

June 9, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Scott Martin called the regular meeting of the Lawrenceville Town Council to order at 7:30 p.m. on June 9, 2020.

Mayor Martin announced that this meeting is being held using electronic means under an Emergency Ordinance adopted at the April 14, 2020, council meeting to allow for the continuity of government operations during the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

Public access has been made available through the web address:

www.gotomeet.me/TownofLawrenceville

Phone dial in: 1-646-749-3122 Access Code: 445-977-069

ROLL CALL

Roll was called. Present physically: Mayor Scott Martin; Council Members H. B. Brockwell, Jr., Phil Gilson and Robert F. Pecht, III.

Present electronically: Council Members: Joyce Bland, Dora Hardy, Alice Talbert and Teya Whitehead.

Also present physically: Planning Commission Chair, Cindy Pecht, Town Manager, Everette Gibson, Chief John Stith, Town Clerk, Wanda Johnson and Council Member Elect, Anne Williams.

Also present electronically: Planning Commission Members, John Miller and Cherrill Robertson, Town Attorney, W. C. Outten, Jr., citizens and the press.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chief Stith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

JOINT PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 6. B-G BUSINESS GENERAL, 6-1-32

As this time had been advertised for a public hearing on the proposed zoning amendment, Ms. Pecht opened the public hearing. Mr. Gibson read the proposed zoning amendment. The amendment allows mixed use, with at least one floor of finished space below the floor for residential purposes. The amendment would align with the historic overlay and the comprehensive plan. All residential uses are subject to requirements in the Rental Inspection District, the Virginia State Building Code and the Fire Code. There was no council comment. There was no planning commission comment. There was no public comment. Ms. Pecht declared the public hearing closed.

ZONING AMENDMENT APPROVED AND ADOPTED

Planning Commission - On motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mrs. Robertson and carried by all ayes, the Planning Commission voted to recommend to Town Council that the zoning amendment be approved and adopted as advertised. Motion: Mr. Miller, Second: Mrs. Robertson. Roll call vote: Mr. Miller, aye; Ms. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Robertson, aye; Ms. Whitehead, aye.

Town Council – On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried, Town Council voted to approve and adopt the zoning amendment to Article 6. B-G Business General District, 6-1-32, as advertised. Motion: Mr. Pecht, Second: Mr. Brockwell. Roll call vote: Mrs. Bland, aye; Mr. Brockwell, aye; Mr. Gilson, abstain; Ms. Hardy, aye; Mr. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, aye.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Ms. Hardy and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on May 12, 2020, as received, suspend the reading and file. Motion: Mr. Brockwell. Second: Ms. Hardy. Roll call vote: Mrs. Bland, aye; Mr. Brockwell, aye; Mr. Gilson, aye; Ms. Hardy, aye; Mr. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, aye.

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. Motion: Mr. Pecht. Second: Mr. Brockwell. Roll call vote: Mrs. Bland, aye; Mr. Brockwell, aye; Mr. Gilson, aye; Ms. Hardy, aye; Mr. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, aye.

RECOGNITION OF CITIZENS

There were no requests to speak.

LAWRENCEVILLE EDA

Mr. Gilson reported that the EDA has not been able to meet due to the pandemic. They do plan to meet on the next regular meeting date.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Martin reported that there was a peaceful protest in town last week. About 150-200 people participated. POPS Restaurant plans to open on July 1st. It will be drive up only at this time. Mayor Martin and Mr. Gibson met with representatives regarding Echo World. Echo World is moving forward and has employees working from home at this time. Mayor Martin thanked all employees in all departments for their hard work during these stressful times. Mayor Martin thanked Mr. Gilson for his service to the Town as a council member and working on the LOVE sign. Mayor Martin recognized Anne Williams. Her term as a council member will begin on July 1, 2020.

REPORT OF TOWN ATTORNEY

Mr. Outten reported that the Emergency Ordinance adopted by Town Council on April 14, 2020, will expire on June 14, 2020, unless readopted by Council. Mr. Outten recommended that Town Council readopt the ordinance and extend it for another sixty days. It will allow Council to meet by electronic means if needed during the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic.

