



CITY OF THOMSON
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 8, 2021

6:30PM

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 Admin.
Lucretia Ferguson, City Clerk
Jimmy Plunkett, City Attorney

Also Present:

Acting Chief E J Bess, TPD
Chuck Cason, City of Thomson
David Thigpen, City of Thomson
Nathaniel Usry
Nora Douglas
Sweet Smalley

At 6:31pm, Mayor Kenneth Usry called the regularly scheduled City Council meeting to order and Councilmember John Smalley gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

CITIZEN COMMENT:

Nora Douglas joined the meeting and brought to the attention of the Mayor and Council a problem with a large group of motorcyclists congregating every Saturday and Sunday at a house on Mobley Street. The mayor asked her to send him the exact address so that it can be looked into by the proper authorities. Mayor Usry then asked all in attendance to join him in congratulating Councilmember John Smalley and his wife, Sweet, on their fifty-eighth Wedding Anniversary today. A hearty round of applause was given.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Council Meeting, March 11, 2021. A motion was made by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Johnson to approve the minutes. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.

BUSINESS:

- a. David Thigpen, who mans the recycle center, celebrates his twentieth year with the City on April 20th. David was presented a certificate and honorarium by Mayor Usry.
- b. ORDINANCE 576: De-annexation of 15.46 acres First reading.
CA Waller brought the Council up to speed with information that Lloyd DeFoor has bought a 31 acre tract composed of two parcels between

Mesena Road and the railroad tracks with one parcel in the City and one parcel in the County. Mr. DeFoor would like to have the entire parcel located in the County and subdivide them into farm lots on which residents would be able to have livestock. City ordinances do not allow this, but the County does. The second reading will be at the Council's May meeting if the City Attorney receives the additional documentation needed from the petitioner.

- c. ORDINANCE 575: Broadband Ready Community First reading.
CA Waller explained that becoming a Broadband Ready Community entails several things including designation of who are the points of contact for broadband companies and positions the City to be able to apply for funds as they become available to municipalities. The second reading will be at the May Council meeting.
- d. LAND BANK AUTHORITY MEMBER APPOINTMENT: The Land Bank Agreement was approved by City Council on July 8, 2010. Mayor Usry explained that the Land Bank can help the City and County dispose of condemned, purchased or donated properties. Councilmember Smalley is already a member of the Land Bank Authority. The mayor recommended as the City's second appointee, Kathy Hawkins who is a local real estate professional and longtime resident. A motion made by Councilmember Whittle and seconded by Councilmember Corley to approve the recommendation and was passed with a 5-0 vote.
- e. RECREATION BOARD MEMBER APPOINTMENT: Two names were recommended to the Council to fill the remaining position with the Recreation Board, Lewis Boykin and Nathaniel Usry. Mr. Boykin is with the Department of Natural Resources and oversees the state ponds. He coaches with the recreation department and his children participate. Mr. Usry is retired from Georgia Pacific in Warrenton. He coached when his children were young and has refereed with the department as well. Councilmember Whittle noted his preference for Mr. Boykin to fill the position and immediately made a motion that Mr. Boykin be approved. Without a second, the motion died. After a roundtable discussion on the candidates, Councilmember Belton made a motion that Mr. Usry be appointed, Councilmember Johnson seconded. The vote taken approved the appointment 5-0.
- f. RESOLUTION 07-2021: CDBG APPLICATION Authorizes the filing, before June 4, 2021, of a Community Development Block Grant application to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for Fiscal Year 2021. All requirements have been met including a public hearing in December, 2020, documentation and notice of the hearing, and showing need for revitalization of the Sills Branch neighborhood. A motion was made to approve the resolution by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Johnson. The vote taken approved the resolution 5-0.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Council: Councilmember Whittle made note of the large pothole on Ansley Drive Extension and that the limbs and yard debris in Hickory Hill need to be picked up by the City. Councilmember Smalley spoke of the illegal activities and excessive traffic on A and Clements Streets. Acting Chief Bess said that the police patrols are working on cleaning up that area. It was brought up in discussion that the GBI are willing to help the City with this type of activity. Councilmember Belton also has been contacted about a residence on Clements Street that is attracting trouble and praised the Boy Scouts in collecting tires during Trash Amnesty Day.

He also gave accolades to the City workers who manned all three locations that day. Councilmember Johnson noted that cars are running the stop sign on MLK.

City Administrator: CA Waller addressed the Council about several subjects. First, the Association of Police Chiefs' vetting of applications will take a little longer than expected. They hope to have the finalist list for us in late May. Mayor Usry thanked Acting Chief Bess for all that he is doing and for stepping into the Chief's role during this time. Next, Mr. Waller has only one more director left for their initial counseling. All directors have been encouraged to counsel the employees in their department in writing. The Water (\$2.4 million) and Sewer (\$8.4 million) facilities will be starting their improvements soon. On the subject of meter replacements, the City Administrator will recommend to the Water & Sewer Commission that the City hire a company to complete the installation before the November, 2022 GEFA deadline. These meters are much more accurate, and billings would reflect actual usage. The city has eighteen vehicles that will be auctioned off on Saturday, April 17th at the old fair grounds. Bids for the Solid Waste proposal will be opened April 23rd. CA Waller hopes to have a recommendation at the May Council meeting on the expected five bids. The expert that helped to craft the Solid Waste RFP may help us review the bids. And last, the County Code Enforcement Officer, Craig Wildi, has been given a list of twenty-two nuisance properties in the city and will update through a share drive that can also be seen by Mr. Waller as things progress.

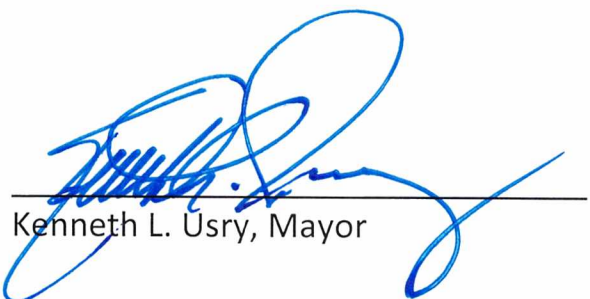
Mayor: The programs for meter change out and Utility Billing upgrades have been difficult, but seem to be coming to an end. Toni Hutchinson, Laurie Hobbs, Hattie Davis, Jennifer Blum and Shanda Grant have worked diligently to improve the system. The mayor told the council that he is pleased to have CA Waller onboard. He is addressing problems and tracking results, and this makes employees more accountable.

City Attorney Plunkett has not heard back from the letter sent to Or-Tec, Inc. The ten days allowed for their reply has not yet passed.

Having no other business, the motion was made at 7:22pm by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Belton to adjourn. A vote of 5-0 in favor of the motion ended the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,


Lucretia W. Ferguson, City Clerk


Kenneth L. Usry, Mayor

