

February 11, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Scott Martin called the regular meeting of the Lawrenceville Town Council to order at 7:30 p.m. on February 11, 2020.

ROLL CALL

Roll was called; Present: Mayor Scott Martin; Council Members: Joyce Bland, H. B. Brockwell, Jr., Phil Gilson, Dora Hardy, Robert F. Pecht, III, Alice Talbert and Teya Whitehead. Also present: Town Attorney, W. C. Outten, Jr., Town Manager, C. J. Dean, Police Chief Everette Gibson, Officer Brian Glover, Town Clerk, Wanda Johnson, Mike Dotti (late arrival), Anne Williams, Jane Adams, citizens and the press.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Gibson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Mrs. Talbert and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on January 14, 2020, as received, suspend the reading and file.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

RECOGNITION OF CITIZENS

As Mike Dotti was not present yet, his presentation was moved to Town Development. There were no other requests to speak.

LAWRENCEVILLE EDA

Mr. Gilson reported that the LEDA term of Tarek Ibrahim ends March 2020. He is willing to accept reappointment. On motion by Mr. Gilson, seconded by Mr. Pecht and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to reappoint Tarek Ibrahim to the Lawrenceville EDA for another term. Rodney Elmore's term expires March 2020 and he has submitted his resignation. Nicole Young has resigned due to moving from the Benchmark Bank in Lawrenceville to the South Hill branch. On motion by Mr. Gilson, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council accepted their resignations with regret and thanked them for their service. Town Council and the LEDA will consider recommendations for new appointments to the LEDA. The minutes of the LEDA February 4, 2020, meeting are in the packet.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Martin reported that he has been in touch with Echo World and they promise him they are hiring and moving along and progress is taking place. Mayor Martin, Mr. Dean, Mr. Dotti and Mr. Currin showed several buildings to a prospective investor this past week. The HGTV Home Town television show is accepting video applications for a town makeover. Mr. Dotti was in charge of a video application for Lawrenceville. It is a great video and letters were also submitted. Mayor Martin volunteered at the junior high school, participating in a Real Money Real World program for the students. There will be a County Fun Day on June 6, 2020. Mayor Martin also spoke at Lawrenceville United Methodist Church for Scout Sunday.

REPORT OF TOWN ATTORNEY

There was no report.

REPORT OF TOWN MANAGER

OLD SOUTHERN STATES BUILDING

Mr. Dean reported that there are still challenges and no definitive answer with KASS. There has been no response to emails that were sent to them.

CURRENT SIDEWALK PROJECTS

North Main Street Sidewalk – Construction is scheduled to begin February 24, 2020, if the weather breaks. Tobacco Heritage Trail/Gazebo Sidewalk – The final paperwork has been sent to VDOT and we are waiting for final authorization to begin work on that project.

REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Mr. Dean reported that the full plan is about 200 pages and he pulled out the information important to the Town for the packet. The plan will go to VDEM, then FEMA, then back to the Town for adoption.

2045 RURAL LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Mr. Dean advised this is about a 400 page plan and he included information in the packet pertinent to the Town. At some point, Town Council will need to adopt this as an appendix to the Comprehensive Plan. Both of these plans were put together by the Southside Planning District Commission. VDEM also had input. All Towns had an opportunity to participate and on-line surveys were available.

BUDGET REQUESTS FOR 2020-2021

Mr. Dean reminded Council that a draft budget is needed for the April meeting. The finance and personnel committees have met and are working on this.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Pecht reviewed the January financial statement. This report is on a cash basis. He pointed out that a majority of the debt service has been paid for the year. The water intake project and the incident at the water treatment plant are impacting finances. FEMA reimbursement for the water intake project (hurricane damage) may not be received for two years. The water treatment plant flood incident expenses are being submitted for insurance reimbursement. Budget requests are needed by March. A draft budget is presented in April for a public hearing in May and adoption in June.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The January report is in the packet. The fire department responded to 30 calls in January. Of the 30, 4 were in the town limits and 26 were outside the town limits. Also, 20 were in the LVFD First Due area, with 10 being mutual aid to other agencies. Approximately 141.5 man hours were expended. It was a difficult month, with 11 structure fires in January. There were two fatalities in one fire. Also, one of the structures was the former St. Paul's President's House. It was a demanding month and we appreciate all of the fire department's good work. Ms. Hardy reminded everyone that the LVFD will cook a Brunswick stew on February 29, 2020.

PERSONNEL

Mr. Brockwell reported that the committee met. There is a 4.4% increase in the health insurance this year. We are looking to continue that as we have in the past. We are looking at an increase in steps for licensure. Randy Spence, Chief Operator at the water treatment plant, has retired after 42 years. There will be recognition for his service.

POLICE

Ms. Hardy advised that the report is in the packet. Chief Gibson reported that two traffic stops yielded 20 pounds of marijuana and weapons. The department has also been on buzzard patrol. They are federally protected birds. Chief Gibson has been in contact with the state and they will be coming out to assess the situation. The older police cars have been parked around town at stores as a preventative measure.

PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT

Mr. Brockwell commented there is no additional report at this time. Some issues will be looked at for the next fiscal year.

STREETS, LIGHTS & CEMETERY

Mrs. Bland reported that the mowing contractor is willing to mow the grass in the cemetery again this year. We will be asking for bids for this year.