EMERGENCY ORDINANCE TO ALLOW FOR THE CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

On motion by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Mr. Pecht and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to readopt the Emergency Ordinance and extend it another sixty days as recommended by Mr. Outten. Motion: Mr. Brockwell. Second: Mr. Pecht. Roll call vote: Mrs. Bland, aye; Mr. Brockwell, aye; Mr. Gilson, aye; Ms. Hardy, aye; Mr. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, aye.

REPORT OF TOWN MANAGER

OLD SOUTHERN STATES BUILDING – KASS

Mr. Gibson reported that the outer locks on the building have been changed. The one key is at the Town Office. Mr. Pecht commented on KASS walking away from the project. He would like for the town to make any appeal we can through the Tobacco Commission and/or our legislators. The town has made investments and had good faith throughout the project. Mr. Brockwell suggested that the town contact Jeff Reed with Virginia's Growth Alliance and invite him to come and give us advice on how we can go forward.

CURRENT SIDEWALK PROJECTS

North Main Street Sidewalk – Mr. Gibson reported that the light poles for the Main Street project will be delivered Wednesday and installation will begin on Thursday.

CABOOSE UPDATE

Russell Holt, our insurance adjuster, has advised that one option is salvage, removal and cleanup of the caboose at \$18,000 to \$25,000. Another option is to have T.J. Gaffney with Streamline Historic Services inspect the caboose and give an estimate on restoring it to 1950s pristine condition. Our insurance would pay for the restoration under replacement cost insurance with no out of pocket expense to the town. Mr. Brockwell requested that Mr. Gibson send out an email to all council members requesting their opinion on the caboose. Mr. Gilson has researched the caboose and given tours to railroad enthusiasts. He offered for the town to locate the caboose on the tracks on his glass factory property.

CARES ACT COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDS

Brunswick County received \$1.4 million in CARES Act relief funds. The Town of Lawrenceville's allocation based on population is \$90,212.50. The Town will receive the funds by check from the County within two weeks. The funds may only be used for qualifying expenses and will have to be tracked with invoices and other supporting documents. Funds must be used for qualifying purposes or be returned.

ST. PAUL'S COLLEGE CAMPUS RE-USE PROJECT

Mr. Gibson reported that he and Mr. Pecht participated in a meeting with the county regarding potential re-uses for the St. Paul's College Campus. The Saint Paul's for Life group met and held a fundraiser. They would like to see a school and multi-functional campus there again. There is also still a drone business interested in the property. Mr. Gibson emailed the final part of the study to council members today.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

ADOPTION OF THE FY2020-2021 BUDGET

Mr. Pecht reported that the committee met and reviewed the latest figures. The committee feels comfortable recommending the adoption of the FY2020-2021 Budget as advertised for the public hearing in May. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to adopt the FY2020-2021 Budget as presented. Motion: Mr. Pecht. Second: Mr. Brockwell. Roll call vote: Mrs. Bland, aye; Mr. Brockwell, aye; Mr. Gilson, aye; Ms. Hardy, aye; Mr. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, aye.

BENCHMARK LOAN PROPOSAL

Mr. Pecht reviewed the loan proposals from Benchmark Community Bank. Proposal #1 would be a \$300,000 term loan for five years at 3.79% interest to purchase vehicles. Proposal #2 would provide \$750,000 for a term of 20 years for long term infrastructure projects. Mr. Pecht recommended that council approve both loan proposals. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to approve the loans and authorized Mayor Martin, Town Manager Mr. Gibson and/or Treasurer Mrs. Johnson to sign the letter of intent and any other final papers for the loans. Motion: Mr. Pecht. Second: Mr. Brockwell. Roll call vote: Mrs. Bland, aye; Mr. Brockwell, aye; Mr. Gilson, aye; Ms. Hardy, aye; Mr. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, aye.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

There was no report in the packet. Mr. Gibson reported that fire department members looked at a 100' tower truck and a pumper tanker truck. They could get both trucks at a good price. The committee will look at the information. Mr. Martin thanked the fire department for a job well done. They had a busy weekend.

