

April 11, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor LaWanda Tatum called the regular meeting of the Lawrenceville Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. on April 11, 2023.

ROLL CALL

Roll was called. Present: Mayor LaWanda Tatum; Council Members H. B. Brockwell, Jr., Dora Hardy, Robert F. Pecht, III, Nakai Peterson, Alice Talbert and Anne Williams.

Absent: Council Member, Teya Whitehead and Town Attorney, W. C. Outten, Jr.

Also present: Town Manager, Everette Gibson, Town Clerk, Wanda Johnson, Special Projects Coordinator, Kimberly Martin, Assistant Chief, Natasha Brown, Officer Martisa Stith, Justin Thomas, Dr. Barbara J. Harris, Dr. Alfonso Seward, Alfreda Reynolds, Public Works Director, Randy Lynch, Leonard Rose, citizens and the press.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Tatum led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Mr. Pecht and carried, Town Council voted to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on March 14, 2023, as received, suspend the reading and file. Ms. Williams abstained as she said she did not receive a copy of the minutes. We will get the minutes to Ms. Williams.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to approve the agenda as presented.

RECOGNITION OF CITIZENS

LEONARD ROSE

Leonard Rose shared that his birthday is May 17 and he will be 60 years old. He said he will graduate with a degree in theology and he plans to write two books. Mayor Tatum congratulated Mr. Rose on his upcoming birthday and graduation.

LAWRENCEVILLE EDA

Mr. Brockwell reported that the LEDA met this afternoon. They discussed marketing, events after hours, and a business directory. The Main Street training program is scheduled for April 26, 2023.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Tatum commented she is still learning, in particular about water and wastewater. She thanked Mr. Brockwell for being her tutor. She and Mr. Gibson attended a Tobacco Commission meeting in South Hill. Mayor Tatum is working with Virginia State University Small Farm Outreach Program planning for a community give away scheduled for May 21, 2023. There will be clothing, lawn and garden, electronics and dry goods. Lunenburg County is also a partner in that project. There will be a community action day on Friday, April 14, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. sponsored by The Improvement Association. Mayor Tatum met with Mike Dotti, Director of the IDA, on Friday and had a very good meeting. She is excited to see that we are moving forward.

REPORT OF TOWN ATTORNEY

There was no report.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

CONSIDERATION OF ACCOUNTS

Mrs. Johnson reported the bills total \$265,509.26. On a motion by Mrs. Talbert, seconded by Ms. Peterson and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to pay the bills in the amount of \$265,509.26 and post to the proper accounts.

DR. ALFONZO SEWARD, CHAIR, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

SCHOOL PROJECT INFORMATION

Dr. Seward provided information on the plans to build a new elementary school and an athletic complex that will hold 1500 people and have an eight lane track. The County is requesting that the Town convey property to the Brunswick County School Board. The parcel is 65 ft. by 65 ft. and has a water tower that is no longer in use. It is adjacent to the Bus Garage and Tech Center. The property would become part of the site where the School Board plans to build the athletic complex.

REPORT OF TOWN MANAGER

PEEBLES AND SOUTHERN STATES PROJECTS

Southern States - Mr. Gibson reported that BDX Performance LLC, located in the Southern States building, will hold a ribbon cutting on April 28, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. Peebles – We are waiting to hear from the Department of Historic Resources regarding Part 2 of the Historic Preservation Certification application. Once approved, Part II will be submitted to the National Park Service for their review of the project. Ms. Williams commented that the Town is not realizing money on the sale of the building. She understood that construction would start and payment would be made in January. Mr. Pecht commented that the Town had no choice regarding the payment made to DHCD.

GENERATOR BID BAY 16 AND MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Mr. Gibson reported the bid for Bay 16 and the municipal building was opened on March 29, 2023. There was only one bidder. The generator bid for the Lawrenceville Town Office was \$385,495, and the Alberta Bay 16 Pump Station generator bid was \$178,125. The recommendation from B & B Consultants is to reject these bids. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to reject the bids as recommended by B & B.

BID FOR MAYFIELD AND FOOD LION WATER TANK MIXERS

Only one bid was received for the Mayfield and Food Lion Elevated Tanks for the TTHM removal system, the mixer projects. The bid was \$208,338, and B & B Consultants recommends accepting this bid from Southern Corrosion.