TOWN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Brockwell invited Mr. Dotti to make comments at this time. The HGTV Home Town video application was shown to Council. It is available for viewing on the IDA website. Mr. Dotti reported that the video has also been sent to 22 different developers. At least one is very seriously interested. He is considering the Peebles and Sledge & Barkley buildings. He has been on his third visit. The roof has been secured on the Sledge & Barkley building.

Mr. Dotti reported that Echo World is ready to go. Wiring is run. They need two more nurses on staff per Medicare standards. They need two nurse practitioners and a doctor on staff. This will be a digital health care center and full service pharmacy. Downstairs will be a call center function as a result of the digital health care. The point of the digital health care is that Medicare and Medicaid are trying to reduce visits. Mr. Dotti commented that we are very low on doctors and that Ben Carson has been pushing the digital health system.

Mr. Dotti commented that Council has received an update on what the IDA is working on. A draft update is in the packet. Mr. Dotti reported that in the last twelve months, the IDA has spent one quarter million dollars on consultants, purchasing buildings, making the video and working with POPS. The IDA needs help updating the historic district. He said the Town's district was last updated in 2000. He said a building built after 1950 is a non-contributing building and cannot get historic tax credits. He said they are also meeting with existing businesses and restaurants to see how they can help them. Not just with money, but with consulting. The IDA is willing to pick up half the tab on the historic district. The IDA has already paid a historical tax credit consultant.

Mr. Dotti reported KASS is not going where anyone hoped it was going. He said they are exploring alternatives for that. Mr. Dotti said all permits are in place for POPS. The liquor license is approved. POPS is waiting on a C.O. They are waiting on engineering as they are changing the use of the property.

Mr. Dotti said moving forward, they are very excited about the Sledge and Barkley building, working on St. Paul's College, and the video.

Mr. Gilson asked Mr. Dotti if he had had contact with the KASS owners in the last month. Mr. Dotti said yes.

The consultants for the St. Paul's College property have a start date of February 10, 2020.

Mr. Brockwell commented that the Town Development Committee feels like the historic resource designation is something we need to look at. We have been in touch with the Department of Historic Resources and were very sorry to find out that the DHR did not scan the Town's information from 2000 into its system. We understand they are working on that now. We have also learned that funding might be available through Hurricane Michael that would pay for some of this. The committee would like to use this when it becomes available. Hopefully, the timing will work for all concerned.

Mr. Dotti stated there is a time limit on the start in any other projects for POPS. The IDA has made the initial investment, but they are on a strict time line. Mr. Brockwell commented that he made it clear what the Town needed for the time line and he has not gotten it.

Mr. Brockwell reported that the committee also talked about the Main Street project. He said the constant is having someone from the local area to ramrod the whole thing. The Town is looking at things for a Main Street program. There is no doubt it would be a great program. There is some question if we are ready for the Main Street program.

Mayor Martin thanked Mr. Dotti, Mr. Brockwell and Mr. Dean. He said we would continue to look at the historic tax credits and programs. We need to work together to fill buildings that are vacant and help with the economy.

WATER/WASTEWATER

Mr. Dean reported that we had 2.7" of rain last week and for about 30 minutes filters at the wastewater treatment plant were overwhelmed and could not process the flow. DEQ has been notified that the WWTP test results were out of limits. The next day they were back in limits. We are keeping an eye on it. The water treatment plant testing equipment and heating system are back up and going. The electric actuated valve openers are not in yet. It is a lot better than it was, but still not completely back. We have received \$129,000 from our insurance so far. This is about a quarter of a million dollar claim. There will be a committee meeting following the council meeting tonight.

SAFETY

The reports are in the packet.

HOUSING CODE ENFORCEMENT

There was no report.

PARKS/RECREATION

There was no report.

WELLNESS

Ms. Whitehead reported that February is National Cancer Prevention Month. March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. She asked that everyone dress in blue for the March council meeting to show participation in cancer awareness.

FARMER'S MARKET

There was no report.

LAWRENCEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Dean reported that per state code, we can only have one council member on the planning commission. Mrs. Bland was the council representative on the LPC and Ms. Whitehead was a regular member of the LPC when she was appointed to Council. Mrs. Bland is resigning from the LPC and Ms. Whitehead will be the council representative on the LPC. We thank Mrs. Bland for her many years of service on the planning commission. The Town will need to appoint someone to take Ms. Whitehead's place as a regular member on the LPC.

UPCOMING ZONING REQUEST

Mr. Dean reported on an upcoming zoning request. Brunswick County owns the property at the old Primary School site located between Second Avenue, Third Avenue and Park Street. The County is requesting that the property be rezoned from R1, single family, to R3 for the proposed development of 48 apartments. A community meeting will be held on Thursday, February 20, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. The developer will be here to answer questions and plans will be available to view. This is a meeting for information only for the planning commission, community members and anyone interested. A public hearing will be scheduled later.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chamber Career Day – Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Brunswick Stew Tour – Saturday, February 22, 2020, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Rotary Chili Fundraiser – Thursday, March 5, 2020

CONSIDERATION OF ACCOUNTS

On a motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Gilson and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to pay the bills in the amount of \$227,291.62 and post to the proper accounts. A number of these bills are associated with the water treatment plant incident.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Mayor

Clerk