

CITY OF NEWNAN, GEORGIA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

JUNE 13, 2023

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Newnan, Georgia was held on Tuesday, June 13, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Richard A. Bolin Council Chambers of City Hall with Mayor Keith Brady presiding.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brady called the meeting to order and delivered the invocation.

PRESENT

Mayor Keith Brady: Council members present: Ray DuBose, Rhodes Shell, George Alexander, Cynthia Jenkins, Dustin Koritko and Paul Guillaume. Also present: City Manager, Cleatus Phillips; Assistant City Manager, Hasco Craver; City Clerk, Megan Shea and City Attorney, Brad Sears.

READING OF MINUTES

A. Minutes from the Regular Meeting on May 23, 2023

Motion by Councilman DuBose, seconded by Councilman Alexander to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting on May 23, 2023 and adopt them as presented.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

B. 2 Appointments – Convention Center Authority, 3-year terms

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Koritko to reappoint Teresa Lovett for another term.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

Motion by Councilman DuBose, seconded by Councilman Alexander to reappoint Parks Avery for another term.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

C. 4 Appointments – Cultural Arts Commission, 3-year term

Councilwoman Jenkins stated that Evette Jones will not be continuing to serve and asked that a letter be sent to her thanking her for her years of service.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Koritko, seconded by Councilman Alexander to reappoint Nora Ann Wood for another term.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

All other Cultural Arts Commission appointments continue to next agenda.

D. 5 Appointments – Keep Newnan Beautiful, 3-year term

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Koritko to reappoint Allison Ziegler for another term.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

Motion by Councilman DuBose, seconded by Councilman Alexander to appoint Veronica Apecenca for a 3-year term to the Keep Newnan Beautiful commission.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

All other Keep Newnan Beautiful appointments continue to next agenda.

E. Appointment – Parks Commission, 3-year term

Continue to next agenda.

F. Appointment – Tree Commission, 3-year term

Continue to next agenda.

CITY MANAGER

City Manager stated he had two items for Council.

First, was regarding conversations the City has been having with Pastor Jimmy Ellison to discuss the homeless situation in Newnan. He came to the City with a proposal to put together a study committee, to go under the umbrella of the Coweta Community Foundation. He has asked for City support and Mr. Phillips suggests entering into an agreement with the Community Foundation for that purpose.

The study committee would look at the current situation of homelessness in the City and look at the feasibility of long-term sustainable solutions. If Council agrees then Mr. Phillips would draft an agreement to bring back to Council in July.

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilwoman Jenkins to instruct staff to draft the agreement with the Community Foundation.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

Second, Mr. Phillips explained there have been conversations regarding recruitment, retention, pay scales etc. Most revolves around public safety, specifically the police

department. This is happening in many cities around the country. Mr. Phillips put together a phased approach to address this in the City of Newnan and he gave an overview of that.

Phase I – Utilize existing budgeted funds, so no budget amendment, to implement a Recruiting and Retention Bonus of \$5,000 per each certified police officer position to be paid in installments and to begin immediately paying all POAB and GFPF dues for all certified police officers and firefighters. This does not need action from Council as the funds already are budgeted.

Phase II – Effective with the adoption of the 2024 budget in January. The first part is to increase each pay grade for certified police officers and firefighters between \$5,000-\$7,000 and then review each police and fire employee for a pay increase between 4%-14%. Also effective with the 2024 budget would be a review of all general employees and pay increases between 4%-8%. The third part of this phase would be releasing an RFP to get proposals for vendors for a defined contribution plan, a 401(a) plan. The pension program has a 10-year vesting period and a lot of new hires are not interested in that. Mr. Phillips feels this would also be a recruiting bonus for the City.

Another part of Phase II would be reviewing the feasibility of offering paid dental for all city employees and increasing coverage amounts of the life insurance policy. The city currently does not contribute to dental for employees. The life insurance amount has not been increased in a very long time.

Mr. Phillips also wants to review road races, walks and parade routes. This does affect staffing levels for public safety, with multiple officers having to work multiple weekends. Mr. Phillips wants to look at places to hold some of these events that are not as intense with personnel such as the LINC.

