

City of Sparta
Regular City Council Meeting
October 13, 2020 @5pm

Council members James Clark, David Ingram, Tom Roberts and Sandra Sherrod were present at the meeting. Council member Sandra Sherrod was not present at opening of meeting, she arrived about 15 minutes after start of meeting. Mayor Allen Haywood, Attorney John Hitchcock and City Clerk Virginia Webb were also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Pro Tem James Clark, with Prayer, Pledge & Roll Call following.

Amend Agenda

A motion was made by James Clark to add August 11, minutes to agenda. Tom Roberts seconded the motion. Agenda was amended to add August 11, minutes to agenda.

Adoption of Minutes

A motion was made by James Clark to adopt the minutes for August 11, 2020. Tom Roberts seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous.

A motion was made by James Clark to adopt the minutes for September 8, 2020. Tom Roberts seconded the motion. This meeting was held to discuss personnel matters.

A motion was made by James Clark to adopt the minutes for September 15, 2020. Tom Roberts seconded the motion. This was the regular monthly meeting.

A motion was made by James Clark to adopt the minutes for September 17, 2020. David Ingram seconded the motion. This meeting was held for the Proposed Budget Hearing.

A motion was made by James Clark to adopt the minutes for September 24, 2020 meeting. David Ingram seconded the motion. This meeting was held to Adopt the Budget.

A motion was made by James Clark to adopt the minutes for October 8, 2020. Tom Roberts seconded the motion. This meeting was held to Adopt the Millage Rate.

Mayor Haywood pointed out that these meetings were all required to complete the Budget and Property Tax Levy process.

Clerks' Report

- A roof leak at the Water Filter Plant was reported by Plant Supervisor Shane Harper.
- The transfer of time between employees has been requested.
- The agreement for Latunya Goodwin needs to be created and signed for the replacement of her windshield.
- QS1 has received and converted all data for Payroll and we should be able to do a test run by the end of the week.
- QS1 informed us today, that Mr Arthur Lawson, Hancock County Tax Assessor, has worked closely with them and has uploaded all the information needed to process property tax bills for the City of Sparta. We are on schedule for our bills to be mailed out and received by October 31, 2020.
- We had a Worker's Comp claim-Bill Lawrence from the Street Department was injured while pulling limbs to the chipper. He was scratched on the side of his face near his left eye.
- Shane Harper, Water Filter Plant Supervisor has built the website for the City of Sparta. It is complete with emails for council members and staff. We had received 3 quotes from vendors with the least expensive being \$1700 as the down payment and \$75 per hour to update and add information to the website. I would like for council to reward him for his work. He has saved us a lot of time and money.

Mayors' Report

- There are many webinars being attended by the Mayor in hopes that we will get some opportunities for Gas, Water, and Housing updates through grants for our community. Rural Prosperity Summit, Georgia Funders Forum, GEFA & CDBG to name a few are some of which that he has attended. Lots of opportunities to apply for grant money are available.

- On Friday, October 8, 2020, all MGAG officers were re-elected to their offices.
- The house on 114 Adams Street owned by Sharron Dixon is being remodeled for a Bed & Breakfast that will serve food & drinks. There are some stipulations in the Ordinance that may prevent that and we may have to make some minor changes to accommodate her plans. Currently, the ordinance states that restaurants must seat at least 50 people and serve at least 1 meal a day for 6 days. There is a meeting planned October 14, @12:30pm, with Sharron Dixon & Neil Moody, of the Dept of Public Health, to further discuss plans and explore options.
- Annual Athens to Savannah Bike Ride is scheduled for October 23, 2020. It is a fundraising event for the Georgia Hi-Low Trail. It will be connected to the Firefly Trail which spans 250 miles and is the longest bike riding trail in Georgia. They will stop at the courthouse for refreshments at approximately 2:00 pm. Due to Covid 19, the number of riders has been limited to 50.
- Renisha Russell, from The Smart Growth America Campaign explained their program and congratulated Mayor Haywood for being chosen out of 20 people from all over the USA to participate in the Champions Institute. The Champions Institute is made up of elected officials to ensure that everyone feels safe on the streets, no matter how they are move around; whether biking, walking, rolling or jogging. Phase II of Smart Growth America, which is another program associated with the organization, will resume in November, with 4-2hour webinars each day-November 10, 13, 18 & 20.
- The City of Sparta is considering fuel consolidation with Hancock County Board of Commissioners. Whereas, we would pay wholesale fuel prices to the County. There will be some minor costs involved with the distribution, but would save money in the long run. We are now paying retail for fuel for all City vehicles. We have checked with Christopher Calloway to price electronic devices and cards needed to complete the process.
- The City is working on lowering water rates for the Hancock County. Rates have already been lowered for the State Prison and Verescence (St. Gobian). The County has mentioned turning over their Water and Sewer customers to the City of Sparta.

- Jerry Hood of EMI is an engineer who has worked with Hancock County Commissioners in the past, to complete renovation of the National Guard Amory, Phase II (Skating Rink), and other projects, has given us a proposal from his company. The City is interested in Water Distribution, Waste Water and infrastructure upgrades. He will do a feasibility study of the entire system and also help to obtain funding for upcoming projects. His proposal includes visiting the City to review present facility conditions and shortcomings. He will review user rates, revenues, and expenses to help with his proposed path. The City will be provided a proposal with reports including photos detailing plan for a cost of \$3720.

Old Business

- Tree Trimming proposal will be limited to 50 to 75 lbs. maximum weight, approximately 3 cubic yards. No limbs or larger than 3 inch diameter. Yard Waste Only-meaning leaves, branches, limbs or other debri from trees, grass, or undergrowth/brush.
- All requirements have been met for Property Tax Billing. All the advertising has been completed and copies of PT-38 has been sent to Department of Revenue, Vendor (QS1), Tax Commissioner, and Clerk of Superior Court. It is suggested that all bills are due on the same day of the month, that moving forward, interest and penalties will accrue on the same day for each year. As it stands now, each year has a different day of the month that they accumulate interest.
- Renewal of the Face Mask Requirement has to be renewed each month. James Clark motioned to renew that the emergency face covering requirement be renewed, originally issued August 26, 2020. Tom Roberts seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous.

New Business

None

City Hall closed Monday, Oct 12, 2020 for Columbus Day

City Council Work Session, Monday, November 2, 2020@4:30pm

City Council Meeting, Tuesday, November 10, 2020@5:00pm

Historic Preservation Commission will meet, Thursday, Nov 12, 2020@
5:30 pm

City Hall will be closed November 26 & 27, 2020 for Thanksgiving

Citizens Input

None

Executive Session

James Clark motioned to enter into executive session. Tom Roberts seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous.

James Clark motioned to go back to regular session. David seconded the motion.

James Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Kuanderrius Scott. David Ingram seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous.

James Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Melanie Gouch for the Water Filter Plant. David Ingram seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous.

James Clark motioned to adjourn meeting. Tom Roberts seconded the motion.