

CITY OF THOMSON
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 8, 2024

6:00PM

Thomson-McDuffie Government Center

Present:

Benji Cranford, 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 Dan Carrier, TPD
Jason Smith, Community Dev. Director
Karen Fioretti, McDuffie Progress
36 Interested Citizens

At 6:00pm, Mayor Cranford 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: None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Called Council Meeting, January 10, 2024. A motion was made by Councilmember Whittle and seconded by Councilmember Corley to approve the minutes. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.
- b. Council Meeting, January 11, 2024. A motion was made by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Smalley to approve the minutes as written. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.

BUSINESS:

- a. Georgia Avenue Temporary Closure-February 14, 2024: The New Thomson United Methodist Church has requested one lane of Georgia Avenue be closed on February 14th, Ash Wednesday, from 10:30am - 1:15pm and 3:45pm - 6:15pm. Entering from Black Street and exiting onto Jackson Street would allow for a Drive-thru imposition of Ashes and a short prayer for each participant. A motion was made by Councilmember Whittle and seconded by Councilmember Smalley to approve the request. A vote of 5-0 was taken in favor.
- b. Gas Authority Appointment: Mayor Cranford asks that Kenneth L. Usry be allowed to fulfill the remainder of his current appointment to the Gas Authority Board. A motion to approve this was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Corley. A 5-0 vote in favor was

taken. The request will be forwarded to the Gas Authority Board and their President.

- c. Mayor Pro-Tem Ordinance – First Reading: Discussion among Councilmembers centered on the City Charter’s requirements concerning appointment of the Mayor Pro-Tem. With Councilmembers unable to agree on the interpretation of the Charter, a motion was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Whittle to table the discussion until the March Council Meeting. A vote of 5-0 passed the motion.
- d. LMIG 2024 Engineering Contract: Councilmembers spoke on the success with which Atlas Technical Consultants have fulfilled their City contracts in the past and that there is not enough time to advertise for a different engineering firm to oversee the 2024 LMIG. A motion was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Whittle to retain Atlas’ services for 2024. A vote taken, passed the motion 5-0.
- e. Personnel Vacancies and Inter-Governmental Agreements: Mayor Cranford asked CA Waller to clarify the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) concerning the Forward McDuffie Governing Board and Director. CA Waller explained that the IGA is inconsistent in its terminology. The Director of Forward McDuffie and Director of Economic Development (as most people know the position) are one and the same. The correct title is President of Forward McDuffie. In the IGA, a six-person Governing Board (or Steering Committee) is composed of the Mayor, County Commission Chairman, and the Chairpersons of the Boards of the Industrial Development Authority, Downtown Development Authority, Tourism Board and Chamber of Commerce. This Steering Committee hires the President of Forward McDuffie. CA Waller verified that the next Forward McDuffie meeting is Tuesday, February 13th at 1:00pm.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Council Report: Councilmember Whittle asked that the public be patient with the City Water Department. They have been overly busy repairing water leaks.

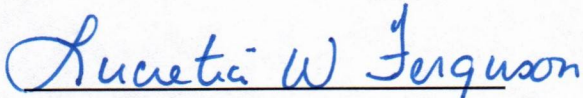
City Administrator Report: CA Waller also spoke on the large amount of leaks being reported. There is a constant reprioritization of jobs as the most severe are addressed first. Several road cuts due to these water repairs in City streets require asphalt patching. Leadership McDuffie and Youth Leadership McDuffie visited the Capital on February 7th. CA Waller assured Councilmember Smalley, when he asked that the City would continue hosting Hometown Connection with our state elected officials. Councilmember Whittle asked about the status of the EIP funds being returned to the Department of Community Affairs. CA Waller assured all that Mayor Cranford had signed the return document and the money will be returned to DCA tomorrow morning. Upon DCA’s receipt, the City will regain compliance with their regulations.


Mayor Report: Mayor Cranford spoke on the returned EIP funds that were a holdover from the last administration.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

Having no other business before the Council, a motion to adjourn was tendered by Councilmember Whittle and seconded by Councilmember Johnson. A vote of 5-0 ended the meeting at 6:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Lucretia W. Ferguson, City Clerk


Benjamin C. Cranford, Jr., Mayor