Phase III – This has been discussed before but are seeing it more now in local government. Local governments are making their health care program available to their retirees, if they have a certain number of years of service. This is only up until their medicare age.

Mr. Phillips reiterated that Phase I requires no council action. He did ask for support for Phase II and III, to proceed with putting together specific details and releasing RFP's for proposals.

Councilman Alexander asked if retirees who recently retired be included or can come back? Mr. Phillips said they have to look at that and get the advice of the actuarial team. There is no guarantee that we'll change from the defined benefit pension program. There would be a requirement for new employees to go into the defined contribution. There will be an optional opt in for non-vested employees and maybe an option for vested employees to freeze their pension benefit.

Mayor Pro Tem Koritko asked about the possibility of volunteer reserve officers to help with special events? Mr. Phillips said everything is on the table and needs to be looked at especially with the special events.

Councilman Guillaume asked if there would be additional liability if volunteers that were non-certified were brought on? Mr. Phillips said the barricades and road closures used to be manned by volunteers and there were some issues so the past few years it has been certified officers.

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilman Guillaume for staff to move forward with items in Phase II and Phase III.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

NEW BUSINESS

G. Public Hearing – Application for Alcohol Beverage License – BJ's Wholesale Club

Mayor Brady opened a public hearing on the application for a Retail Off Premise (Package) Sales of Malt Beverages and Wine for BJ's Wholesale Club, 331 Newnan Crossing Bypass.

A representative of applicant was present for the hearing. No one spoke for or against the application. Mayor Brady closed the public hearing. The City Clerk advised that all the documentation had been received and everything was in order.

Motion by Councilman Shell, seconded by Councilman Alexander to approve the application for a Retail Off Premise (Package) Sales Malt Beverages and Wine License.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

H. Public Hearing – Demolition Request of 24 Burch Ave

Mayor Brady opened the public hearing.

Bill Stephenson, Chief Building Official, explained that this is a request by the owner to demolish and the owner is Coweta Force. The structure is not located in a historic district and is considered non-contributing according to a historical survey conducted in 2001.

No one spoke for or against. Mayor Brady closed the public hearing.

Motion by Councilman DuBose, seconded by Councilman Alexander to grant the request for demolition at 24 Burch Ave.

Councilwoman Jenkins asked about the condition of the building. Mr. Stephenson said from the photos the condition does not look good but he is not sure of specifics. There was a new roof put on after the tornado.

Hank Arnold, Founder and Director of Coweta Force spoke. Councilwoman Jenkins stated that although this is not in a nationally recognized historic neighborhood, the City has applied for that. Mr. Arnold said they were donated the property in 2020 and they had wanted to renovate but a structural engineer looked at it and determined that it is in poor shape and would cost more than what it is worth to repair. The plan now is to put a duplex, single-family occupancy on the property and would apply for a building permit after demo.

Councilwoman Jenkins asked about the certificate of appropriateness process for duplexes that had previously been discussed, would that apply for this property? Tracy Dunnavant, Planning Director stated that the current process only applies to national registered districts so at this time it does not apply but that condition could be added. Councilman Shell agreed that would be a good idea, so they know what is going on the property.

Amended Motion by Councilman DuBose, seconded by Councilman Alexander to grant the request for demolition at 24 Burch Ave with the condition that Coweta Force will go through the Planning Commission in the Certificate of Appropriateness process to show what is going to be built after the demolition.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

I. 2021 Budget Amendment Year End per Audit Purposes

Nicole Hall, Finance Director, stated that this is to amend the 2021 budget by \$9,128,387 to cover tornado expenses, purchase of Caldwell Tanks property, Murray Street properties, Pickleball Facility and LINC properties.

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilman Shell to adopt the ordinance amendment as presented.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

J. Consideration of Second Amendment to MEAG Solar Power Agreement

Mayor Brady explained that this is coming from Newnan Utilities. There was a hiccup in the first contract and this rectifies that.

