



CITY OF THOMSON
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
March 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
Karen Fioretti, McDuffie Progress
Erin Burditt, McDuffie Progress
14 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 on the contract between the City and Waste Management.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Council Meeting, February 10, 2021. A motion was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Johnson to approve the minutes. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.

BUSINESS:

- a. Special Event Permit request: Pitt Street Park: A Recreation Department approved request to use Pitt Street Park for an event on June 19, 2022 is before the Council. Mayor Usry noted that the application indicates that police officers would be used for security. There would need to be coordination between the event organizer, NAACP Chapter 5219, and Chief Gale. A motion to approve the permit, as soon as proof of security arrangements are finalized, was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Belton. A vote of 5-0 was taken in favor of the motion.
- b. Water and Sewer: Tap and Meter Fees: Mayor Usry explained that during the Water and Sewer Commission meeting on January 18th, a vote approved certain sizes of water and sewer taps and their fees for The Villages at Bordeaux, Millbrook

Subdivision and White Oak Landing that are currently under construction. These developers will lay all piping and make all taps. The City Utility charge for the meter, installation of the meter and inspection of the sewer tap will be \$600.00 for each ¾ inch and \$700.00 for each 1 inch.

For all other construction when the City makes the tap and installs the meter, the Commission approved the following charges:

Water Tap – ¾ inch \$1300 An increase of \$300.

1 inch \$1550 An increase of \$200.

Sewer Tap – 4 inch \$800 An increase of \$200.

6 inch \$1200 No increase.

The fees to bore under a road will not change. A motion to approve the revised fees as presented was made by Councilmember Whittle and seconded by Councilmember Belton. A 5-0 vote in favor was taken.

- c. Water and Sewer Bond Refinance: Mayor Usry sought the approval of the Council to allow him and CA Waller to refinance the remaining \$7,570,000 of the 2012 bond of \$11,810,000 which is currently at 3% interest, when rates are lower. The approval would allow them to act quickly to lock in a lower rate without having to convene a meeting of the Council when the market is favorable. A motion was made by Councilmember Belton to approve the request and was seconded by Councilmember Whittle. A vote of 5-0 approved the motion.
- d. Resolution 03-2002: Mayor Usry spoke on House Bill 1093 and Senate Bill 494 seeking to limit a city's authority to make housing, land use and zoning decisions within that city's boundaries. If passed, they would allow unlimited access for corporations to develop "build to rent" subdivisions, regardless of the surrounding land use, and which vary greatly in price, quality, management and tenant protections. The Georgia Constitution recognizes zoning and land use decisions as a core function of Local Governments. A motion was made by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Johnson to adopt the resolution and forward it to be presented to the House and Senate. A vote taken, passed the motion 5-0.
- e. Ordinance Establishing a Downtown Dining District/Outdoor Alcohol: First Reading
- f. Convention and Visitor's Bureau Requests:
The Braves National Championship Trophy will be in Thomson on April 21st from 5:00-8:00pm at the Depot. The requests are to close Railroad Street from Main Street to the crosswalk at the Annex from 4:00-9:00pm and to have a sign in front of the Depot. They are seeking a Temporary Alcohol License if the ordinance to establish a Downtown Dining District/Outdoor Alcohol is not approved at the April 14th City Council Meeting. A motion to approve all three requests was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Whittle. A vote of 5-0 passed the motion.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Council Report: Councilmember Johnson spoke on constituents' concerns with the shootings in the City recently. Mayor Usry asked Chief Gale if she could address that issue. Chief Gale spoke on the rivalry problems between two groups containing juveniles, guns and other weapons. The Georgia State Patrol, Georgia Bureau of Investigation and McDuffie County Sheriff's Office are all working in conjunction with the TPD on road checks and investigations, resulting in the recovery of some firearms. She stressed the investigations are ongoing and progressing. Councilmember Smalley spoke on his appreciation for being nominated and chosen for the Chamber of Commerce's Darrell Johnson Award. He was surprised and feels very blessed. He then addressed Chief Gale about becoming involved with TPD events and what a good job she and her department are doing. Councilmember Belton spoke on the condition of mobile homes at Magnolia Drive and Salem Road. The area is in bad shape and he would like for Code Enforcement to check into it. Councilmember Keryl Corley made sure that the Council was aware that March 18th will be Natural Gas Utility Worker's Day. There are plans for CA Waller to take

the department to lunch. Councilmember Whittle commended Waste Management for their dedication and hustle on Saturday after they ran behind on Friday with garbage pickup. Mayor Usry commented that WM had let the City know of their temporary personnel shortage.

City Administrator Report: CA Waller was at the GCCMA Spring Conference in Athens and not in attendance at the meeting.

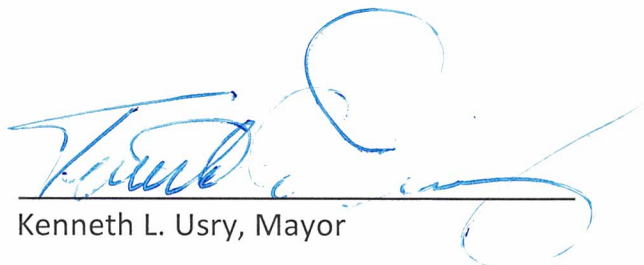
Mayor Report: Mayor Usry spoke on upcoming events including Trash Amnesty Day, Community Cleanup and the Braves National Trophy stop in Thomson.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: No executive session.

A motion to adjourn was tendered by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Whittle. A vote of 5-0 ended the meeting at 6:29pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Lucretia W. Ferguson, City Clerk


Kenneth L. Usry, Mayor

