



CITY OF THOMSON
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2022

6:00PM

Thomson-McDuffie Government Center

Present:

Kenneth Usry, Mayor
Alton Belton, Councilmember
Keryl Corley, Councilmember
Elaine Johnson, Councilmember
John Smalley, Councilmember
Scott Whittle, Councilmember
Lucretia Ferguson, City Clerk
Jimmy Plunkett, City Attorney

Also Present:

Chief Courtney Gale, TPD
Assistant Fire Chief John Thigpen
Erin Burditt, McDuffie Progress
13 Citizens

Not Present:

John Waller, City Administrator

At 6:00pm, Mayor Kenneth Usry called the regularly scheduled City Council meeting to order and City Attorney Plunkett gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

CITIZEN INPUT:

Paul Daly spoke of his concerns regarding impact fees, utility billing and City network security.

Randall Reese spoke of his concerns regarding garbage collection and fire/police departments.

Douglas Veer spoke of the need for, and his willingness to pay for, recycling.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The motion was made by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Johnson to approve the agenda as written. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Council Meeting, January 13, 2022. A motion was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Corley to approve the minutes. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.

BUSINESS:

- a. Chuck Cumber 20 Year Service Award: Mayor Usry noted that Chuck is responsible for both of the City's Water Treatment plants and provides us with good, clean drinking water each day. He was presented a certificate and honorarium.

- b. Ordinance 578 Repeal of City Ordinances Related to Fire Service: Mayor Usry presented the second reading of the ordinance. An intergovernmental agreement with the County was approved on August 6, 2019, and is slated to end on August 31, 2044. Ordinance 578 repeals any fire department related obligations in previous City ordinances. A motion to approve was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Whittle. A 5-0 vote in favor was taken.
- c. Resolution 02-2022: The City has applied through the Georgia Department of Transportation for a \$59,000 grant of American Rescue Plan Act funds for the Airport. The resolution allows the Mayor and staff to execute the documents to accept the grant. There are no matching funds required. A motion was made by Councilmember Smalley to approve the resolution and was seconded by Councilmember Corley. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.
- d. City/County/Forward McDuffie Public Relations Officer: A need is being explored for a professional to, at a minimum, handle all social media and write positive articles promoting the entire county. A job description has been crafted and 50% of the undecided salary would be funded by the County, with the remaining 50% coming from Thomson, Dearing, Tourism, Industrial Development, Economic Development and possibly the Board of Education. A motion to proceed with exploring the possible position was made by Councilmember Corley and seconded by Councilmember Smalley. Councilmember Belton questioned that it is a non-funded position. A vote taken, passed the motion 4-0, with Councilmember Belton abstaining.
- e. Natural Gas Ready-to-Serve Fees: Approximately seventy-five commercial gas customers are considered as low use, with many only connected to serve their emergency generators. The only time gas moves through their meter is during a power outage. Reducing their RTS fee to \$50.00 monthly will result in a City revenue loss of \$14,175.00. The loss would be offset by raising the RTS fee on large use industrial customers. A motion made by Councilmember Whittle and seconded by Councilmember Belton to approve the changes was passed with a 5-0 vote.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Council Report:

Councilmember Smalley noted the large meeting attendance and addressed the good points of the City/County Fire Department consolidation. Councilmember Belton brought attention to the street sign missing at Old Washington Road and Cobbham Road. Councilmember Smalley noted that the street sign at Dixie Lock & Safe needs to be checked also. Councilmember Whittle commended the workers who are keeping up with the extra yard trash of recent storms and the cleaning of drainage ditches around town.

City Administrator Report: CA Waller was absent due to a Board meeting of Georgia City-County Management Association.

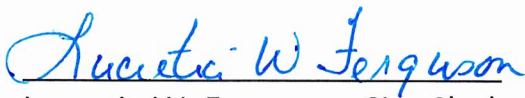
Mayor Report: Mayor Usry reminded the Council that reservations need to be made for the Chamber of Commerce banquet on March 4th. He reminded all of the community wide cleanup from March 28th to April 1st before the Masters Tournament. After limited or no attendance during the COVID pandemic, the Augusta National is back to normal ticket sales this year and we look forward to having the patrons in our restaurants and hotels again. The City is still waiting to be notified of the award of any of the \$24,000,000 ARPA fund request. Grants of approximately \$10,000,000 are being explored concerning the Railroad Street

water park and amphitheater, Journal Street upgrades and First Avenue storm water issues.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

Having no other public business, the motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Whittle to adjourn. A 5-0 vote ended the meeting at 6:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Lucretia W. Ferguson, City Clerk


Kenneth L. Usry, Mayor

