

TOWN OF TALLULAH FALLS  
STATE OF GEORGIA  
REGULAR MEETING  
February 8, 2018  
MINUTES

The regular monthly meeting for February 8, 2018 of the City Council of Tallulah Falls, Georgia was called to order at 6:10 p.m. by Mayor Teri Dobbs.

PRESENT WERE:	Mayor Teri Dobbs Councilperson Deb Goatcher Councilperson Bill Coldren Councilperson Larry Hamilton Councilperson Mary Beth Hughes Fire Chief Mike Early Police Chief Bill Goatcher Town Attorney Allyn Stockton Town Clerk Jessica Robinson
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OTHERS PRESENT:            See attached sign-in list

Mayor Dobbs welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Reverend James Turpen Sr. to open the meeting with prayer.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Coldren to accept the agenda for the February 8, 2018 Regular City Council Meeting. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Goatcher and passed unanimously.**

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Coldren to accept the minutes for the January 4, 2018 Regular City Council Meeting and Executive Session. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Goatcher and passed unanimously.**

Mayor Dobbs turned the meeting over to Attorney Stockton. Attorney Stockton swore in Mary Beth Hughes as a new Councilperson. All the Council Congratulated Councilperson Hughes for her commitment of service. *Oath attached hereto and made a part of hereof.*

Mayor Dobbs moved the meeting discussion on to the next item on the agenda, the Tallulah Falls School (TFS) building permit. Mike Early stated that he had discussion with Tallulah Falls School staff and that the item has been postponed. He stated that the original date was set for the March meeting. Councilperson Goatcher said that the TFS permit was discussed during the workshop. Mayor Dobbs clarified that the TFS building permit was not an action item for this meeting.

Mayor Dobbs introduced Tim Lee to present from the Habersham Economic Development Committee. Mr. Lee is the Executive Director for the Habersham Partnerships for Growth. Habersham Partnership for Growth is a public private partnership charged with growing jobs and the economy in Habersham County. He stated that as the Executive Director of Economic Development, he is responsible for executing the vision of the Partnership. Mr. Lee is responsible for executing the vision of the Partnership. Mr. Lee introduced members of the Board who attended the meeting: Pastor Mike Franklin from The Torch, Wade Rhodes, Former Chairman, and Dr. Larry Peevy, President at Tallulah Falls School. Each of these gentleman serves on the Executive Committee.

Mr. Lee stated that role is to assist the business industry, primarily existing business grow. This year he is meeting with all the businesses in Habersham County. The goal of this committee is to improve the quality of life through employment growth and development. Mr. Lee extended a sincere thank you to Mayor Dobbs for her support and work as part of this community. Mayor Dobbs returned the appreciation by thanking Mr. Lee and the team for being so supportive of Town of Tallulah Falls.

Mayor Dobbs moved the meeting to the next order of business- Tree City USA. Mark Wiles represented the organization and provided a proclamation to the Town. Mayor Dobbs announced that Councilperson Mary Beth Hughes will serve as the chair for this committee.

Police Chief Bill Goatcher suggested to plant a tree in the area that hosts the Bluegrass festivals. Mayor Dobbs and the Council accepted the proclamation and Mayor Dobbs read the proclamation to everyone and declared February 8th, 2018 Georgia Arbor Day in the Town of Tallulah Falls.

Mayor Dobbs announced that the Fire Wise grant was approved in the amount of \$5,000.00. Mike Early said the money will be used to rent a chipper to clear roads and the right-a-ways.

***Attorney Report: Charter Amendments and Letter to the Delegation attached hereto and made a part hereof.***

Attorney Stockton provided proposed draft amendments to the Town Charter at the request of the Council for review and vote of acceptance. He also provided a draft letter for Mayor Dobbs to sign and send to the Local Delegation requesting action to process the amendments to the Charter. Attorney Stockton read the proposed amendments as follows:

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE TOWN OF TALLULAH FALLS, GEORGIA**

*Be it enacted by the Georgia General Assembly, that there shall be elected for the Town of Tallulah Falls, Georgia by the qualified voters therein, a Mayor and four Councilmembers, In the event that the office of Mayor or one or more of the Council shall become vacant by death, resignation, removal or otherwise, said vacancy or vacancies may be filled by appointment and selection by Mayor and Council in case of a vacancy in the Council, and by the Council in case of vacancy in the office of Mayor, and persons so elected shall be duly qualified to fill such vacancies in case they should be qualified to hold such office or offices, in case they were or should be regularly elected by ballot of the qualified voters of said city. Persons so elected to fill vacancies shall serve in said position until the next regular election at which time the seat for which the vacancy was filled shall be on the ballot for either a full term or to fill the remaining unexpired term whichever the case may be.*

