



CITY OF DAHLONEGA

Council Meeting - Amended Minutes

May 06, 2024, 6:00 PM

Gary McCullough Chambers, Dahlonega City Hall

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 706-864-6133.

Vision – Dahlonega will be the most welcoming, thriving, and inspiring community in North Georgia

Mission Statement - Dahlonega, a City of Excellence, will provide quality services through ethical leadership and fiscal stability, in full partnership with the people who choose to live, work, and visit. Through this commitment, we respect and uphold our rural Appalachian setting to honor our thriving community of historical significance, academic excellence, and military renown.

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Mayor Taylor called the May 6, 2024, City Council Meeting to order at 6:01 P.M.

Mayor Taylor thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

PRAYER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE AMERICAN FLAG

Mayor Taylor asked Councilmember Brown to lead the prayer and Councilmember Ariemma to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to approve the agenda with one change to item 5 only to discuss Ordinance 2023-06 Amendment Two.

Motion made by Councilmember Reagin to approve the agenda with a change to item 5 only to discuss Ordinance 2023-06 Amendment Two, Seconded by Councilmember Gaddis.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Motion made by Councilmember Gaddis to approve the consent agenda items, Seconded by Councilmember Brown.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

1. 2024 National Travel and Tourism Week Joint Proclamation
Allison Martin, City Manager
2. 2024 Georgia Cities Week Resolution
Allison Martin, City Manager
Strategic Priority - Communication
3. Application for a Consumption on Premise Alcoholic Beverage License – Georgia 7 Pie LLC dba 7 Pie Pizzeria
Doug Parks, City Attorney & Mary Csukas, City Clerk
Strategic Priority - Communication

4. Application for a Retail Alcoholic Beverage License – Dahlonaga Tours and More LLC
dba Dahlonaga Walking Tours Ghost and Grapes Tasting Room
Doug Parks, City Attorney & Mary Csukas, City Clerk
Strategic Priority - Communication

PUBLIC COMMENT – Limit to 3 minutes

Mayor Taylor opened the floor to public comments.

Mr. Larson made a public comment about the Sunrise Rotary Club Tribute Dinner that would be held on May 23rd. He thanked the Nugget for helping them with the invitations. He hopes to see the Council Members at the dinner on May 23rd.

Mr. Gribben made a comment on the signage ordinance and suggested that the Director of Planning and Zoning position be filled.

Mr. Gordineer made a comment about how well the Bear on the Square festival went. He complimented the staff on how well the square looked for the festival. He asked a question about item number 7. He questioned the sign ordinance.

Ms. Labbell made a comment about the sign ordinance. She stated she was a professor at UNG and had students paint murals in town and questioned what areas of Dahlonaga would be included in the ordinance.

Ms. Rowe made a comment thanking the council for looking into the ordinance longer to get a better evaluation of the sign ordinance. She also stated that she is looking forward to getting a better look into the alcohol ordinance. She encouraged the council to have more engagement towards business owners in Dahlonaga.

Mr. Garrick made a comment about the sign ordinance. He suggested having a public hearing with the business owners.

Mrs. Ariemma made a public comment about the sign ordinance and suggested keeping the town historic.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to approve meeting minutes a-d.

Motion made by Councilmember Bagley to approve meeting minutes a-d, Seconded by Councilmember Brown.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

- a. Council Meeting Minutes - March 4, 2024
Sarah Hunsinger, Assistant City Clerk
- b. City Council Work Session Minutes - March 18, 2024
Sarah Hunsinger, Assistant City Clerk
- c. City Council Meeting Minutes - April 1, 2024
Sarah Hunsinger, Assistant City Clerk
- d. City Council Work Session Minutes - April 15, 2024
Sarah Hunsinger, Assistant City Clerk

APPOINTMENT, PROCLAMATION & RECOGNITION:

1. Oath of Office Robert Conaway - Planning Commission

JoAnne Taylor, Mayor

Strategic Priorities - Effectively Manage Growth

Mayor Taylor swore in Robert Conaway to the Planning Commission.

2. Appointment to the Planning Commission

JoAnne Taylor, Mayor

Strategic Priorities - Effectively Manage Growth

Mayor Taylor appointed Jane O'Gorman to the Planning Commission.

3. Re-appointment to the Downtown Development Authority Board

JoAnne Taylor, Mayor

Strategic Priorities - Effectively Manage Growth

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to re-appoint Tony Owens to the Downtown Development Authority.

