

CITY OF THOMSON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
September 10, 2009
6:30PM City Hall

Present:

Kenneth Usry, Mayor
Clifford Lunceford, Councilmember
Alton Belton, Councilmember
John Smalley, Councilmember
Bernice Brown, Councilmember
James Jones, Councilmember
Don Powers, City Administrator
Dianne Landers, City Clerk

Also Present:

Phil Eberly, WK Dickson
Lauren Crosby, WK Dickson
Billy Hobbs, McDuffie Mirror
James Taylor
Donna Branch, WTHO
Bea Hart-Moss

Jimmy Plunkett, City Attorney – Absent

Mayor Usry welcomed all to the Regular Council Meeting of September 10, 2009. The invocation was done by Councilmember Smalley, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Mayor Usry acknowledged the passing of Mr. Jake McCord. Mr. McCord was a former City of Thomson employee with 35 years of service. He was also a local artist whose paintings are owned by collectors far and wide. Jake was a unique person and an excellent City employee.

MINUTES:

Councilmember Jones moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Council meeting on August 13, 2009. Councilmember Smalley seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Letter from First United Methodist Church on temporary street closure:

Rev. John Barnes, the pastor of Thomson First United Methodist Church sent a letter asking for consideration in closing Church Street to through traffic on Sunday mornings as a temporary measure, hoping that we could work to a future permanent solution to close a section of Church Street. The reason for this is to avoid the danger when crossing the street in order to go from the main church building to the Family Life Center. Mayor Usry gave the City Administrator the go ahead to investigate an appropriate process to close Church Street, on Sundays, between the areas bounded by McDuffie Avenue, south to Tom Watson Way, north. This will come back to Council for approval at a later date.

Historic Preservation Commission – Change in the ordinance:

Though this agenda item was presented as an amendment to the by-laws, it has to be treated differently as described below....it is a proposed change of the ordinance creating the commission

This agenda item was a first reading of a proposed change to the Historic Preservation ordinance. The changes are:

- Board make-up to 7 members total from current number of 5.
 - Five (5) voting members (of 7) shall reside in the City.
 - 2 members (of 7) are not required to reside in the City, but must own property within the City limits. These two board members will be considered ex-officio. This new requirement affects two members, Lee Anne Cowart and Stephanie Ivery.
- Anne Knox and Charlotte Derry, both of who are City residents and who have agreed to serve, are recommended as the new members. They will be officially invited after the 2nd reading of the ordinance in October. Stephanie Ivery and Lee Anne Cowart have agreed to stay on as City property owners (but not residents)

Councilmember Lunceford moved to accept the commission appointments conditioned upon a satisfactory second reading in October. Councilmember Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Since there will be a second reading, the motions (Smalley), second (Belton), and vote to accept (unanimous) to accept the amendment to the by-laws were not necessary at this meeting.

In related business, Bob Flanders, who has resigned, will be replaced at the October meeting. Mayor and Council are working on Mr. Flanders replacement and will present a candidate for approval at a later meeting.

Right Of Way (R.O.W.) Ordinance:

This is the first reading on the Right of Way Ordinance in reference to telephone and cablevision /video legislation.

This ordinance will:

- Establish reasonable standards for rights of way occupancy.
- Require an application in writing to use the rights of way specifically describing the nature, extent, and location of the portion of the utility affected.
- Will allow for the provision of an indemnity bond or other acceptable security conditioned to pay for any damage to any part of a public road or to any member of the public caused by the work of the utility performed under authority of a city permit.

Report from Phil Eberly:

Phil Eberly from WK Dickson gave the following report:

- City of Thomson and McDuffie County received their normal annual \$150,000 FAA entitlement in 2009. The 2009 funds will be used to do necessary engineering required for the expected complete overlay of the runway in 2010.

Other items accomplished with these funds will be engineering for the anticipated access road for future build-out of Aviation school, T-Hangars, and GSP Helicopter/Aviation Hangar and some geotechnical work to satisfy EPD on tank closures performed some years back.

Mr. Eberly asked for the \$150,000 FAA entitlement funds to be approved for the design and task order, and the signing of the contract for the project. Councilmember Belton moved to allow Don Powers, City Administrator to execute any contracts that come in on the Airport Improvements and to receive the FAA entitlement funds. Councilmember Lunceford seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Resolution East Georgia Great Water Heater Round Up:

A Resolution was introduced for the East Georgia Great Water Heater Round Up. This has been executed by the Mayor, commencing on September 1, 2009. This program will run for three months and encourages customers to utilize natural gas and upgrade existing water heaters.

Amendment , Cingular Wireless Contract:

Cingular Wireless merged with AT&T. Originally, Cingular had a contract with the City of Thomson for the tower located on our water tank at 811 East Hill Street for \$1,666.66 per month, *with no guarantee on the length of contract*. AT&T now wants to negotiate the lease to \$1,300 per month for a guaranteed eight (8) years starting November 1, 2009. GMA was involved in the negotiations and approved of the change. Councilmember Belton moved to accept the amendment to the contract. Councilmember Smalley seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Development Authority Appointment:

Councilmember Smalley moved to table the proposed appointment to the Development Authority to next month. This is in response to the County's recommendation that Paul McCorkle be put on the Dev Auth Board, replacing Darrell Wester. Members of the Board must be approved by the City and the County. Councilmember Belton seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

DISCUSSION:

Don Powers reported that the second 2009 CDBG recipients were announced last week and the City of Thomson was on the list. We were awarded \$800,000 for the continuation of infrastructure improvements and home renovations in the Pitt street area.

Councilmember Belton stressed the importance of having our employees certified in flagging for traffic. According to DOT and the Public Service Commission, employees must be certified and carded in order to attempt any flagging.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05pm.

Dianne L. Landers
City Clerk