

TOWN OF TALLULAH FALLS  
STATE OF GEORGIA  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018  
MINUTES

The special called meeting for June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018 of the City Council of Tallulah Falls, Georgia was called to order at 6p.m. by Mayor Teri Dobbs.

PRESENT WERE: Mayor Teri Dobbs  
Councilperson Deb Goatcher  
Councilperson Larry Hamilton  
Councilperson Mary Beth Hughes  
Councilperson Carol Nelms  
Fire Chief Mike Early  
Police Chief Bill Goatcher  
Town Clerk Jessica Robinson  
Attorney Allyn Stockton

OTHERS PRESENT: See attached sign-in list

Mayor Dobbs welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked Mr. Ray Morris to open the meeting with prayer.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to accept the minutes of the May 3, 2018 Regular City Council Meeting/Executive Session and the May 21, 2018 Special Called Meeting. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes and passed unanimously.**

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to accept the agenda for the July 21, 2018 Regular City Council Meeting. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes and passed unanimously.**

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to approve the budget for 2018-2019. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes and passed unanimously. (Budget attached hereto and made a part hereof.)**

Mark Wiles, Tree City USA, presented a tree ordinance for the Town to adopt. Mayor Dobbs read the ordinance to the Council. Mayor Dobbs and all members of the Council executed the ordinance.

Chief Goatcher and Chief Early provided an update regarding the work that was completed for the Fire Wise grant. Additional assistance from volunteers provided enough manpower to complete the entire town.

Mayor Dobbs presented information for the development of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). The Council held a Special Called Meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup> with Attorney Janney Sanders to gain information about the process to develop this authority and why it would be beneficial for the Town. Mayor Dobbs presented the Council with a Resolution that was drafted by Mr. Sanders. Attorney Stockton explained that every city has the ability to activate a Downtown Development Authority. However, there is a process to complete before the authority becomes active. A Resolution is the first step that covers most all the requirements. Once the Resolution is adopted by the Council, documents are to be submitted to the Department of Community Affairs for notification. As a requirement, the Council must select seven members to serve on the DDA. The requirements state that you must be resident of the town and/or a business owner living in the County of the DDA. Mayor Dobbs presented the names of the representatives appointed by the Council to serve:

2-year term- Joey Fountain    2- year term- Dustin Rogers  
4-year term- Kristi Early    4-year term- Keith Nelms  
6-year term- Ann Irvin    6- year term- David Hart    6-year term Mary Beth Hughes

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher for the Council to approve the slate of representatives as presented. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes. The Motion passed unanimously.**

Mayor Dobbs thanked everyone who agreed to serve on the DDA. Attorney Stockton provided a draft of by-laws to be reviewed by the Council and the DDA.

Brian Rindt, from Rindt McDuff Engineering, and Willard Ferguson, Water Consultant, provided an update on the status of the current water system. Mayor Dobbs introduced Dallas Taylor, representative of Tallulah Falls on the Rabun Co. Water and Sewer Authority.

Attorney Stockton stated Mr. Rindt has been asked to attend the meeting to provide an update about the current water system and information focused. He reminded the Council and all of those in attendance that this was a business meeting and not a question and answer session or a debate.

Mr. Rindt stated that the main well for the city has been studied by a Geologist. Two things were determined from the study that was performed. The first being the long-term constant yield for the that well is about 27 gallons a minute. In addition, a camera was put inside the well to examine the 40-year-old steel casing. It was also determined that the casing was in bad condition. The Geologist recommends that a new liner be installed to make the casing new again. By replacing the casing, there is desired result for a reduction of the iron that is currently in water. Mr. Rindt provided several options that he and his team are considering. Installing a pump on the current well and reducing the size of the proposed filtration system are two of those recommendations. Another recommendation is to put a transducer in the well to monitor the water level and to be able to control the speed. The filtration system is currently on hold pending the results of the liner and how it might impact the iron.

Mayor Dobbs stated that the Town is still currently operating on the Demorest water system.

Once written approval has been received from EPD, the well company will come and install the new liner. Water Consultant, Willard Ferguson, stated that he has been in discussions with the Geologist. Mr. Ferguson recommended that a recorder should be installed at City Hall that will put out a paper chart that will show what the depth is in the well. This will provide a daily log that will be maintained. Mr. Ferguson stated that this information is something that EPD would like to know and he would also like to know. Chief Bill Goatcher stated that he did not agree with the recommendation by Mr. Ferguson. Chief Goatcher stated that he is monitoring the well and logging the information. He stated that if there is a transducer installed, it could easily be monitored daily while monitoring the gallons in well. Councilperson Hamilton asked how much the transducer would cost and if it is typical to install when replacing the liner. Mr. Rindt stated that the transducer should be put in when reinstalling the pump. He stated that all the wells that he has installed in the last 15 years have transducers to help with monitoring what the well is doing. He did not feel that the transducer would be a very expensive. Councilperson Hamilton asked for a ballpark price. However, Mr. Rindt said he did not have enough information to provide that information at this time. Mr. Ferguson stated that the Geologist, Bob Atkins, is working to get estimates for the proposed work to be completed. Mr. Rindt did not have any action items for Council approval. The Council thanked Chief Goatcher for the additional time he has spent during the past several weeks for the evaluation of the well and existing water system.