Motion made by Councilmember Gaddis to re-appoint Tony Owens to the Downtown Development Authority Board, Seconded by Councilmember Ariemma.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CITY REPORTS:

4. Financial Report - March 2024

Allison Martin, City Manager

City Manager Martin stated that the annual property tax bills were levied and mailed by the Tax Commissioner on October 1st with a December 1st due date. To date, 96.60% of the 2023 taxes budgeted have been collected. Sales tax collections remain strong and reflected collections 6.66% greater than FY23. The change in the State law related to internet sales taxation has continued to impact on our collections positively. The annual revenue for Insurance Premium Tax is \$667,217 this year, which is 22.37% greater than last fiscal year. This amount is based on a pro-rata population formula. Alcoholic Beverage Tax and License revenue collected year-to-date is slightly less than the prior year. Permit revenue collected year-to-date is greater than last year's collections due to a change in the fee schedule. Department expenditure is in line with budget expectations. Downtown Development Authority results are on track with the budget. Hotel/Motel tax revenue collections experienced a sharp decline in April 2020 with the onset of the Pandemic. Beginning in September 2020, collections have remained higher than in previous years. FY24 is 3.10% more than FY23. There are two factors for the increase above pre-pandemic levels. One is the change to the law regarding collection by third-party online booking agencies, the other is the new hotel. Water and sewer sales are trending along with budget projections. Revenue from water sales and sewer charges is 3.01% greater than FY23. All department expenses are in line with the budget. Solid Waste Fund Refuse Collection Charges are revenues that are 1.97% greater than the prior year. Expenses meet budget expectations. Stormwater Enterprise Fund transfers in and Indirect Charges reflect a six-month allocation. Stormwater utility charges were first billed in January 2021 and meet budget expectations. Expenses are related to the startup of the new utility, projects, and allocated staff pay and benefits.

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to accept the March 2024 Financial Report.

Councilmember Ariemma stated that people should be proud of the staff for the financial situation that the city is in. He complimented the staff for doing such a great job.

Councilmember Bagley stated that all of the information on the Dahlenega.gov website is under the government tab.

Motion made by Councilmember Bagley to accept the financial report of March 2024, seconded by Councilmember Ariemma.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

5. Ordinance 2023-06 Amendment Two and Ordinance 2024-03 Amending Sign Regulations
Doug Parks
Strategic Priority - Communication

City Attorney Parks stated that in Ordinance 2023-06 Amendment Two, the Planning Commission held two meetings regarding sign regulation changes instead of the one anticipated. Hence, the adoption schedule needs to be adjusted. The moratorium is set to expire on May 6th, so there is now a need for a short extension of the moratorium until May 21st. Approval of the extension will be requested at the May 6th meeting.

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to approve the extension of the moratorium until May 21st.

Motion made by Councilmember Gaddis to approve the extension of the moratorium until May 21st, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

CONTRACTS & AGREEMENTS:

6. GDOT PI#0016628 ROW Mowing and Maintenance Agreement Pedestrian Bridge
Mark Buchanan, City Engineer
Strategic Priority - Infrastructure

City Engineer Buchanan stated that the City of Dahlenega staff have worked with GDOT for the past five years on designing a pedestrian bridge at Lake Zwerner. As this project moves closer to bidding and construction, GDOT has requested the city enter into an agreement for right-of-way maintenance and mowing. The city is already maintaining the identified area, and this is a formality required as part of their processes. This document also requires the pedestrian bridge to be inspected at regular intervals. GDOT and its consultants currently handle all city and county bridge inspections. This is not expected to change but, again, is part of the process of moving this project forward to bidding and construction. This information was sent after the work session, but due to GDOT timelines, it is due back before our next work session and meeting combination.

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to approve this agreement.

Motion made by Councilmember Bagley to approve this agreement, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

Councilmember Ariemma asked what part of the bridge the city would be responsible for.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

7. Peaks of Dahlonega Water Main Upsize Agreement

Allison Martin, City Manager

City Manager Martin stated that the city staff worked with the owner/developer of the Peaks of Dahlonega to upsize a water main from what was designed for their project to what the water/sewer master plan indicated should be installed in the project area for future growth/expansion of the water system. While discussed, there was never a formal agreement adopted by the parties. As this amount of the water line upsizes exceeds the manager's approval threshold, the city council must approve the agreement and subsequent payment of funds to the contractor. The cost sheet is attached for reference and to show what great value this is for the rate-paying customers on our system.

