

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
February 1, 2010

The Hartwell City Council met in regular session Monday, February 1, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of city hall with all members present. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jennifer Sudderth.

Following the invocation given by City Manager David Aldrich, everyone present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag.

Hearing no corrections or additions to the minutes of the January 4, 2010 council meeting, a motion was made by Councilwoman Mayfield to approve the minutes as written. Motion was seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously.

A proclamation was read by Mayor Sudderth, proclaiming the month of February to be declared as Black History Month in the City of Hartwell.

A video presentation was given by Chamber of Commerce Chairman Dennis Cobb and Mr. Bill Griggs regarding tourism, followed by a request for Council's approval of the Chamber's hiring of a Tourism Director. Mr. Cobb explained that the Chamber would like to partner with the County and City in funding this position, with the City's share being \$5,297.00. He further explained that the anticipated base salary for the position would be approximately \$26,000 and the Chamber was willing to also pay a commission based upon performance. Following discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Little to fund the \$5,297 for a period up to three years, after which, the agreement would be reconsidered depending upon the recommendations of the Chamber, City, and County. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Hicks, seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried unanimously to approve the hotel/motel tax agreement with the Chamber of Commerce.

Upon further discussion regarding funding for a tourism director, Councilman Little amended his previous motion to state that the \$5,297 to be given to the Chamber for a tourism director should come from the hotel/motel tax. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously.

The City Manager explained budget amendments for fiscal year 2009 as proposed by the Finance Officer. Councilwoman Mayfield moved that the budget amendments be approved. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Mayfield, seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously to authorize the repair of the in-pipe sewer camera at a cost of approximately \$15,000. As explained by the City Manager, recent heavy rains have caused problems with the sewer lift stations and the repair of the camera is needed to identify problems that contribute to sewage spills. As stated in a memo from Chief Wastewater Operator Dan Moorhead, quotes for a new camera ranged from \$40,000 to \$61,000, and it is felt that repairs and upgrades would bring the system up to date, including transitioning from analog to digital recording capability.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Mayfield, seconded by Councilman Little and carried unanimously to accept the low bid of \$11,400 from Process Control for repair of the wastewater influent sump pump panel.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Mayfield, seconded by Councilman Craft and carried unanimously to approve a request from the Hart County Little League for the annual Little League parade on Saturday, March 27th beginning at 10:00 a.m. at Bell's Shopping Center and ending at the Recreation Department.

Councilman Hicks reported that the Street Department was not cleaning out drainage ditches all over the city. He offered a motion to instruct the City Manager to have all drainage ditches around the city properly cleaned out. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield. The City Manager stated that he would do as instructed, but he suggested they first begin by cleaning out pipes due to the City not properly equipped to clean around pipes without disturbing yards. Mr. Tony Haynie suggested that the City notify property owners before digging out ditches, stating that he was in the process of spending several thousand dollars for landscaping on his own property. As the Mayor asked if the motion needed to be changed from cleaning out ditches to cleaning out pipes, Councilman Hicks stated that his motion was to direct the City Manager to have all drainage ditches properly cleaned out and maintained throughout the city, with the City Manager to oversee this work. Motion carried unanimously.

The City Manager explained that the County was receptive to working with the City on the area of inmate housing, and a proposed Intergovernmental Agreement had been prepared for Council's consideration, whereby city inmates would be housed at the Hart County Jail. He recommended the appointment of an ad hoc committee to assist him in working with the County on the proposed agreement. As discussion ensued, Sheriff Mike Cleveland stated that the County had space for about 45 inmates, and although he could house city prisoners most of time, he could not guarantee space in the jail for city inmates at all times. Following considerable discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Little to consider the concept of an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City and County for the County to house City prisoners, and to form a committee to talk with the County and Sheriff's Department regarding details of the Agreement. Motion was seconded by Councilman Craft. Further discussion ensued regarding issues such as medical and liability costs, actual cost per day, etc. As the Mayor asked for clarification, Councilman Little again stated that his motion was to consider the concept of an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City and County for the housing of city inmates by the County and to form a committee to look into this concept. He stated that basically this motion meant agreeing with the concept of consolidation of jail services. As the vote was called by the Mayor, motion carried 4 to 2, with Councilmembers Mayfield and Hicks opposing. Mayor Sudderth appointed Councilmembers Sarah Mayfield, Tray Hicks, and Van Senkbeil to serve on a committee to work with the City Manager in negotiations with the County.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Mayfield to accept a quote from Group Resources, Inc. for the City's health insurance coverage. Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried unanimously. Councilwoman Mayfield explained that the insurance coverage with Group Resources was identical to the current health insurance plan, at a savings of approximately \$120,000 per year.

Councilman Little reported that the City Hall Building Committee had looked at many different avenues over the last year regarding the construction of a new city hall, renovation of the existing city hall, or purchasing other property. He further explained that a feasibility study was conducted by Trehel Corporation and preliminary plans were prepared for a new city hall, using the assistance of Signature

Architects. Mr. Bob DuBose of Trehel and Mr. Frank Travaglio of Signature Architects gave a presentation of their proposed plans, which were also presented at a town hall meeting on January 16th. Mr. DuBose stated that the cost of the proposed structure would cost between \$3 and \$3.4M. He also explained the design-build concept, stating that one company would be in charge of design and construction under this type method. Following the presentation and after considerable discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Little as follows: "I move that having considered the options of renovating the existing city hall, purchasing an existing building in the city limits and renovating it, or constructing a new city hall on property currently owned by the city, the city hall committee is recommending that the City construct a new city hall on the property currently owned by the City at the corner of Howell and Carter Streets, and to utilize a design-build contract with a guaranteed maximum price, and not to pursue other options at this time." Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mayfield and carried 5 to 1, with Councilman Craft opposing.

After further discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Little as follows: "I move that the City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager and city hall committee to develop a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and advertise for qualified candidates for construction of a new city hall on city property pursuant to a design-build contract with a guaranteed maximum price, and that this authorization includes drafting and publishing a Request for Qualifications to solicit candidates, allowing Trehel Corporation to submit its name as a candidate, interviewing selected candidates, and then reporting to City Council on the qualified candidates before issuing a Request for Proposals." Motion was seconded by Councilman Ethridge and carried 5 to 1, with Councilman Craft opposing.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Turner
City Clerk