*Be it enacted by the Georgia General Assembly, that no person related within the second degree by affinity, or within the third degree by consanguinity to any elected officer of the Town of Tallulah Falls, Georgia shall be elected or appointed to any office, position, clerkship, employment or other service of the city other than as a volunteer. This shall not apply to nor effect any such relationships that were pre-existing as of January 1, 2018, nor shall any such pre-existing relationships as of January 1, 2018, which would otherwise violate this provision, be required to discontinue in the future.*

Attorney Stockton advised the Council that time is of the essence regarding this item. He stated that the item would need to be in before Crossover Day of the session.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Hamilton to authorize Mayor Dobbs to sign a letter and send the amendments to the Local Legislation. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes.** Councilperson Hughes asked a question regarding the information of appointment for vacancy. Attorney Stockton directed her to review the proposed amendment. Discussion took place regarding Council appointments and the amendment to the Charter by the Council. Attorney Stockton presented the draft language for the Notice of Intention for the legal ads to run in both local newspapers to suffice the mandatory advertisement requirement. **The motion passed unanimously in favor of the proposed amendment to the Town Charter reflecting the change to finish out the term at the next election.**

**Fire Report:** Attached hereto and made a part hereof.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to pay for tires for fire trucks from Habersham SPLOST funds. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes and passed unanimously.**

Attorney Stockton received information and advised the Council that the tires for the fire truck was not an approved expenditure from SPLOST funds. Mayor Dobbs advised that the tires could be paid from the General Fund.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to rescind the vote to pay for the fire truck tires from Habersham SPLOST funds. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Coldren and passed unanimously.**

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to pay for the fire truck tires from the General Fund. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes and passed unanimously.**

Mayor Dobbs provided an update for the SDS plan regarding the Fire Department. She requested that Chief Early contact Mike Carnes to work on the Code Red item.

**Police Report:** Attached hereto and made a part hereof.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Hamilton to authorize Chief Goatcher to proceed with working with Aikens of Winder on receiving more information about the trade-in value of the current police truck. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Coldren and passed unanimously.**

**Water Report:** Attached hereto and made a part hereof.

**Financial Report:** Attached hereto and made a part hereof.

Mayor Dobbs reported that the Town is debt free. She stated that the Town is not going to increase property tax. However, the property tax does not fund the entire budget. SPLOST funds from both Rabun and Habersham County are both very important to this community. Mayor Dobbs is attending meetings and representing the Town of Tallulah Falls to make sure that the Town continues to receive equitable SPLOST funding.

Mayor Dobbs read the Financial Report and stated that the town is debt-free. She also made note that the property tax received does not fund the entire budget of the Town. Mayor Dobbs stated that the local SPLOST meetings for both Habersham and Rabun County have started and that she is representing this community to make sure that the Town of Tallulah Falls is part of those discussions and to keep money coming in. She expressed how critical funds from both Rabun and Habersham SPLOST are for the operation of the Town departments.

**Street Report:** Attached hereto and made a part hereof.

Chief Goatcher stated that we are still waiting for the LMIG funds from the state. The Council will be updated once received.

**Public Safety Report:** None.

**Mayor's Comments:**

Mayor Dobbs announced the 2018 appointments for the following:

- Police Chief – Bill Goatcher
- Fire Chief - Mike Early
- Mayor Pro-Tem – Deb Goatcher
- Water Commissioner – Larry Hamilton
- Roads Commissioner - Bill Coldren
- Public Safety Commissioner - Mary Beth Hughes
- Rabun Water and Sewer Authority – Dallas Taylor
- CPA – Mixon, Mixon, Brown, Tench CPA
- Tree City – Chairperson- Mary Beth Hughes, Board Members Kristi Early and Barbara Rice
- Sign Committee – Chairperson- Mary Beth Hughes

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to approve the 2018 appointments. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes and passed unanimously.**

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher for the Mayor to attend the Service Delivery Strategy training in Athens. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes and passed unanimously.**

Mayor Dobbs announced that the Clerk had received a letter or resignation from Bill Coldren as a Councilperson of the Town of Tallulah Falls effective February 8th, 2018. The resignation will go into effect after the executive session.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Coldren to go call the election for the vacancy seat of Bill Coldren. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes and passed unanimously.**

Mayor Dobbs announced that qualifying would begin on March 5<sup>th</sup> and go through March 9<sup>th</sup> and the election will take place on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018.

Mayor Dobbs called for an Executive Session for the Council to discuss personnel.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Coldren to go into executive session for discussion of personnel. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Hamilton and passed unanimously.**

Mayor Dobbs called the regular Council Meeting back to order at 8:20 p.m. and asked the Council to make any appropriate motions based on discussions in executive session.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to accept the resignation of Councilperson Coldren. Councilperson Coldren abstained. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Hamilton and passed unanimously.**

**Councilperson Goatcher made the Motion to adjourn; seconded by Councilperson Hughes. The Motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

APPROVED:

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MAYOR

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COUNCIL MEMBER

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CLERK

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COUNCIL MEMBER

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COUNCIL MEMBER

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COUNCIL MEMBER