

CITY OF THOMSON
PUBLIC HEARING AND CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 9, 2023

6:00PM

Thomson-McDuffie Government Center

Present:

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

Also Present:

Chief Courtney Gale, TPD
Chase Beggs, Former P&Z Director
Lamar Fain, Waste Water Director
12 Interested Citizens
Erin Burditt, McDuffie Progress

Not Present:

Keryl Corley, Councilmember
John Waller, City Administrator

PUBLIC HEARING

At 6:00pm, Mayor Kenneth Usry welcomed all to the Public Hearing concerning the Planning and Zoning Board's recommendation on a rezoning request. Former Planning and Zoning Director Beggs, who continues to assist part-time in the Planning & Zoning Department, presented the recommendation.

642 Matthew Street: The owner asked for a change from R-2 (Medium to High Density Residential) to a Conditional Use zoning designation that would allow her to operate a personal care home out of her residence. The P&Z Board unanimously recommended that the zoning change be denied.

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: None

There being no questions, comments, or other concerns, Mayor Usry closed the public meeting at 6:01pm.

COUNCIL MEETING

At 6:01pm, Mayor Kenneth Usry called the regularly scheduled City Council meeting to order.

CITIZEN INPUT: Kimberly Heard spoke to the Council concerning her rezoning request. She did not feel that her Care Home would be a threat to the neighborhood nor that the neighborhood would be a threat to her residents, but the home would be highly secured. Bea Hart-Moss wished to clarify statements made at the Planning & Zoning Board meeting the previous day. Mayor Usry thanked both speakers and told Ms. Heard that he felt the Planning Board denied her request due to the efforts to keep residential and business areas separate in the City.

City Attorney Plunkett gave the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:

Thirty-year Service Award: Mayor Usry recognized Waste Water Treatment Director Fain for his thirty years of service to the City and presented him with a certificate and honorarium in thanks.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Councilmember Whittle made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Smalley to approve the agenda as presented. A vote of 4-0 in favor was taken.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Council Meeting, February 9, 2023—Councilmember Smalley made the motion to approve the minutes and was seconded by Councilmember Johnson. A vote of 4-0 approved them.

BUSINESS:

a. Recommendation of Planning & Zoning board, re: 642 Matthew Street:

Councilmember Belton made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Whittle, that the Council accept the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Board to deny the rezoning request for 642 Matthew Street. By a vote of 3-0, the motion to deny the request was approved. Councilmember Smalley abstained.

b. Thomson-McDuffie Development Authority Board 1/1/2023 – 12/31/2026

Reappointments:

The City has two positions of four years each that need to be filled on the Development Authority Board. Chuck Irminger and Steve Dwyer have agreed to accept the posts if reappointed by the Council. Councilmember Whittle made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Belton, to reappoint Mr. Irminger and Mr. Dwyer to the Development Authority Board for the 1/1/2023 – 12/31/2026 term. A 4-0 vote approved the motion.

c. Thomson-McDuffie Water-Sewer Commission 1/1/2023 – 12/31/2026

Reappointments:

The City has two positions of four years each that need to be filled on the Water-Sewer Commission. Ken Williams and Gene Thomas have agreed to accept the posts if reappointed by the Council. A motion to reappoint Mr. Williams and Mr. Thomas to the Water-Sewer Commission for the 1/1/2023 – 12/31/2026 term made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Smalley passed with a 4-0 vote.

d. Façade Grant Application – 224 Main Street:

Cowart Land and Development, LLC purchased from the Downtown Development Authority of the City of Thomson, the adjoining property to their existing Main Street business. They applied to the City for up to \$10,000 on a Façade Grant Application to help with renovations. Councilmember Johnson made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Whittle, to approve the Façade Grant request for up to \$10,000 by Cowart Land and Development, LLC for 224 Main Street. A 4-0 vote passed the motion.

e. Revolving Loan Fund Board Recommendations:

1. Two State Construction has approached the Development Authority and the City Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Committee requesting a loan of \$500,000 for an expansion of facilities and includes adding employees. The RLF Committee considered the request and approved a loan of \$250,000 for a term of five years with interest adjusted yearly at Prime Rate plus 1%. Councilmember Smalley made the motion to approve the \$250,000 loan for five years with an annually adjusted interest rate of Prime plus 1% for Two State Construction. Councilmember Whittle seconded the motion and a vote taken in favor, passed 4-0.

2. Augusta Coating and Manufacturing (ACM) previously received a loan from the RLF and in 2021 received a two-year extension, due to be paid on September 2, 2023. The Committee received a request to extend ACM's final balloon payment due date by one year until September, 2024 with the same interest rate and amortization schedule. A motion made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Belton to approve the Augusta Coating and Manufacturing request for a one-year loan extension, with the same interest rate and amortization schedule on their balance of \$195,997.98 was approved by a 4-0 vote.

f. Thomson-McDuffie Water-Sewer Commission Recommendations:

1. White's Creek Sewer Line Labor Costs: A sewerage pipe that crosses the creek had to be replaced. The Commission approved up to \$100,000 for the labor costs associated with the replacement. All materials are on hand to be installed. Bids were received after the commission meeting and Fortis Siteworks had the lowest bid at \$44,961. A motion made to award the contract to Fortis Siteworks for \$44,961 by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Johnson passed on a 4-0 vote.
2. Matthew Street Water Line Labor Costs: The 10-inch water main involving eight lots must be moved and the abandoned section capped. All materials are acquired and ready for use. The Commission approved up to \$100,000 for labor costs only and again, Fortis Siteworks entered the lowest bid coming in at \$75,920. Councilmember Johnson made the motion to award the contract to Fortis Siteworks for \$75,920, was seconded by Councilmember Whittle, and a vote of 4-0 passed the motion.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Council Report: Councilmember Belton commended Police Chief Gale and her officers for continuing to make Old Washington Road safe. He noted that even with the addition of speed humps, cars still exceed the speed limit.

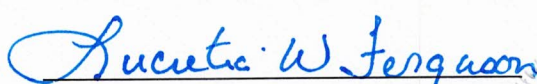
City Administrator Report: None

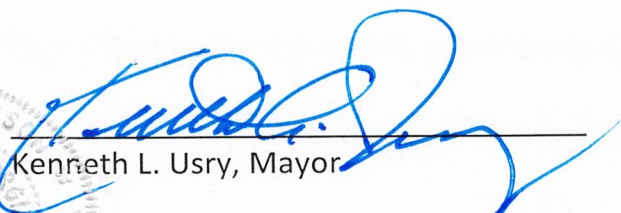
Mayor Report: The Mayor reported that Howell Roberts resigned from the Thomson-McDuffie Planning Board and he asked the Council to bring in names of City residents who are interested in the position. He also noted that there are two vacancies on the Thomson Housing Authority Board for the City to fill. The City is working to make sure that the airport is in top shape to greet our Masters guests next month and Mayor Usry announced that, from now on, City Council Work Sessions would be held in the first-floor meeting room instead of the smaller second-floor Training Room.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

There being no other business before the Council, Councilmember Johnson made, and Councilmember Smalley seconded, a motion for adjournment. A vote in favor taken adjourned the meeting at 6:30pm. (4-0)

Respectfully submitted,


Lucretia W. Ferguson, City Clerk


Kenneth L. Usry, Mayor