There will be an additional cost to run electric power through Dominion Energy to the Food Lion Tank. This cost will be \$18,730.64. The cost for solar power would have been an additional \$100,000 and will not be utilized.

On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to accept the bids from Southern Corrosion and Dominion Energy in the total amount of \$227,068.64.

BUDGET FY2023-2024 ASSUMPTIONS DRAFT BUDGET

The draft budget and assumptions for FY2023-2024 are in the packets tonight. Mr. Gibson reviewed the assumptions as listed. Revenue: 20% water and sewer rate increase, no garbage rate increase, no tax rate increase. Expense: three percent raise for employees, Town continues to pay 100% of the eligible employee's individual health insurance premium, Town will pay 20% of the additional premium for dual or family, if

selected, continue to outsource mowing for water and wastewater plants, include \$20,000 estimated cost for redistricting, building code enforcement position, on an as needed basis.

PREMIERE OF HOMETOWN HUSTLE

The premiere of Hometown Hustle, Season 2: Episode 8, “Brunswick” will be April 27, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. Featured Brunswick businesses will be Browntown Farms, Shady Shack Bar and Grill, Poplar Pointe Marina and The Butterfly Rose Flowers and Gifts.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

ADVERTISE FY2023-2024 BUDGET FOR PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Pecht reviewed the proposed budget and assumptions for FY2023-2024. A copy is in the packet. Mr. Pecht thanked Mr. Gibson and staff for putting the budget together. A draft budget is presented in April for a public hearing in May and final adoption in June. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mrs. Talbert and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to advertise the proposed FY2023–2024 Budget as presented for a public hearing at the Town Council meeting on May 9, 2023.

AUTHORIZATION FOR SIGNATURES ON BANK ACCOUNTS AND CREDIT CARD

On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mrs. Talbert and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to authorize that Mayor LaWanda Tatum be added to sign the signature cards on the Town bank accounts and credit card. Former Mayor Scott Martin will be removed and Mayor LaWanda Tatum will be added to the accounts.

Mr. Pecht commented on the current budget, reporting the ARPA funds will be expended this month when bills are paid. The ARPA funds have distorted the financial statement. We did get good projects done with ARPA funds. The TTHM project is blowing a hole in the budget. The total cost of that project is roughly \$800,000. The other thing putting pressure on the budget is two of our largest customers’ consumption is down. Ms. Williams asked about the possible impact on the next fiscal year budget if the private prison closes. Ms. Williams said the public needs to understand there is no guarantee that the GEO contract will be renewed. Mr. Pecht said a closure would mean much higher water rates and 350 jobs would be lost in the community as well. He said we also need to be aware of the shortage of water and wastewater operators, stricter regulations and higher costs. Ms. Williams asked about raising tax rates. Mr. Pecht responded if tax rates were doubled, it would generate an additional \$250,000 in revenues.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The fire report for March 2023 is not available tonight.

Fire Chief Justin Thomas reported several members attended a project with Alberta Fire Department and the Red Cross to install free smoke detectors in the Alberta first due area. Chief Thomas has signed up with Red Cross to provide that in the Lawrenceville first due area. They will map out the town, knock on doors, complete Red Cross forms and install up to five detectors per home for free. The pork chop dinner on April 1st did okay. The cornhole tournament is April 29, 2023. The golf tournament is May 12, 2023, at the Gasburg Country Club. The ladder truck should be back next week from repairs. A siren battery charger connection has been ordered. Mayor Tatum commented she prays for them when she hears them go out and she enjoyed watching the training maneuvers in the parking lot. She was impressed and proud.

PERSONNEL

Mr. Brockwell reported there is updated information in the add packet on salary breakdown by job title and department. The current job opening list is in the packet. We still need water and wastewater operators. Ms. Williams asked if we could partner with SVCC and Virginia State for an internship. Mr. Brockwell said we have looked into that. The Town currently pays the tuition for operator classes once an employee is hired.

POLICE

Ms. Hardy reported the police report is in the packet. The department has been busy.

PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT

Mr. Brockwell commented we have been fortunate to have the ARPA funds that have helped out quite a bit with equipment issues. Town employees refurbished an old dump truck.

STREETS, LIGHTS & CEMETERY

Mrs. Talbert reported Alvin “Luck” Dugger did a super job fixing a hole in the street at New Street and Sharp Street. Mayor Tatum forwarded an email to Mr. Gibson regarding there is a red ant problem in the cemetery again.

