



CITY OF DAHLONEGA

Council Work Session Minutes

February 19, 2024, 4:00 PM

Gary McCullough Council Chambers, Dahlongega 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 – Dahlongega will be the most welcoming, thriving, and inspiring community in North Georgia

Mission Statement - Dahlongega, 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.

OPEN MEETING

Mayor Taylor called the February 19th, 2024, City Council Work Session to order at 4:00 P.M.

Mayor Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming.

PRESENT

Mayor JoAnne Taylor
Councilmember Roman Gaddis
Councilmember Ryan Reagin
Councilmember Ross Shirley
Councilmember Lance Bagley
Councilmember Daniel Brown

ABSENT

Councilmember Johnny Ariemma

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion made by Councilmember Reagin made a motion to approve the agenda, Seconded by Councilmember Shirley.

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

BOARD & COMMITTEES

1. Dahlongega Downtown Development Authority/Main Street – January 2024

Ariel Alexander, Downtown Development Director

Mayor Taylor asked the council if they had any questions for Downtown Development Director Alexander.

Councilmember Shirley asked questions about the Christmas committee.

Downtown Development Director Alexander stated that there were not many changes.

She stated that everyone was very grateful for all the work that the city crews did. There

was a great success with Kids Day, and they stated that this is something that would continue.

Councilmember Gaddis asked about the bears around the square.

Councilmember Bagley asked when the bear sculpture would be finished and where it would be.

2. Cemetery Committee—January 2024

Quataunda Armstrong, Dahlonaga Cemetery Committee

There were no questions regarding the Cemetery Committee reports.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS AVAILABLE AT: <https://dahlonega.gov/category/department-reports/>

Councilmember Shirley asked about the Public Works report regarding Hancock Park and what the plans are for fixing the park.

City Manager Martin stated that they have been discussing this as staff for the past three weeks and have decided to try over-seeding in those areas.

APPOINTMENT, PROCLAMATION & RECOGNITION: (Vote at Council Meeting)

Mayor Taylor swore in a new member of the Cemetery Committee, Rick Harris.

Mayor Taylor thanked everyone in the community who volunteered on boards and committees to help the community.

Councilmember Bagley thanked Mr. Harris for everything he does for the community.

Mayor Taylor and City Manager Martin recognized Jackie Grizzle as the employee of the year.

Mayor Taylor and City Manager Martin thanked him for all his hard work.

3. Discussion of Appointments Cemetery Committee

Mark Buchanan, Director of Public Works

Strategic Priorities - Effectively Manage Growth

City Manager Martin stated that the Cemetery Committee wants to amend its by-laws so that people can continue to serve on that committee without having to sit out a year. The committee and the director of public works in Buchanan recommended this.

Mayor Taylor asked when this would be done.

City Manager Martin stated this would be completed before the next council meeting.

4. Discussion of Appointment to the Planning Commission

Mary Csukas, City Clerk

Strategic Priorities - Effectively Manage Growth

Ms. Csukas, the City Clerk, stated that they are asking for the reappointment of Robert Conaway for one more year.

5. Discussion of Appointment to the Tree Committee

Mark Buchanan, Director of Public Works

Strategic Priorities - Effectively Manage Growth

City Manager Martin stated that Kimberly & Chris Mihok have voiced that they would like to be added to the Tree Committee and have completed their applications.

Councilmember Gaddis asked if it matters if they are residents of the city.

PRESENTATION

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS

6. Benefit Plan Updates

Doug Parks, City Attorney

Strategic Priorities - Communication

City Attorney Parks stated that The Council has been presented with two housekeeping matters concerning benefit plans. This is a revised plan document for the city's 457 Deferred Compensation plan and a restatement of the 401 Defined Contribution Plan. He recommends that this be adopted.

Mayor Taylor stated that they have a defined benefit plan to help reward their employees and a promised pension.

7. Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement

Allison Martin, City Manager

Strategic Priorities - Communication

City Manager Martin stated that the city approved an agreement in 2020, which should be renewed every four years, allowing cities and counties to access reimbursement money and support during emergencies. The county provides countywide Emergency Management services, and the EMA Director and Deputy Director can request state resources on their behalf.

Councilmember Bagley asked about the language of the agreement.

