

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

October 12, 2021

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

Also Present: City Manager Meg Kelsey; City Clerk Sue Olson; Assistant City Manager Bill Bulloch; City Attorney Jeff Todd; Communications Manager Katie Van Schoor

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Thornton, the invocation was given by Rev. John Oliver, Rosemont Baptist Church, and Mayor Thornton led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

On a motion by Mr. McCamey seconded by Mr. Edmondson, Council unanimously approved the minutes of the regular Council meeting held on September 28, 2021.

Nate Crawford, Executive Director for DASH, came before the Council to request an additional \$250,000 in ARPA funds, bringing their total to \$500,000, to fund additional units for the Hillside West Gateway Development workforce housing, and due to rising construction costs. The Grant application deadline initially was to be August 31, 2021, but has been extended to October 31, 2021. Mr. Crawford explained that Troup County had agreed to appropriate \$500,000 to DASH from their ARPA funds, and he is asking the City to match that. At the August 24, 2021 Council meeting, Council voted to appropriate \$250,000 to DASH, contingent upon the Governor's approval of the application. Council would like to have more information from DASH and what their commitment will be. No action was taken.

Ernest Ward came before the Council to ask for consideration of the City not enforcing the sign ordinance during the election season. The current sign ordinance limits the total square footage for signs on private property to 16 square feet. Mr. Ward believes that the ordinance isn't regulated fairly. Mayor Thornton told Mr. Ward that he cannot instruct staff to "not enforce" any ordinance, but that he will ask them to make sure enforcement is consistent. No action was taken.

Mr. Edmondson reported that he enjoyed the work session earlier today aboard the Miss Sally Floating Classroom on West Point Lake. He also informed the Council that a Christmas fund has been established for families that have been affected by COVID and other tragedies during the year. If anyone would like to contribute, they can contact Mr. Edmondson.

Ms. Kelsey presented copies of the September financial statements and payment of bills over \$2,000 for Council's information.

Ms. Kelsey also reported that the City has reached an agreement to purchase the property located at 311 Creekside Drive. Council had previously been informed that during heavy rainfalls, due to the repairs that are needed to the Mooty Bridge Road lift station, sewage backed up causing problems inside the home. On a motion by Mr. Mitchell seconded by Mr. Arrington, Council voted unanimously to purchase the property for \$195,000.00, and should be able to re-sell it when the lift station is upgraded within the next year or so.

In good news, closing comments, Ms. Van Schoor reported that we had a terrific Faith & Blue event at Sweetland on October 10th hosted by our LaGrange Police Department, Troup County Sheriff's Department, and the Georgia State Patrol. Mayor Thornton and Council Member Dr. Edmondson spoke at this great event. Also, tonight, the LaGrange Police Department and the Troup County School System are presenting "Parkland School Shooting: Lessons Learned", a free presentation to the community by Safe Schools for Alex Founder and Executive Director Max Schachter. Schachter's 14 year old son Alex was one of the 17 victims murdered in the Parkland school shooting on Valentine's Day 2018. Mayor Thornton and City Manager Meg Kelsey had a chance to meet with him this afternoon. And last, we are excited about opening the new Visit LaGrange Visitor Center. The Visit LaGrange Board meeting was held there this morning. If you would like a tour, Ms. Kelsey will take you after tonight's meeting.

There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m. by Mayor Thornton.

Mayor

City Clerk