

CITY OF LAGRANGE, GEORGIA
REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

November 26, 2019

Present: Mayor Jim Thornton; Council Members Nathan Gaskin, Jim Arrington, Tom Gore, Willie Edmondson, LeGree McCamey, and Mark Mitchell

Also Present: City Manager Meg Kelsey; City Clerk Sue Olson; City Attorney Jeff Todd; City Planner Leigh Threadgill; Communications Manager Katie Van Schoor

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Thornton, the invocation was given by Former Council Member Norma Tucker and Mayor Thornton led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

On a motion by Mr. Edmondson seconded by Mr. McCamey, Council unanimously approved the minutes of the regular Council meeting held on November 12, 2019.

Mayor Thornton presented a 30 year service award to Sgt. Chris McGhee with the LaGrange Fire Department. Mayor Thornton expressed the gratitude of the Mayor and Council for Sgt. McGhee's years of service to the citizens and the City of LaGrange. Chief John Brant also thanked Sgt. McGhee for his years of service and dedication to the LaGrange Fire Department and to the citizens of LaGrange.

Mr. Edmondson thanked the City and staff for helping with the 2nd Annual "Light Up LaGrange" parade sponsored by the District 2 Council Members. He also stated that the progress continues on the sidewalks on Colquitt Street. And finally, he asked that all remember Richard English in their prayers as he has been hospitalized and in failing health.

Mr. McCamey emphasized Mr. Edmondson's thoughts on the parade and thanked all for helping.

Ms. Kelsey thanked District 2 for recognizing her as a Guest of Honor in the parade.

Ms. Kelsey reported that Keith Schuermann, Director of the Troup-Harris Regional Library, had presented a plan to the Council in the Work Session earlier today for expansion of the library located on Alford Street. The total project will cost approximately \$6 million. Mr. Schuermann said the library has applied for a \$2 million grant available from the State, and he is asking the City and the County to commit to \$1 million each. The remaining funds would be sought from Philanthropists. On a motion by Mr. Edmondson seconded by Mr. Arrington, Council voted unanimously to approve the request for \$1 million in the next budget cycle, contingent upon funding from the other sources.

Ms. Kelsey reported that Bobby Carmichael, Chairman of the Board for Visit LaGrange, Inc., had presented to the Council in the Work Session earlier today, the tourism budget of approximately \$850,000. On a motion by Mr. Edmondson seconded by Mr. Mitchell, Council voted unanimously to approve the budget as presented.

Mr. Kelsey reported that Edward Smith, Chairman of the Executive Committee for DDA II, came before the Council in the Work Session earlier today to request assistance from the City for Sweetland Amphitheater for landscape and maintenance services, along with financial and accounting services. On a motion by Mr. Edmondson seconded by Mr. McCamey, Council voted unanimously to approve the request and to hire an additional landscape crew.

On a motion by Mr. Mitchell seconded by Mr. Arrington, Council voted to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to execute an agreement with First Baptist Church Fannin Street for the Georgia DOT Hamilton Road Project acquisition. Mr. McCamey abstained from voting, therefore, the vote passed 5 – 0.

On a motion by Mr. Gore seconded by Mr. Mitchell, Council voted to authorize a Resolution of Support for the Georgia Radio Museum and Hall of Fame. Mr. Gore thanked Mr. Long for his commitment and service to the radio industry.

On a motion by Mr. Arrington seconded by Mr. Mitchell, Council voted to deny a request to rezone 1702 Adamson Street from R-2 (Residential) to R-3 (Residential). Messrs. Arrington, Mitchell and Gore voted to deny the request; Messrs. Gaskin, Edmondson and McCamey voted in favor of the rezoning. Mayor Thornton broke the tie and voted to deny the request, therefore, the ordinance failed to pass by a vote of 4-3.

On a motion by Mr. Gore seconded by Mr. McCamey, Council voted unanimously to reappoint Dick Daniel and Gwen Redwine to three year terms on the Historic Preservation Commission.

Carolyn Haamid came before the Council to invite them all to a Holiday Fundraising Dinner Event hosted by CAFI. The dinner will be held Thursday, December 5th at 6:30 p.m. in Newnan.

In good news closing comments, Ms. Van Schoor shared with the Council that we will be decking the City Halls on Monday, December 2nd. The Mayor, City Council and all City employees are invited to come and bring an ornament and help decorate City Hall on Monday. There will be Harvest Coffee and donuts from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m., refreshments and hot cocoa until 5:00 p.m. There will also be a city wishing tree that will be up for the first time in front of City Hall where the public is invited to share their wish on the tree. Tags will be provided to put on the tree.

Then...Save the date for City Hall Open House/Business After Hours with the Chamber of Commerce, Thursday, December 12th from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. There will be carolers, Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus, lots of holiday treats, and a wishing tree. The public is invited to video tape their wish for the city. This is free and open to the public – and very kid-friendly. ☺ We are looking forward to a wonderful holiday season! Happy Thanksgiving!

There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned by Mayor Thornton.

Mayor

City Clerk