

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Hawkinsville, Georgia met in a Regular Meeting, Monday April 5, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall with Chairman James Colson presiding.

PRESENT: Chairman James Colson, Vice-Chair Shelly Berryhill, Phil NeSmith, Henry Cravey and Wilson Credle.

Jerry Murkerson gave a prayer. All pledged allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

James Colson called the meeting to order and announced a change in the order of the agenda.

RECOMMENDATION OF PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION:

The change in the agenda was done due to the number of citizens present to hear the Planning & Zoning recommendations on the property located at 477 Martin Luther King Blvd., owner Alvin "Candy" Powell to rezone from R-3 to B-2 to construct a funeral home.

Colson called on those citizens in attendances wanting to voice their agreements and disagreements. He would allow two to speak in favor and two against.

Alvin "Candy" Powell spoke as the owner stating he wanted to do what he had been trained to do and that funeral homes were his livelihood.

John Robert Ross, Jr. stated he didn't see any problems with a Funeral Home.

He did not know why people were against, that no one was ridiculing Mr. Powell and it seemed to be a neighborhood problem.

Wright Jones of 416 Lovejoy Street stated the people living in the area did not want to see another funeral home nor any other business locate there. Mary Boney 22 Highland Ave. stated there were 3 other funeral homes in the area and she was concerned about the environmental issues of that type business. Ricky Taylor Highland Ave said he didn't want the issue to create problems, but they have an established neighborhood and would like to enjoy it without another business locating in the area. It has nothing to do with Mr. Powell would just like to keep as residential. Manager Murkerson stated that the properties all around are zoned R-3. He also stated that the petition was never received by the P&Z Board. Mr. Taylor said there are 30 signatures on the petition of citizens that live close to the property

Wilson Credle asked if the property had any particular meaning. Phil NeSmith said years ago there was a florist shop on the corner across from the area.

Shelly Berryhill said he would encourage business and jobs, he was not in favor of spot zoning, that the City Commissioners had overturned the recommendation of the P&Z Board only once in its history.

Phil NeSmith said he didn't see just cause to deny and was inclined to approve. He said the citizens could go to the owner and entertain the purchase of the property. If own property adjoining a business property then your property would increase in value.

Wright Jones said the streets in the area were too narrow for another business. He felt it would be hard to try and sell a house in the area if there were funeral homes all around. Boney felt it would be a nuisance to the area. Manager Murkerson said no site plans or construction permits had been issued or presented by Mr. Powell, not sure if property suitable for construction, but that would be up to the Codes Enforcement Officer to see that they were correct according to the City's Unified Land Ordinance

Phil NeSmith motioned to approve the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Board to rezone property located at 477 Martin Luther King Blvd. from its present R-3 Residential to B-2 Business. Henry Cravey seconded, Shelly Berryhill voted in favor, James Colson and Wilson Credle were opposed, motion passed. Site Plans must be presented and must meet all codes.

BUSINESS LICENSE: Henry Cravey motioned to approve the applications for a business license in the names of;

1. Jeff Taylor Flooring
(45 Mooring Rd.- Floor Installation, Jeff Taylor, owner)
2. Speedy Lube of Hawkinsville
(163 Hwy 341 By Pass- Automotive Shop, Andy Poe, partner)
3. Complete Lawn Care and Landscaping
(87 3rd Ave. – Lawn care and landscaping, Jason Sinyard, owner)
4. Houston OB/GYN, LLC
(222 Perry Hwy. Prof Bldg B- Medical Office, Carlo Lee, owner)
5. Southland Seed Company, Inc.
(40 Houston St- Agriculture/Seed Cleaning, Jimmy Brewer, president)

Phil NeSmith seconded, motion passed.

RESOLUTION PRESERVE AMERICA DESIGNATION: Manager Murkerson read in its entirety. The Preserve America, a White House initiative includes a greater knowledge about our Nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's irreplaceable cultural and natural heritage assets and support for the economic vitality of communities. The City resolves to protect and celebrate our heritage, use our historic assets for economic development and community revitalization and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs. Shelly Berryhill motioned to adopt the Resolution. Wilson Credle seconded, motion passed.

AMENDMENT TO THE UNIFIED LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ORDINANCE (Basis for establishing areas of special flood hazard as required by FEMA) Presented as the 1st reading. This amendment will delete a section and add a new section. Though no approval necessary for 1st reading, Henry Cravey motioned, Phil NeSmith seconded, others agreed to adopt the amendment at the 2nd reading

AMENDMENT TO THE UNIFIED LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ORDINANCE (to bring the City ordinance in line with 2009 and earlier amendments to the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act as required by EPD) Presented as the 1st reading. This amendment will delete the current ordinance in its entirety. Though no approval necessary for 1st reading, Shelly Berryhill motioned, Phil NeSmith seconded, others agreed to adopt the amendment at the 2nd reading.

