

Canton, Georgia

*151 Elizabeth Street
Canton, Georgia 30114*



Minutes - Final - Draft

Thursday, April 18, 2013

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

City Council

1. Meeting Called to Order

Present for the meeting were:

Mayor Gene Hobgood

Councilman John Beresford

Councilman Bill Bryan

Councilman Hooky Huffman

Councilman Jack Goodwin

Councilman Bob Rush

Scott Wood – City Manager

Bobby Dyer – City Attorney

Dean Floyd - Fire Chief

Nathan Ingram – Chief Financial Officer

Ken Patton – Community Development Director

Joby West – City Engineer

Camille Wehs – Director of Technology

Susan C. Stanton – City Clerk

Councilman Cummins was not present

2. Pledge of Allegiance/Invocation

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Hobgood and the invocation was given by Councilman Goodwin.

3. Guests and Visitors**A. Proclamation of National Library Week - Mayor Hobgood**

The Mayor presented the Proclamation to Loriann White from the DAR.

4. Consideration to Approve Council Meeting Minutes**A. Action on March 21, 2013 Council Meeting Minutes - Attachment 01**

Attachments: [March 21, 2013 Council Meeting Minutes](#)

Councilman Rush made a motion to approve the Minutes; Councilman Beresford seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 ayes, 0 nays So approved

B. Action on April 04, 2013 Council Meeting Minutes - Attachment 02

Attachments: [April 04, 2013 Council Meeting Minutes](#)

Councilman Rush made a motion to approve the Minutes; Councilman Beresford seconded the motion.

Vote: 3 ayes, 0 nays So approved

Councilman Bryan and Huffman abstained from the vote due to their absence from the April 04, 2013 meeting.

5. Consideration To Approve Agenda

Councilman Rush made a motion to approve the Agenda; Councilman Beresford seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 ayes, 0 nays So approved

6. Ten Minute Public Input

Linda Holmes-Rubin inquired into the reimbursement for her reservoir condemnation related legal fees.

Lance and Debi Halick spoke in support of their zoning change request.

7. CONSENT AGENDA - Items to Consider for Consent Agenda

None.

8. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Action on Selection of New Committee Member for the Urban Redevelopment Agency - Mayor Hobgood

Mayor Hobgood recommended that Clay Cowley be appointed to fill the vacant position; Councilman Beresford affirmed the recommendation.

Vote: 5 ayes, 0 nays So approved

- B. Action on Planning Commission Recommendation on Case # CUP1302-001, 402/403 Kimberly Way, Request to Operate Church in L-I (light industrial) Zoning - City Manager

Councilman Rush made a motion to approve the Planning Commission's recommendation; Councilman Beresford seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 ayes, 0 nays So approved

- C. Action on Planning Commission Recommendation for Case # ZCA1302-001, 2000 Towne Mill Avenue - Request to Increase Approved Commercial Area - City Manager

Councilman Rush made a motion to approve the Planning Commission's recommendation; Councilman Huffman seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 ayes, 0 nays So approved

- D. Discussion and Possible Action on Resolution to Determine the City Council's Position on Discussing Consolidating Fire Services with Cherokee County - Councilman Beresford - Attachment 03

Attachments: [Resolution to Determine Council's Position Regarding Fire Services Consolid](#)

Councilman Beresford requested that this matter be postponed until the next meeting for the presence of Councilman Cummins. Discussion of the County's proposal followed with comments made by County Commissioners Buzz Ahrens and Harry Johnston.

Mayor Hobgood asked the City Manager the following questions regarding the Cherokee County Consolidation Proposal:

1. Does the proposal provide for the County to build 2 new fire stations in the City and have them open in 2014 and 2015?

Answer: Yes.

2. Does the proposal provide for 2 ambulances to be stationed in the City: one in the Laurel Canyon/Great Sky area and a second near the New Northside Hospital near Hwy 140 & the former Commerce Boulevard?

Answer: Yes.

3. Is it your understanding that the County currently has the discretion to place ambulances at any location they choose and are not mandated to station an ambulance at Laurel Canyon or for that matter anywhere in the City?

Answer: That would be my understanding, yes.

4. Does this proposal in your opinion, provide a means by which the senior/disability homestead which was approved by the voters in a referendum, may continue?

