



CITY OF THOMSON
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
May 11, 2023

6:00PM

Thomson-McDuffie Government Center

Present:

Alton Belton, Councilmember
Keryl Corley, Councilmember
Elaine Johnson, Councilmember
John Smalley, Councilmember
Scott Whittle, Councilmember
John Waller, City Administrator
Lucretia Ferguson, City Clerk

Also Present:

Chief Courtney Gale, TPD
Erin Burditt, McDuffie Progress
John Jump
Tom Thiemann

Not Present:

Kenneth Usry, Mayor
Jimmy Plunkett, City Attorney

At 6:00pm, Mayor Pro-Tem Belton called the regularly scheduled City Council meeting to order and Councilmember Smalley gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

CITIZEN INPUT: John Jump, who is a resident of Ellington Avenue, expressed his concern about the excessive speeding on his street, especially in the vicinity of Whiteoak Park. Many children play there and he is concerned about their safety. The Georgia State Patrol has issued a few tickets, but the speeders are back. Mr. Jump also asked that the City look at why the speed limit is 35 MPH instead of 25 MPH.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The motion made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Johnson to approve the agenda as written, passed by a 4-0 vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Council Meeting, April 13, 2023. A motion made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Whittle to approve the minutes passed by a 4-0 vote.

BUSINESS:

- a. One-Day Alcohol Licenses for Bike Ride Across Georgia, June 9th: The Activities Council has requested a one-day alcohol license for both the Brickyard/Springfield Street area and Railroad Street. Both will be City-provided overnight camping zones for Bicycle Race Across Georgia (BRAG) riders and their support group. Railroad Street will, that night, also be the site of a free concert. A motion made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Corley to approve the one-day license passed by a vote of 3-0 with Councilmember Smalley abstaining.

- b. Resolution 03-2023 – Application for CDBG 2023: Resolution 03-2023 allows the City to apply for a 2023 Community Development Block Grant from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and for Mayor Usry to be the official representative concerning the application. If awarded to the City, this grant will have approximately 80% dedicated to water, sewer, stormwater and road needs and 20% dedicated to partial renovations of qualified homes in the Sills Branch Revitalization Neighborhood. A motion to approve the resolution made by Councilmember Whittle and seconded by Councilmember Corley was approved by a 4-0 vote.
- c. Library Board Appointment: Katherine Doupe, a long time Board member, has agreed to serve another four-year term. A motion was made by Councilmember Smalley to approve the appointment and seconded by Councilmember Whittle. A vote of 4-0 filled the seat on the Library Board.
- d. Speed Camera Installation in School Zones: The Thomson Police Department requests the Council's approval to contract with Blue Line Solutions to install speed cameras in School Zones. Other than electricity to run the equipment there is no cost to the City. Cameras will photograph the license plate and the vehicle that speeds during the posted reduced speed times when school is in session. A TPD officer will compare the plates and vehicles to confirm that they match. BLS will print and send the citation to the owner of the vehicle, receive the fines and disburse funds and documentation. A 3-1 vote passed the motion made by Councilmember Corley and seconded by Councilmember Johnson to approve Chief Gale's request. Councilmember Whittle noted that he is not in favor of the action but will support the Council in its decision.
- e. First Reading – Ordinance to Modify Zoning Appeal Procedures: CA Waller explained that in 2022 the State Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 1405, Zoning Procedures Law. The City needs to modify its zoning ordinances to remain in compliance with state regulations. Provisions of HB 1405 go into effect July 1, 2023. The second reading will be at the June 8th Council meeting.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Council Report: Councilmember Smalley brought up the difficulty of the cleanup of the property at 311 Gordon Street. The five heirs, children of the deceased owner, are working on it. Councilmember Whittle commends the City in their work with potholes and road problems during the good weather that we have been experiencing.

City Administrator Report: CA Waller noted that the City has been chipping away at the extensive list of paving and road repairs. He spoke on the rash of street sign disappearances and that with the expenditure of funds for new signs in the last year, there is a temporary hold on new purchases. Filling personnel vacancies remains a challenge. A certified Fire Inspector looked at the roll-off truck that recently burned in the Barn and confirmed that it was an electrical fire involving the battery that caused the loss; there was no evidence of foul play. The County has agreed to pay half of a replacement cost and it would be used by both City and County personnel. Water/Sewer Distribution has identified fire hydrant problems and brought 3 of them back online. Sergeant Randy Clewis, a new TPD hire,

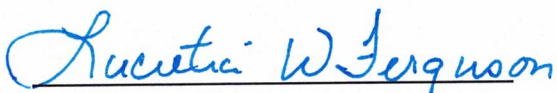
changed a tire for a motorist who was unable to handle the task recently. The motorist was very grateful for his act of kindness.

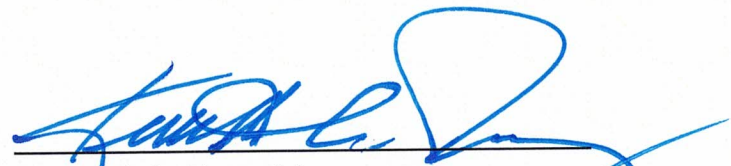
Mayor Report: Not present, but Mayor Pro-Tem Belton brought everyone up to date on future happenings.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

Having no other public business, a motion to adjourn tendered by Councilmember Whittle and seconded by Councilmember Johnson passed with a vote of 4-0 at 6:24pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Lucretia W. Ferguson, City Clerk


Kenneth L. Usry, Mayor

