

City of Donalsonville  
Council Meeting-April 4, 2023

**Official Minutes**

Mayor Ron Johnson, Jr. called the Council Meeting to order at 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall. After which Mayor Ron Johnson, Jr. gave the invocation, then all joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America. Councilmembers present for the meeting included, Mayor Ron Johnson, Jr., CP Mitch Blanks, CP Mitzy Moye, CP Travis Brooks, CP Lindsay Register, and CP Flossie Smith. Mayor Pro Tem Ed Bond was absent. Staff present were Interim City Manager/Communications Director Jeffrey Hatcher, City Clerk Christina Corvers, Police Chief Kem Pugh, Fire Chief Dean King, Public Works Superintendent Bert Adams, and City Attorney Billy Grantham.

Approval of the Agenda: CP Smith made a motion to approve the Agenda, with CP Register seconding. Motion passed. Next, the approval of the minutes from the March 2, 2023 Called Council Meeting, the minutes from the March 7, 2023 Council Meeting, and the minutes from the March 13, 2023 Called Council Meeting. CP Smith made a motion to approve the March 2, 2023 Called Council Meeting, the minutes from the March 7, 2023 Council Meeting, and the minutes from the March 13, 2023 Called Council Meeting, with CP Brooks seconding. Motion carried.

APPEARANCES: David Maxwell with BetterWay thanked the Mayor and Council again for their continued support. David Maxwell requested to amend his road closure request from last month for Woolfork Avenue on May 13, 2023 from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM for the Firehouse kick-off fundraiser. David Maxwell requested an additional 5 hours of road closure in order to set up for the event that evening. After some discussion, all were in favor of approving the road closure request of Woolfork Avenue on May 13, 2023 from 12:00 PM to 9:00 PM for the Firehouse kick-off fundraiser pending coordination with Chief Pugh.

Next, Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Director Tori Gravlee then gave an update on the Board's recent and upcoming activities to include the following:

- Making progress with the creation of a website that will be the central location for upcoming events and news, as well as promoting the downtown businesses and providing directories along with information on the Rural Grant and the Georgia Cities Loan.
- Gave an update on the Clarke Building project, noting that it is in the final stages of remodeling.
- The DDA Board requested the Mayor and Council attend their month board meeting on Monday, April 24, 2023 to discuss the use of ARPA Funds.
- Requested the road closure of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from Wiley Avenue to Woolfork Avenue on April 8, 2023, 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM for the "1<sup>st</sup> Annual Hop & Shop" Event. CP Blanks made a motion to approve the road closure of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street from Wiley Avenue to Woolfork Avenue on April 8, 2023, 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM for the "Hop & Shop" Event, CP Smith seconded. Motion passed.
- Gave an update on the "Greenscape" project, which will include the planting/placement of flowers/plants and pine straw to kick-off Spring 2023.

Winston Ferris then requested permission to replace a Double-Wide Mobile Home on a lot located at 705 Constitution Avenue. After some discussion, CP Moye made a motion to approve the request subject to applicable code requirements. CP Register seconded; motion passed.

Next, Interim City Manager Hatcher presented a request made by Jonathan Pollard for permission to hold a 5K Walk/Run/Bike Event with the date and time to be announced at a later time, along with the proposed route. Interim City Manager Hatcher stated that Jonathan Pollard additionally requests Public Safety assistance for the participants while the event is taking place. CP Smith made a motion to approve the request to hold a 5K Walk/Run/Bike Event, with the date and time to be announced at a later time, of the proposed route, to include Public Safety assistance for the participants while the event is taking place. CP Moye seconded; motion carried.

Deborah Hiemstra asked to hold off on her request to discuss City services as she recently spoke to Chief Pugh about some issues and hopes to have them resolved in the near future.