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilman Shell to approve the amendment to the MEAG Solar Power Agreement as presented.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

K. Consideration of a Resolution to Appoint 2023 MEAG Power Annual Election Voting Delegates

Voting delegates to stay the same, George Alexander and Rhodes Shell. City Manager stated that the resolution is not needed since they are staying the same.

Motion by Councilman Guillaume, seconded by Councilman Shell to approve voting delegates.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

L. Rezoning Request RZ2023-02 by LDO Coweta, LLC; 35.49 + acres at 2037 Newnan Crossing Bypass, requested zoning from RS-15 to RMH for 163 townhouse development – For Information Only

No action needed.

M. Consideration of Construction Contract Award, Budget and Funding for Planning & Zoning Department Renovations

Hasco Craver, Assistant City Manager, explained that this it to renovate and build out 5 dedicated office spaces in the Planning & Zoning suite. Staff is recommending to approve the proposal from Tomco. Staff also put together a budget to fully outfit with new furniture.

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilman Guillaume to approve the contract award and budget as presented.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

N. Consideration of an Intergovernmental Agreement with Coweta County for Upcoming SPLOST Referendum

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilman Guillaume to approve the agreement as presented.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

O. Consideration of a Resolution Setting the Date for the General Election and Qualification Period for Candidates in the 2023 General Election

Motion by Councilman Shell, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Koritko to adopt the resolution as presented.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

P. Consideration of Resolution Appointing an Election Superintendent for the 2023 General Election

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilman Guillaume to adopt the resolution as presented.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

Q. Discussion on Holding Work Sessions for Rezoning and Annexation Cases

Mayor Brady explained that this was discussed at the Council retreat. The concern had been brought up by council members that there was not enough time given in order to hear from the developers or applicants in rezoning and annexation cases.

Possible options are to extend the time during Council meetings from 15 minutes to 30 minutes or does Council want a separate meeting to allow the developer to come in and staff would make a presentation and Council could ask questions.

Councilman Shell said now they get the information on a Thursday for the Tuesday meeting and there's not always enough time for some of the more complicated projects. Councilwoman Jenkins agreed, with questions from citizens and sometimes receiving last minute changes there is not enough time to consider everything.

Councilman Shell asked what the time is between Planning Commission hearing it and then Council? Tracy Dunnavant, Planning Director, said that Planning hears it on the second Tuesday of the month and then Council hears it the following month at the night meeting, so about 6 weeks in between. Mr. Sears explained that the problem is the ads that have to run for the public hearing, no less than 15 and no more than 45 days before the meeting.

Mayor Brady suggested if Planning hears it on the second Tuesday then could Council hear it in a work session at the very next meeting but no public hearing and then the public hearing a month later? Mr. Sears said yes but during the summer when there is only one meeting that wouldn't work.

Councilman Shell asked if staff could come back with a chart showing how the dates would work out in different scenarios.

Mayor Pro Tem Koritko asked if an additional work session would create a burden for developers. Ms. Dunnavant stated that developers would probably like to address questions from Council before getting to the public hearing.

Motion by Councilman Shell, seconded by Councilman Alexander to instruct staff to bring back visuals with different scenarios.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

R. 2nd and Final Reading – Rezoning Request RZ2023-01 by Freedom Land Holdings, LLC for 5.82 + acres located at Old Atlanta Highway

Mayor Brady recused himself due to a business relationship. Mayor Pro Tem Koritko took over the meeting and called for the vote.

Motion by Councilman Guillaume, seconded by Councilman Alexander to adopt the ordinance for rezoning. Opposed: Jenkins.

MOTION CARRIED. (5-1)

S. Request from Damian Wilson of Phantom Fireworks to extend business hours

Brad Sears, City Attorney, explained that this is governed under state law and not by City of Newnan ordinance. There had been some confusion. The city will work with Mr. Wilson.

No action needed.

VISITOR

Michael Scharko stated that he wanted to speak about the rezoning and was not allowed to. Mayor Pro Tem Koritko explained that that item had been voted on.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilman Shell to adjourn the Council meeting at 7:18pm.

MOTION CARRIED. (7-0)

Megan Shea, City Clerk

Keith Brady, Mayor