio on their restaurant. Outdoor alcohol sales will be added to the alcohol license for that location once the patio has been constructed and inspected to ensure that all patrons will enter the outdoor space through the restaurant.

Renewal of Probation Services Contract

City Attorney Parks explained that this is a renewal of the annual contract for probation services. Attorney Parks said that there will be a few minor changes made to the contract with regard to reporting and administrative issues to enhance fiscal responsibility.

Council Member Norton asked, are there other competing probation companies that operate in this area. City Attorney Parks replied that there is conceivably one other company that could provide the service. Council Member Norton stated that he asked because the city sometimes puts services, not necessarily professional services, out for bid and negotiates for prices. City Attorney Parks replied the city does not pay for probation services, the fees are paid by the probationers.

There was discussion regarding the types of reports received from probation and how they are used for accounting as well as legal purposes in case management. Attorney Parks said the document to be approved at the council meeting will include changes to enhance the fiscal responsibility and accountability of the probation provider with the Finance Department.

Public Safety

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman reported for the Public Safety Committee and said the committee is comprised of Council Members Larson Ridley and himself.

The options that the committee looked at were:

1. Do nothing
2. Hire a Town or City Marshall (which would be the same as a Police Chief)
3. Contract with the Sheriff's Office (stats on that provided)
4. Form a Dahlonega Police Department

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Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman reported that the committee visited four other city police departments that had different combinations of 2 to 4 full-time, part-time and reserve officers. If Dahlonega decided to form their own police department there would have to be three fulltime employees with the first hire being a chief who would have to create the entire department.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman said the budgets of the other police departments reviewed ranged from \$175,000 to \$300,000 with the department that had four full-time officers being the highest and included four vehicles and six fully certified reserve officers.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman said that the Lumpkin County Sheriff's office would like to see Dahlonega have their own police department with the intent to have uniformed officers on the square and certified officers to cite for city code violations as well as other crimes.

Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman said negatives to having a police department in Dahlonega would be start-up costs of vehicles, fully outfitting the officers with equipment and uniforms as well as a place for them to operate. Dahlonega having a police department would most likely result in a request from the 911 center for the city to fund an additional dispatcher. Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman said his prediction would be the anticipation that if Dahlonega formed a police department it would be expected to eventually morph into a full time department, which is not the intent.

There was discussion regarding proposal of a contract with the Lumpkin County Sheriff's Department for two full-time deputies that would be dedicated to Dahlonega to enforce codes and issue citations and use of new technology such as tag readers.

Discussion continued regarding the problem the Sheriff's Office currently has keeping a full staff of deputies and how that could affect their providing deputies to Dahlonega.

Former Council Members Gerald Lord and Ralph Prescott both spoke in opposition of contracting with the Sheriff's Department due to issues experienced in the past such as the deputies that were supposed to be in Dahlonega being called away to handle issues in the county.

There was discussion regarding pros and cons of a contract with the Sheriff's Department vs. a police department, difficulty in directing an elected official as opposed to an appointed one and private security officers not having arrest powers.

Discussion continued regarding the option of creating a place for Georgia State Patrol in hope they would place more patrol in the area.

City Manager Schmid said if the Council wished to pursue contractual services with the county he could schedule a meeting with the Sheriff, public Safety Committee and himself to begin working on development of a contract. Also helpful, may be the consideration of some equipment purchases for the Sheriff's Department to make their job easier.

Former Council Member Ralph Prescott stated his opinions regarding the need for Dahlonega to have a police department because of past contracts not working.

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Mayor Pro Tempore Hoffman asked County Commissioner Doug Sherrill to speak. Commissioner Sherrill said he could see both sides of the situation, contracting with the Sheriff would be a contract with an elected official and could potentially be a moving target. Commissioner Sherrill said the county is currently in financial crisis due to property tax exemptions.

There was further discussion regarding service delivery and the possibility of tax city residents pay to the county coming back to the city for public safety.

The meeting closed with the suggestions of the city and county meeting, hearing from residents of Dahlonega regarding their preferences, the need for more uniformed presence on the Square as opposed to a police force.

The meeting adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly A. Smith