Both amendments will be presented for a 2nd reading and approval at the May 3, 2010 meeting.

PROCLAMATION: The City Commissioners presented a proclamation to James Joyner in honor of his 15 years of service as the Executive Director for the Hawkinsville Housing Authority. Mr. Joyner retired on March 31, 2010. Commissioners proclaimed April 5, 2010 as "James Joyner Day".

Mr. Joyner stated there were two things he was very proud of, one the corporation of the City and the Hawkinsville Police Dept. and how they had all worked together and that the Housing Authority had become a viable part of Hawkinsville.
Rachell Pitts was introduced as the new Executive Director.

PULASKI/HAWKINSVILLE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY: Phil NeSmith motioned to reappoint Tom Arnold, Juanita Brown and Wayne Wetherington to serve. Shelly Berryhill seconded, motion passed.
Manager Murkerson stated Wayne Wetherington is willing to serve until a replacement is appointed or they are reappointed.

Wilson Credle requested that a listing of all Boards and Authorities and the codes by which they were adopted become a part of their agenda notebooks.

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE:

Murkerson gave a report on Dilapidated houses from the Codes Enforcement (23 houses demolished, 17 by owners and 6 by the City. City employees who are certified inspectors have inspected the last list and determined that four of the five must be treated as if they contained asbestos. We will resend the RFP's with the inspection report included and require contractors to utilize proper techniques for remediation. The old Satterfield property at 168 Broad St next to Hardees is in the court process.

We have the preliminary engineering report from Ocmulgee Site & Environmental Services for the Jordon Drive wastewater project. We will move forward with the GEFA loan/grant application. The total expense will be \$79,560.00. They will increase the out fall between Jordon Drive to under the road to the other side of McCormick Ave. They will replace the 8" line with a 12" line.

With the resignation of Wayne Wetherington we have a vacancy to be filled on the Housing Authority Board. If you have a recommendation I will contact that person to determine if he/she would be willing to serve. I have discussed this with Ms. Rachell Pitts and she informs me that the Authority Board will have a recommendation by our next meeting.

We have a balance of \$8,273. in our mosquito fund and we will start aerial spraying the week of April 12. We will initially spray the wet areas in an effort to thwart production. Subsequently we will spray all the areas in the City as needed.

We have installed over 90 meter boxes and replaced approximately 10 shutoff valves in Southern Hills subdivision. This should complete the project.

We received an email on behalf of Jim Higdon of GMA announcing the proposed slate of District 6 Officers for the 2010-2011 year, with the nomination of Commissioner Shelly Berryhill as 3rd Vice President of Georgia Municipal Association District 6. The ballots to confirm this nomination will be mailed in the near future. Everyone congratulated Berryhill.

James Joyner, member of the Complete Count Commission for the Census stated that Friday, April 9, 2010 will be "March to the Mail Box Day".

Nick Kouloungis of the Middle Georgia Regional Development Authority gave a report on the CDBG Rehab project. A complete housing assessment had been done, 727 homes were looked at. The target area would be McDuffie Street. The rehab would be for non-standard structures and owner occupied structures.

POLICE REPORT: Commissioners were handed the Police Dept. report for March 2010 showing 495 calls for service were made, with 41 citations issued, 6 warnings and 6 wrecks attended with a total of \$7,585.00 in fines to be collected. For the 1st quarter period January to March there have been 1,234 calls for service, with 388 citations issued, 72 warnings, 18 wrecks attended, with a total of \$49,295.00 in fines to be collected.

Assistant Chief Robert McGriff gave a report on the abandoned vehicles, showing a total of 75 vehicles removed since the program started. Six vehicles had been covered up due to being worked on and four citations had been written on vehicles to be moved. Three of those vehicles were moved in March and one is waiting to come to court.

Phil NeSmith stated that scrap iron/medal prices are at an all time high and suggested an article be placed in the newspaper to urge the removal of vehicles no longer in use. The Commission thanked McGriff for a great job.

Phil NeSmith questioned McGriff of the policies in arresting illegal immigrants. McGriff stated INS is contacted to investigate, but this is a slow process.