AGREEMENTS & CONTRACTS

8. Asphalt Leveling and Resurfacing City Streets LMIG Projects #2024-001 In-House Paving Projects #2024-002

Vince Hunsinger, Capital Projects Manager

Strategic Priorities - Infrastructure

Capital Projects Manager Hunsinger stated that this item informs the Council of the results of the bids to complete asphalt leveling and resurfacing various city streets in Dahlonega, identified as LMIG Project #2024-001 and In House Paving #2024-002. The available budget for the LMIG project as of 1/30/24 is \$123,000.00, a combination of funds from the City's SPLOST fund for the LMIG grant match for paving and the GDOT Local Maintenance & Improvement Grant Program. The available budget for the In-House Paving project is \$210,000. The lowest bid for the LMIG project is \$97,827.75. The low bid for the In-House Paving project is \$203,046.32. He informed the public that LMIG is a grant that comes through the state, and they give money to help build their infrastructure.

Councilmember Shirley stated that there were a lot of bids this time, and he hopes that it continues.

OTHER ITEMS:

9. Alcoholic Beverage License Consumption on Premise - The Bear Necessities Café, LLC

dba The Bear Necessities Cafe

Doug Parks, City Attorney & Mary Csukas, City Clerk

Strategic Priorities - Communication

City Attorney Parks stated that the application is complete, and he recommends approval.

Councilmember Shirley stated that he read the length of the application and was curious about what part of the application is state requirements and what is local requirements. He also asked how long it takes to get these through.

Ms. Csukas stated that the state requires more paperwork. She stated that this restaurant provided more paperwork than needed for our local application.

10. Alcoholic Beverage License Consumption on Premise – 27 on Park LLC, dba Twenty-Seven on Park

Doug Parks, City Attorney & Mary Csukas, City Clerk

Strategic Priorities - Communication

Mayor Taylor stated that some additional paperwork was brought today and asked the council to look over this before voting at the council meeting.

City Attorney Parks stated that the consumption on-premises license application for Twenty-Seven on Park is a provincial license with affirmative statements and conditions. The license allows alcohol service to guests and their related parties if the license is in effect, and no events not involving a hotel stay should be conducted on the premises. The applicant reaffirms these statements by accepting the license and confirms that immediate revocation will occur if any of these statements are no longer true. The application requests beer, wine, and distilled spirits.

Mayor Taylor asked if the owners wanted to speak on the subject.

The owners spoke to the Mayor and Council about the extra paperwork and gave them more information.

Mayor Taylor recommended tabling further discussion until the next work session.

Councilmember Bagley questioned if we would be holding them back from any events if they postponed them for another month.

Councilmember Gaddis stated that the only item that is before the council is to approve basically an extension of what was already happening. He informs them that all other plans must go through HPC.

City Attorney Parks suggests that action be taken soon.

Mayor Taylor states that this is an interim solution from the owners, and they are determined to abide by our standard licensing.

Councilmember Gaddis asked if the goal was to have a restaurant there.

Councilmember Shirley asked the council if there was any reason why they would delay this.

11. Dahlonga Walking Tours and More LLC – 2024 Guided Tours Permit

Mary Csukas, City Clerk

Strategic Priorities - Communication

Ms. Csukas stated that Dahlonga Tours and More LLC requests a 2024 Cemetery Guided Tours Permit. Ordinance 2022-12 allows for Commercial Walking Tours of

Mount Hope Cemetery. This ordinance requires any tour operator seeking permission to use Mount Hope Cemetery property to be approved in advance by the City Council. The tour operator must abide by any directions of the City Manager or designee and specific conditions enumerated in these regulations.

Councilmember Shirley asked if this is normally brought to the council and why this license must be renewed.

City Manager Martin stated that it would take council action to allow this special permit to occur outside of the cemetery hours.

COMMENTS – PLEASE LIMIT TO THREE MINUTES

Mayor Taylor asked the council if there was anything they would like to have moved to the consent agenda for the next meeting.

Motion made by Councilmember Shirley to move Benefit Plan Updates and Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement to the consent agenda, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

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

Clerk Comments

Ms. Csukas had no comments.

City Manager Comments

City Manager Martin had no comments.

City Attorney Comments

City Attorney Parks had no comments.

City Council Comments

Councilmember Gaddis had no comments.

Councilmember Reagin had no comments.

Councilmember Shirley had no comments.

Councilmember Bagley congratulated Lumpkin County High School boys' basketball on going to state.

Councilmember Brown had no comments.

Mayor Comments

Mayor Taylor had no comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Taylor called for a motion to adjourn at 4:40 P.M.

Motion made by Councilmember Shirley made a motion to adjourn, Seconded by Councilmember Reagin.

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