## **INTERNAL BUSINESS**

**INTERNAL BUSINESS:** The Financial Statements for February 2023 were presented and reviewed with comments made by Interim City Manager Hatcher on the current status, along with discussion on the three-month analysis.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**OLD BUSINESS:** Interim City Manager Hatcher presented the first reading of Ordinance 04-04-23, Mayor and Council Compensation Increase. CP Blanks made a motion to table Ordinance 04-04-23, Mayor and Council Compensation Increase, with CP Smith seconding. Motion passed.

Next, Interim City Manager Hatcher recommended appointing the three previous Historic Preservation Committee members to serve on the board. The members are Rebecca Grantham, Sheila Williams, and David Maxwell. Interim City Manager Hatcher stated that the members would proceed with setting meetings and reviewing property in Donalsonville for designation as Historic property. After some discussion, CP Smith made a motion to appoint Rebecca Grantham, Sheila Williams, and David Maxwell to serve on the Historic Preservation Committee. CP Register seconded; motion passed.

Interim City Manager Hatcher then stated that with the approval of Resolution 03-07-23, City of Ethics Recertification from last month's meeting, the Mayor and Council will need to appoint three board members to serve on the Ethics board. As per the adopted resolution, the Mayor appoints one member, the Council appoints another, and the Mayor and Council jointly appoint a third. After some discussion, Mayor Johnson requested the agenda item be tabled until the next Council meeting so further candidates could be reviewed. CP Smith made a motion to table the appointment of the Ethics Committee until the next Council meeting so further candidates could be reviewed. CP Moyer seconded; motion carried.

Next, Interim City Manager Hatcher presented the new radio antenna system proposal from Motorola regarding the radio upgrades. and was able to improve the cost for the City of Donalsonville. Interim City Manager Hatcher recommended approving the radio antenna system proposal as this would allow the City of Donalsonville to utilize the County Tower for coverage, therefore allowing the radios to be used county wide. After some discussion, CP Blanks made a motion to approve the revised radio antenna quote from Motorola. CP Smith seconded; motion passed.

Interim City Manager Hatcher then recommended to adopt Resolution 04-04-23 providing for the recognition of April 23-29, 2023, as Georgia Cities Week. CP Smith made a motion to approve Resolution 04-04-23 providing for the recognition of April 23-29, 2023, as Georgia Cities Week, with CP Register seconding. Motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS:** Interim City Manager Hatcher presented Resolution 04-04-23 A, Appointment of Municipal Gas Authority Representative. Interim City Manager Hatcher stated that previous City Manager Hicks had been the City's representative on the Authority Board with the Mayor being the designated alternate. Councilmember Moyer volunteered to serve on the board as the City's designated representative. After some discussion, CP Blanks made a motion to approve Councilmember Moyer as the Municipal Gas Authority representative, with Mayor Johnson being the alternate representative. CP Brooks seconded; motion passed.

Next, Interim City Manager Hatcher stated that Chief Pugh has requested the establishment of a position for Assistant Police Chief and for Police Captain. Interim City Manager Hatcher stated the new positions would be salaried, which would greatly reduce the overtime costs incurred by the Department each year. Lastly, Interim City Manager Hatcher stated that creating these two new positions would provide a structure to improve Police Department operations and increase patrols in Donalsonville. After some discussion, CP Smith made a motion to approve the two new job positions, along with the proposed job descriptions. CP Register seconded; motion carried.

Interim City Manager Hatcher then provided an update for the Communications Department. Interim City Manager Hatcher stated that with the recently approved new radio antenna system proposal from Motorola, upgrades would be completely live within two months of start date. Lastly, Interim City Manager Hatcher stated that the City of Donalsonville is still waiting for USDA to release the funds before the expansion project can begin but is hopeful those funds would be disbursed as early as summer.

Next, Chief King stated that he had nothing new to report at this time.

Police Chief Pugh then stated that he had nothing new to report at this time.

Next, Public Works Superintendent Adams stated that he had nothing new to report on at this time.