BETTER HOMETOWN REPORT: Karen Bailey gave a report for April 2010. The BHT Board of Directors would meet on Tuesday April 27th at 11:00 a.m. and she would need to know who would sit on the board to represent the City Commission. River Parks Advisory Committee working on projects related to development of the river. Met with Lori Hennesy, GA Dept. of Econ. Dev and Tourism March 22nd to seek funding for marketing the river parks and the Blue Way project- connecting Hawkinsville & the Ocmulgee river with surrounding counties, the region and the State. Met with Georgia DOT March 12th, city and county will partner with the Hawkinsville Garden Club for some beautification projects. GDOT will provide BHT, the city and county with daffodil bulbs in November and labor and equipment to plant them. The community market is active and looking forward to the completion of the Ocmulgee Market at the cotton mill in the future. BHT supplied support letters to the OneGeorgia Authority in regard to the changes in the scope of the plans for the project. The Promotions Committee is working on plans for a “First Friday” event for downtown where merchants and restaurants will allow shoppers to shop later on in the day of the event in an effort to increase our tax base. The committee will meet on April 6th at Pulaski paint & Decorating. Sponsors for the “Enduring Farmlands Scenic Byway” project will meet April 7th for the continued development of the byway’s corridor management plan. HBHT is partnering with UGA Archway, PCMS, 4-H, PCMS GEN Club, The Jimmy Carter Center and the Hawkinsville Garden Club for pollinator-wildflower gardens to be located at PCMS and the Mile Branch River Park. April 22nd at 4:00 p.m. at Mile Branch River Park and Pulaski County boat landing will be the location of a celebration for Earth Day & Global Youth Service Day and the ground breaking of the pollinator gardens. We have two contractors to look at the Opera House windows for repairs using the Georgia Heritage grant awarded.

FINANCE DIRECTOR’S REPORTS: Mitchell Woods handed out the cash and other financial reports for February 2010. He stated the SPLOST funds were down by \$1,100 for the month, \$12,800 compared to budget, but felt if the economy were stabilizing and the collections were the same we would be down \$17,000 by the end of the year.

COMMISSION COMMENTS:

Colson, Cravey, Credle and NeSmith all congratulated Berryhill for being considered by GMA for appointment as 3rd Vice-President for District 6 and knew he would represent the City of Hawkinsville well.

James Colson had no further comments.

Henry Cravey asked about the continued roof leaking at the Spec. Bldg. Manager Murkerson said they were still working with the contractor, that the roof had a 10 year warranty and hoped it would be honored.

Phil NeSmith told Murkerson he appreciated him emailing the agenda items, that it was a big help to them all.

Phil NeSmith stated they needed to address in the next SPLOST allocations funds to pave the last three streets at Anderson Acres that the City has property owners living on dirt roads. He requested a specified figure of the cost to pave them. They will address this at the Monday workshop.

Murkerson stated they had applied for grants through DOT and the funds were allocated for other areas. Wilson Credle requested Public Works identify any streets in the City not paved. NeSmith said some areas need to be repaved.

Wilson Credle asked about the progress of the cotton mill community market. Murkerson stated demolition of the buildings and separate building for the community market were under way. They had applied to OneGeorgia Authority, as previously stated by BHT, in regards to changes in the scope of plans for the project.

Credle understood the citizens could now make payments for utilities online through the City’s website, but there was a 6% fee added. Murkerson explained the City contracted with Creative Logics, its software supplier, in turn they contracted with a merchant to handle the online payments and they were charging the additional fees. Credle wants to research for merchants with lesser fees.

Shelly Berryhill reminded everyone to join in the activities at the April 16 & 17 Harness Festival.

CITIZENS COMMENTS: Lee Slade also reminded everyone about the Harness Festival, that this year there would be a parade, Bar-b-Que Cook-off, Live Bands after the Fireworks and a 5K Run.

Mary Beth Bass invited the Commission to attend a meeting in Athens for the results of the Personnel Survey recently handed out to city employees and commissioners.

Attorney David Walker said he attended a very special and inspiring program at the Perry United Methodist Church and that it would be televised at a later date and hoped everyone would be able to see it.

There being no further comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Phil NeSmith motioned to go into an Executive Session to discuss pending litigation. Shell Berryhill seconded, motion passed.

The time was note at 7:27 p.m.

The meeting was re-opened. The time was noted at 7:35 p.m.

There being no further business.

ADJOURN: Phil NeSmith motioned to adjourn. Henry Cravey seconded, motion passed.

Chairman, Board of Commission
Hawkinsville, Georgia

ATTEST:

City Clerk