PERSONNEL

Mr. Brockwell thanked Mr. Gibson for moving in as Interim Town Manager. The Town will advertise for the positions of Town Manager and Chief Water Plant Operator in the local paper and with VML and VACO.

POLICE

Ms. Hardy advised that the report is in the packet. Ms. Hardy acknowledged the peaceful protest in town that was organized by Tiquan Goode with the NAACP. Ms. Hardy commented that it was well attended by town officials and local law enforcement. She was very moved and proud of the Town and County. Ms. Hardy thanked Chief Gibson, Interim Chief Stith and the Sheriff's Department. She also thanked everyone for supporting the cause for justice. Interim Chief Stith reported that a person of interest in the caboose fire case has given a full confession.

PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT

Mr. Brockwell advised to make sure that the new vehicles are added to the insurance policy.

STREETS, LIGHTS & CEMETERY

The cemetery looks good and the center circle has been mulched.

TOWN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Brockwell reported that we have not heard from the historical district grant application yet. The IDA has applied for a grant for the Star Value building. There is also a project for the Sledge and Barkley building.

WATER/WASTEWATER

Mr. Brockwell reported that Randy Lynch has been working very hard with Mr. Gibson and Mr. Bugg to gather information for the county project. There is water capacity available but not much sewer capacity available. There will not be a committee meeting tonight.

SAFETY

The wastewater plant report is in the packet. The water plant is not holding safety meetings at this time as there is no chief operator in place.

HOUSING CODE ENFORCEMENT

Mayor Martin reported he had a call from a citizen this week and we need to follow up on property concerns.

PARKS/RECREATION

There was no report. We miss the ballpark being open.

WELLNESS

Ms. Whitehead reported that June is Men's Health Month and there is a ZOOM meeting planned. A COVID19 packet will be sent out. Information is posted in the window at the VCU Massey Cancer Center.

FARMER'S MARKET

Mayor Martin commented that this is a tough time for everybody and we don't know what the future looks like at this time for the market.

LAWRENCEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Ms. Pecht and Mr. Gibson will meet regarding recommendations for commission membership.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

A list of the Town Council meeting dates for FY2020 – 2021 is in the packet.

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 \$448,022.26 and post to the proper accounts. The total includes sidewalk project payments. Those payments will be reimbursed at 80%. Motion: Mr. Pecht. Second: Mr. Gilson. Roll call vote: Mrs. Bland, aye; Mr. Brockwell, left the meeting early; Mr. Gilson, aye; Ms. Hardy, aye; Mr. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, aye.

NEW BUSINESS

MEETING TIME

Mr. Pecht asked if Council could consider moving the meeting time up one hour to 6:30 p.m. It might require a code change. We will consult with Mr. Outten and also ask council members to take it under consideration.

APPOINTMENT OF TOWN ATTORNEY

On motion by Mrs. Talbert, seconded by Mr. Pecht and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to appoint W. Curtis Outten, Jr. as Town Attorney for the term July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021. Mr. Outten has served as Town Attorney for 57 years. Motion: Mrs. Talbert, Second: Mr. Pecht. Roll call vote: Mrs. Bland, aye; Mr. Brockwell, left the meeting; Mr. Gilson, aye; Ms. Hardy, aye; Mr. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, aye.

APPOINTMENT OF TOWN MANAGER

This appointment is excluded at this time. The position will be advertised.

CLOSED SESSION – PERSONNEL MATTER

There is no need for a closed session at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, a motion was made by Ms. Hardy, seconded by Mrs. Talbert and carried by all ayes to adjourn the meeting. Motion: Mr. Brockwell, Second: Ms. Hardy. Roll call vote: Mrs. Bland, aye; Mr. Brockwell, left the meeting; Mr. Gilson, aye; Ms. Hardy, aye; Mr. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, aye.

_____ Mayor

_____ Clerk