TOWN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Brockwell commented that the committee has met and Mrs. Martin is working on several projects. There is an impressive list and Mrs. Martin has done an excellent job. The SPDC project list is in the packet. Ms. Williams reported on the garden at 313 High Street. We have received additional mulch from Scotts. We have a commitment for cinder blocks from Lawrenceville Building Supply. Mr. Lynch and his team have helped out. Sheriff Brian Roberts will provide community service labor. The garden is coming along.

WATER/WASTEWATER

Mr. Brockwell reported there will be another meeting with the county about the water tower on April 24, 2023.

HOUSING CODE ENFORCEMENT

Mr. Gibson reported that Mr. Veliky is working with the owner of the building next door to VCU Massey Cancer. A special commercial window is on order that is expected to correct the problem.

PARKS/RECREATION

Mr. Gibson reported the artist is working on a drawing for the mural. The artist might attend the next meeting.

WELLNESS

There was no report.

FARMER’S MARKET

Ms. Williams advised she will not be able to continue to serve on this committee due to another commitment. Mayor Tatum said we will ask someone else to serve on the committee.

LAWRENCEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

There was no report.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

DEA National RX Take Back, Saturday, April 22, 2023, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Red, White & Blue Parade, Saturday, June 24, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

Sparks in the Ballpark Spectacular, Saturday, June 24, 2023, 7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

Premiere of Hometown Hustle, Season 2, Episode 8, “Brunswick”, Thurs., April 27, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

Mrs. Martin reported on the plans for the Sparks in the Ballpark Spectacular. There will be a wonderful event with a professional fireworks display, food vendors and a parade before the fireworks. The Feature Attraction Band and DJ Bird will perform. Money donations have been received for the community events fund. On motion by Ms. Hardy, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to donate \$1500 to this event from the Town Development budget. Mayor Tatum thanked Mrs. Martin and commented people are very excited about the upcoming event.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

RAM PROJECT \$1500

Town Council agreed to match the donation from previous years and contribute \$1500 to the 2023 RAM project as discussed at the March meeting.

CLOSED SESSION-MOTION TO ENTER THE CLOSED MEETING

“Mr. Mayor, I move the Lawrenceville Town Council enter into a closed meeting pursuant to the provisions of Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended for the purpose of discussing personnel matters and a real property matter.” Motion: Mr. Pecht. Second: Mr. Brockwell. Roll call vote: Mr. Brockwell, aye; Ms. Hardy, aye; Mr. Pecht, aye; Ms. Peterson, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, absent; Ms. Williams, aye.

MOTION TO EXIT A CLOSED MEETING AND RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

“Mr. Mayor, I move the closed meeting be adjourned and the Lawrenceville Town Council convene again in open session.” The motion was made by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Ms. Hardy and carried by all ayes.

CERTIFICATION

“Be it resolved to the best of my knowledge (i) only public business matters exempted from open meeting requirements, under Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting.” Motion: Mr. Pecht. Second: Mr. Brockwell. Roll call vote: Mr. Brockwell, aye; Ms. Hardy, aye; Mr. Pecht, aye; Ms. Peterson, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, absent; Ms. Williams, aye.

ADVERTISE FOR A PUBLIC HEARING TO CONVEY PROPERTY

The County is requesting that the Town convey a property to the Brunswick County School Board. The parcel is 65 ft. by 65 ft. and has a water tower that is no longer in use. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Ms. Hardy and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to advertise for a public hearing to be held at the Town Council meeting on May 9, 2023, regarding the conveyance of real property and a water tower on the property to the Brunswick County School Board.

RETIREMENT OF EVERETTE GIBSON

On motion by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Mr. Pecht, and carried by all ayes, Town Council, with deep regret, accepted the letter of retirement from Everette Gibson effective June 1, 2023.

APPOINTMENT OF TOWN MANAGER

On motion by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Mrs. Talbert, and carried, Town Council voted to appoint Randall Lynch to the position of Town Manager effective June 1, 2023, as recommended by the Personnel Committee. Ms. Williams voted nay.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, a motion was made by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Ms. Hardy and carried by all ayes to adjourn the meeting.

LaWanda Tatum, Mayor

Wanda Johnson, Clerk