Interim City Manager Hatcher then gave an update on the following:

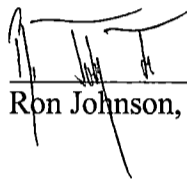
- (1) **Firehouse Transfer:** The City of Donalsonville has received an agreement for the transfer of the Historic Firehouse to Betterway and the Downtown Development Authority. City Attorney Grantham is currently reviewing this agreement. Will present it to the Council for approval once the City Attorney has finished the review process.
- (2) **Hazard Mitigation Resolution:** The City of Donalsonville has completed the Hazard Mitigation 5-year plan for Seminole County Emergency Management. The biggest change is the addition of Hazard Mitigation for Cybersecurity. Interim City Manager Hatcher recommended the approval of the proposed Resolution to Adopt the 2023 Seminole County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. After some discussion, CP blanks made a motion to approve the resolution to adopt the 2023 Seminole County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update pending the necessary corrections. CP Moye seconded; motion carried.
- (3) **Past Due Billing:** Interim City Manager Hatcher stated that he has been looking at past-due accounts for utility bills and fines. Working with the Credit Bureau Associates on how best to begin collecting the past-due accounts. Accounts will be presented for collection when 90 days have passed without a response from the customer. CBA collects a fee of 35% for accounts with a 50% collection for those that go to litigation. After some discussion, CP Blanks made a motion to enter into an agreement with Credit Bureau Associates (CBA) for collections of past due Utility Billing, with CP Brooks seconding. Motion passed. The Mayor and Council then authorized the City Attorney and the City Court Solicitor to move forward with the process of collecting the past due Fines.
- (4) **Posting Signs for Zoning Changes:** Interim City Manager Hatcher recommended that the City of Donalsonville begin using signs for zoning changes and mobile home variances to ensure that neighbors are aware of changes that have been requested. A sign will make it easy for the public to be aware of proposed changes in their neighborhood. The Mayor and Council authorized Interim City Manager Hatcher to move forward with the process of receiving quotes for the purchase of Zoning Signs to be used to notify the public of any zoning and/or land change requests.
- (5) **No Parking Signs on 1<sup>st</sup> Street:** Signs have been posted prohibiting overnight parking on 1<sup>st</sup> Street. This is being done to bring the City of Donalsonville into compliance with our lease from CSX. The City of Donalsonville will begin providing courtesy warnings to violators for now; however, after 30 days, the City will proceed with additional enforcement as required.
- (6) **Budget:** The Budget Committee met and reviewed the draft budget. Interim City Manager Hatcher is in the process of making a couple of changes to accommodate requests from the Budget Committee and should have a budget ready for approval at the end of the week.
- (7) **Police Reimbursement:** A response has been prepared and sent over to the County Attorney regarding his questions on the reimbursement. Hoping to meet with the Police Committee and the County to resolve this matter in the near future.
- (8) **City Manager Advertising:** The City of Donalsonville has paid an estimate of \$3500 per week for advertising the position in the regional newspapers. Interim City Manager Hatcher requested direction from the Mayor and Council on how to proceed

with hiring for this position, including possible advertising and when we wish to set a closing date for applications to be received. After some discussion, the Mayor and Council agreed to run the available position in the regional newspapers on Sundays for a total of three weeks, with a closing date of May 1, 2023. The Mayor and Council will then review applicants at the Council Work Session/Retreat to be held on Saturday May 6, 2023, 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM.

With there being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, at 6:50 PM, CP Brooks made a motion to adjourn, with CP Smith making a second; and the motion carried.

ADJOURNED

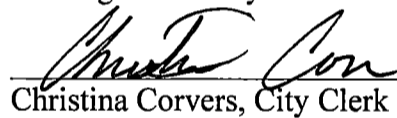
City of Donalsonville



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Ron Johnson, Jr., Mayor

Attest and Certification:

I, Christina Corvers, do here Attest and Certify that the above written is a true and correct representation of the business and actions conducted during the April 4, 2023 meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Donalsonville.

  
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Christina Corvers, City Clerk