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to approve this agreement.

Motion made by Councilmember Ariemma to approve this agreement, Seconded by Councilmember Gaddis.

Councilmember Ariemma asked if changing the master plan from 8 inches to 12 inches would be helping the city.

Councilmember Bagley asked if the original master plan was 8 inches, and it was changed to 12 inches.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

OTHER ITEMS:

8. District 2 Officers for 2024-2025

Allison Martin, City Manager

City Manager Martin states that cities in each district are asked to vote on their officers annually for the coming year. The officers roll positions each year until they transition off, with a first ballot sent out to cities that wish to nominate someone to fill a vacant position in February of each year. In April, the cities receive the final slate of officers and are asked to vote. The vote must be returned to GMA by May 17th. Due to the timing of our meetings, the council will need to vote at the May meeting. This year, Mayor Taylor is slated to be the President of the District 2 officers. Please note this ballot was updated by GMA to reflect that Jim Conley, Mayor of the City of Blairsville, who was the District 2 committee nominee for 3rd Vice President, does not wish to seek the nomination for the coming year. The District 2 District Officers and nominating committee were notified and have discussed the options per the by-laws. Their decision for the nomination for District 2, 3rd Vice President is Courtney Umbehant, Mayor, City of Lavonia.

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to approve the District 2 Officers for 2024-2025.

Councilmember Ariemma congratulated Mayor Taylor on getting the role of President for the 2024-2025 District 2.

Motion made by Councilmember Gaddis to approve the District 2 Officers for 2024-2025, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

9. Dahlonega Sunrise Rotary Clock Donation

Allison Martin, City Manager

City Manager Martin stated that the Dahlonega Sunrise Rotary Club recently voted to purchase a four-sided clock and donate it to the City of Dahlonega for placement in the downtown area. The clock's approximate value is \$27,000. The clock would have the town name, contain

the Rotary name/emblem, and the year of incorporation. The proposed location requested by the club is noted in the attached file. They are asking the city to assume ownership of the clock, prepare the site for installation, and assume the power bill and the long-term maintenance after the three-year warranty period ends.

Mayor Taylor called for a motion regarding the Dahlonega Sunrise Rotary Clock Donation.

Councilmember Ariemma thanked the Dahlonega Sunrise Rotary for the Clock Donation. He questioned the material of the clock.

Mr. Larson stated that there is a 3-year warranty on the clock, which is a four sided clock.

Motion made by Councilmember Brown to accept the Dahlonega Sunrise Rotary Clock Donation, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Clerk Comments

City Manager Comments

City Attorney Comments

City Council Comments

Mayor Comments

Mayor Taylor asked that comments be made before moving into Executive Session.

Ms. Csukas, City Clerk, had no comments

City Manager Martin had no comment

City Attorney Parks had no comment

Councilmember Gaddis had no comment.

Councilmember Ariemma stated that we are the best small town in Georgia, and to keep it that way, people need to participate in meetings to make the right decisions.

Councilmember Reagin stated that Bear on the Square was great and thanked everyone who worked.

Councilmember Bagley thanked everyone for coming to the meeting tonight. He said people need to participate to help them make the right decisions. Stated that the Holly has a play being shown and that it is great. He also congratulated UNG softball.

Councilmember Brown stated that Bear on the Square was great and thanked everyone for their comments.

Mayor Taylor thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and stated that they would keep listening.

10. Executive Session - Real Estate

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to enter Executive Session regarding real estate at 6:53 P.M.

Motion made by Councilmember Gaddis to enter Executive Session regarding real estate, Seconded by Councilmember Brown.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to adjourn the Executive Session at 7:04

Motion made by Councilmember Reagin to adjourn the Executive Session, Seconded by Councilmember Brown.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to adjourn the May 6, 2024, City Council Meeting.

Motion made by Councilmember Reagin to adjourn the City Council Meeting, Seconded by Councilmember Brown.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Gaddis, Councilmember Ariemma, Councilmember Reagin, Councilmember Bagley, Councilmember Brown

Approved this 3rd day of June, 2024.

DocuSigned by:
Mayor JoAnne Taylor
51BAA48D7790497... JoAnne Taylor, Mayor

Attest: DocuSigned by:
Sarah Waters
310ED11635D5472... Sarah Waters, City Clerk.