



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

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
John Waller, City Administrator
Lucretia Ferguson, City Clerk
Jimmy Plunkett, City Attorney

Also Present:

Chief Courtney Gale, TPD
Assistant Chief Robert Brown
Josh Heath, McDuffie Progress
Chris Hampton, Solid Waste/Streets
Tony Daniel, Water/Sewer Distribution
Jason Smith, Community Relations
7 Employees
8 Interested Citizens

PUBLIC HEARING

At 6:00pm, Mayor Kenneth Usry welcomed all to the Public Hearing concerning the Planning and Zoning Board's recommendation on a zoning change from R-1 to R-2 to accommodate a duplex at 539 Guill Street.

Jason Smith, Community Relations, presented the recommendation.

REQUEST FOR REZONING OF 539 GUILL STREET FROM R-1 TO R-2: Mr. Smith spoke on the subject property. It is located behind the Thomson Super Curb and across from a multi-family residential structure. The plans meet all setback and lot size requirements. The property does not have any curb cuts and the plans call for two driveways. Mr. Smith noted that the Planning Board recommended approval of the change in zoning request on a 4-0 vote with the stipulation that there be only one shared driveway.

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Usry opened the floor for public comment on the recommendation. There being no comments, questions or other concerns, Mayor Usry closed the public meeting at 6:02pm.

COUNCIL MEETING

At 6:02pm, Mayor Kenneth Usry called the regularly scheduled City Council meeting to order. City Attorney Plunkett gave the invocation, followed by the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag.

EMPLOYEE CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION: CA Waller explained that Department Heads were asked to recommend employee(s) that they felt needed to be recognized. He spoke on each one as they were awarded their certificate.

City/County Building Inspector: Wes Swinson

Solid Waste Department: Stedman Grant

Streets Department: Lagonzo Butler

Water/Sewer Distribution Department: Phillip Kendrick, Mark Huff, Alonzo "Joe" Usry and Benji Sturkey

Police Department: Sgt. Robert Benton

Fleet Maintenance Department: Austin Reynolds

CITIZEN COMMENT: None

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: City Council Meeting, October 12, 2023: A motion was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Belton to approve the minutes. A vote of 5-0 was taken to approve them.

BUSINESS:

Recommendation of Planning & Zoning re: 539 Guill Street:

- a. A motion was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Corley that the Council approve the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Board for 539 Guill Street, including the stipulation of only one shared driveway, that was presented in the Public Hearing. By a vote of 5-0, the motion was approved.
- b. **Employee Medical Insurance:** Watson and Knox Insurance has presented a City employee insurance plan that is partially self-funded, meaning that when the City pays its insurance premium and has less in claims than that premium, the City receives a refund of the difference at the end of the year. The City will not pay more than the agreed upon premium. The Georgia Municipal Association has been our employee medical insurance provider for several years and has continued an upward trend in cost the last 3 years. GMA's medical insurance premiums have become a burden that the City cannot sustain. The proposed new plan, with no increase in premiums from last year, will provide medical, prescription, and life insurance. There are also additional dental, vision, life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance plans available for all employees to purchase. A motion made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Corley to approve the new employee insurance plan was passed with a vote of 5-0.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- a. **Council Report:** Councilmember Corley spoke of the many compliments from citizens on the completed paving project at the junction of Hendricks Street and the railroad. Councilmember Smalley asked that the City check on the sink hole on Ellington Avenue at White Oak Park. He also noted that there is a dilapidated building at Knox Street and Anderson Avenue.
- b. **Mayor's Report:** Mayor Usry covered upcoming events and holidays.
- c. **City Administrator's Report:** CA Waller told the Council about two damaged hangar doors at the airport. One was damaged by a pilot who will reimburse the cost of the repair. The Industrial Development Authority, on

behalf of Empire Distributors, asked the City to extend the sewer behind Advance Auto's facility north of I-20 to their property line. The City is still waiting on an approval of a GEFA loan for \$4,300,000 to add to the existing loan to renovate the Waste Water Treatment Plant. He covered several more ongoing projects concerning the tennis courts, new Maxwell Elementary School and demolition of derelict buildings.

With there being no more business before the Council, the mayor closed the meeting for an Executive Session at 6:36pm.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

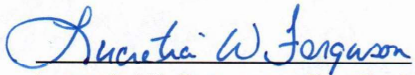
A motion to move into Executive Session for Personnel matters was made by Councilmember Smalley and was seconded by Councilmember Whittle. A vote of 5-0 was taken and the session began at 6:37pm.

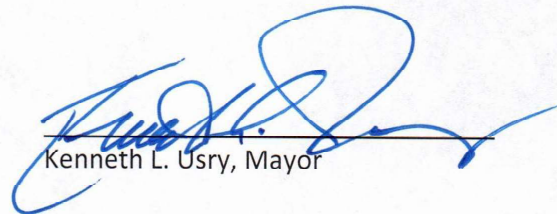
A motion to move out of Executive Session was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Smalley. A unanimous vote of 5-0 moved the meeting back into regular session at 6:55pm.

Mayor Usry called the regular Council meeting back to order, at which time Councilmember Johnson made a motion to approve CA Waller's contract renewal. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Belton and a vote of approval was taken, 5-0.

There being no other business before the Council, a motion for adjournment was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Belton. A vote was taken and the meeting was adjourned at 6:56pm. (5-0)

Respectfully submitted,


Lucretia W. Ferguson, City Clerk


Kenneth L. Usry, Mayor