Answer: I think the recommendation from Mr. Johnston is designed to at least partially achieve that, now in fairness I think it graduates on out so ultimately we'd have to continue that, but, initially I think the proposal is designed to address that.

5. In your opinion, does this proposal from the County provide the framework whereby all City fire personnel will have employment with the Cherokee County Fire Service at equal or better pay and benefits?

Answer: Now, I can't speak to the equal and better. We have been assured that all firefighters would be retained; I think equal yes, better I'm not sure about. There are some points that would need to be taken very seriously in that regard. There is a distinction in our respective benefits packages that would need to be taken into account. So, if you took a \$40,000 a year firefighter and carried him directly over to the County at \$40,000 that may not be an equal situation because of the benefits distinction. But if all that's taken into account and if the County is assuring the City that our fire fighters would not be economically disadvantaged in any way and the benefits program is into account, yes.

6. Does this proposal provide for continuation of the downtown fire station for fire services?

Answer: I think we have, to my knowledge, we have said that that was going to be essential and we wanted to retain that real estate, we wanted to retain the deed to that real estate and use at least a portion of that building for general administrative or non firefighting purposes.

7. Does this proposal allow for the city to continue billing the property owners for fire services in exactly the same manner as the City has done historically?

Answer: Yes.

8. Does this proposal provide for a tax credit against at least a portion of the property and equipment to be transferred to the County?

Answer: *Well it was pegged to the net m and o and then I think Mr. Johnston's suggestion at least in part encompasses that, yes.*

9. Does this proposal provide that the fire tax portion of our SPLOST be transferred to the County as it is collected over the next 6 years?

Answer: *Yes, but I think there's been some misunderstanding about that amount because I don't think we have the 504 and I don't think we will have the 504. I think it will be less.... on a proportional basis.*

10. Is it true and not a misrepresentation, that under the plan recently defeated by the voters, the cost to the average taxpayers would likely increase a total of between 50 and 60%?

Answer: *I'll have to think about that one.... CFO is nodding his head affirmatively.*

11. Would it seem reasonable to you in your professional opinion as a City Manager that if the City consolidated its fire services with that of the County, that the current City fire personnel would be utilizing the new County training center for training?

Answer: *Yes, if they were County employees, certainly.*

12. Is it also your professional opinion that if the City keeps its fire services in-house, that the City may have to pay the County to utilize the County fire training center or the City may have to build its own at an additional cost to the taxpayers?

Answer: *If 1 of those 2 scenarios did not develop I think it could be a detriment to our ISO.*

13. Mr. Wood, is it still your professional opinion which you have shared with me on a number of occasions, that from a purely economic viewpoint, i.e. cost/benefit, not political, that consolidation is the best direction for this City?

Answer: *I have said that if you look at nothing other than the economics then the County's proposal certainly has some attractiveness.*

E. Action on Contract Fire Services Funding Feasibility Study - Councilman Rush - Attachment 04

Attachments: [Fire Services Funding Feasibility Study](#)

Councilman Rush made a motion that the City enter into a contract with Ecological Planning Group for a fire services funding feasibility study; Councilman Beresford seconded the motion.

Vote: 5 ayes, 0 nays So approved

F. 1st Reading of General Addendum to the Georgia Municipal Employees Benefit System Defined Benefit Retirement Plan Adoption Agreement - City Manager -Attachment 04A

Attachments: [Canton Addendum 4 16 13](#)

This was the first reading of the Addendum.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Action/Approval of Surplus Auction Items - City Manager - Attachment 05

Attachments: [2013 Auction Items](#)

*Councilman Goodwin made a motion to approve the surplus item list;
Councilman Huffman seconded the motion.*

Vote: 5 ayes, 0 nays So approved

10. City Manager's Report

None. The City Manager had provided a written report.

11. Council Introduced Items

Councilman Goodwin inquired as to who would fill the vacancy on the fire services committee. The Mayor reported that he would serve himself or he will appoint someone. Councilman Goodwin also reminded everyone of the movie this weekend at the Canton Theatre.

12. Mayor's Report

None.

13. Adjourn

Councilman Rush made a motion to adjourn: the motion was seconded by Councilman Goodwin.

Vote: 5 ayes, 0 nays So approved