Councilperson Goatcher asked at what point would the Council need to make a decision about the new filtration system. Mr. Rindt answered by saying that he thought this would be something that would be ready at the next meeting. Councilperson Hughes asked if the Council would be voting on each of the proposed items to include the casing, the transducer, and the work on the well. Mayor Dobbs said that once the numbers and estimates have been received they would provide this information to the Council before moving forward. Mayor Dobbs reminded the Council that the budget has already been approved to complete the proposed work. However, Mayor Dobbs feels that it is very important to make sure that the Council and the community is aware of the cost and the work being completed in advance.

Mayor Dobbs introduced Dr. Frank Carl, Scientist of the Savannah Riverkeepers. Dr. Carl stated that he had more questions than answers for the Council. Dr. Carl asked questions regarding the required minimum flow for the channels for Tugaloo River, Rabun dam and the upper ridges of Lake Tallulah. Mayor Dobbs stated that with the EPD water withdraw permit, the engineers for Georgia Power and the EPD do not have issue with the request being made by the Town. Dr. Carl asked if anyone knew what the rate of flow was from the Clayton treatment plant? Attorney Stockton and Dallas Taylor provided information to Dr. Carl about the discharge permit and the withdraw permit for Clayton and Rabun County. Mayor Dobbs and the Council suggested that Dr. Carl contact Georgia Power and Rabun County regarding some of his questions that were not related to the Town. Mayor Dobbs thanked Dr. Carl for attending the meeting and encouraged him to reach out to the any of the Consultants or Council if he needed any additional information that they could provide.

**Attorney Report-** Attorney Stockton stated that the Charter Amendments have been signed off by the Governor.

**Fire Report-** Fire Chief, Mike Early, stated the Fire Department Election held its' annual election for Officers and announced the following election results.

Chief - Mike Early  
Assistant Chief – Paul Marsteller  
Captain – Jason Ivester  
1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant – Matt Nall  
2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant – Open  
3<sup>rd</sup> Lieutenant – Open

Chief Early also stated that the department has changed their by-laws. (Election by-laws are included)

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Hughes to accept the by-laws as they are presented. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Nelms and passed unanimously. (By-laws are attached hereto and made a part hereof.)**

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

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

**Street Report-** Mayor Dobbs stated that she had received a letter from resident Robert Bellou regarding the road to his house washing out. Mayor Dobbs, Councilperson Hamilton, and Chief Goatcher did a site visit at the property to review the concern. Chief Goatcher advised the Council that the road going to the water tank crossed over the parking area of Mr. Bellou. He stated that the terrible rain storms have caused erosion to come down into the parking area. Chief Goatcher has assessed the road and made modifications to correct the situation. He has cleared out a culvert that was clogged and put in an additional culvert above the property. He recommends putting gravel on the road up to the water tank and replacing the pea gravel for the parking area of Mr. Bellou. Chief Goatcher requested that the Council approve to spend \$500.00 for gravel for the completion of this item.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to spend up to \$500.00 from the Roads and Streets budget for gravel for road to the water tank and to purchase pea gravel for the parking area of Mr. Bellou. The Motion was seconded by Councilperson Nelms and passed unanimously. (Letter attached hereto and made a part hereof.)**

**City Clerk Report-** Clerk Robinson stated that several items are in process. We have purchased a laptop to assist with court proceedings and are also in the process of implementing a system to accept credit card payments at City Hall. We are also in the process of purchasing a new copy machine. The laptop and any court related items are paid for by the Technology Fund. Chairs for the Community Room have been ordered and will be paid for with Habersham SPLOST funds for building renovations. Mike Early, the Technology Consultant, has been involved in reviewing all of the proposed technology items to be purchased and will assist with making sure these items are aligned with our IT security procedures, installed properly and coordinating correctly with our current IT system.

**Mayors Comments-** Mayor Dobbs announced that Habersham County will be proposing a

TSPLOST on the November ballot. A public hearing will be held on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at the jury assembly room at the Habersham County Courthouse. Chief Goatcher has assisted Mayor Dobbs and Clerk Robinson to complete the proposed project list if the TSPLOST is approved in November. Mayor Dobbs stated that she will be signing the Habersham SDS Resolution. After several meetings and discussion, the agreement is ready to be executed by all the Cities and Habersham County authorized representatives.

Mayor Dobbs appointed Councilperson Nelms as the representative for roads and bridges.

Mayor Dobbs made the request that on the Friday following a Council meeting, that the City Clerk leave at noon due to the extended hours from the previous day for the meeting. All Council members agreed to approve the request.

Mayor Dobbs received a letter from the Department of Transportation regarding LMIG funds for 2019. The funding is proposed \$13,619.00.

**Public Comment-** David Hart asked about the status of the Employee Handbook. Mayor Dobbs stated that is something that the Town will be bringing back for discussion in the upcoming months. Budget and other items had to take priority. However, the Employee Handbook is a vital piece to the processes and procedures for the operations of the Town. Chief Goatcher stated that the Fire and Police Department both had policies and procedures in place. Mayor Dobbs requested that those be provided to Council as they continue to make decisions on the Employee Handbook.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Hughes to go into Executive Session for Real Estate and Personnel. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Nelms. The Motion passed unanimously.**

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Hamilton to exit Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Goatcher. The Motion passed unanimously.**

**No action was taken during Executive Session.**

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Hughes to name Matt Nall Assistant Police Chief. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Nelms. The Motion passed unanimously.**

Mayor Dobbs wanted to make a public statement regarding the policies and procedures of the Town. The previous statement regarding the need to develop an Employee Handbook was not to indicate that the Departments of the Town are not operating correctly. The Departments are running efficiently. It is important for the Council and administrative staff to have a copy of all updated policies and procedures available.

**A Motion was made by Councilperson Hughes to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Nelms. The Motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 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