

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Hawkinsville, Georgia met in a Regular Meeting, Monday September 12, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall with Chairman Shelly Berryhill presiding.

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

Phil NeSmith gave a prayer. All pledged allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

Chairman Shelly Berryhill called the meeting to order.

Sam Way spoke for a large group of merchants in attendance concerning the Commerce Street North Bridge. Berryhill gave an update stating they had met with DOT Project Manager Glen Ford and though he and Larry Walker, former member on DOT Board regretted they were not able to attend this meeting, they assured us that there was nothing in concrete at this point, only a preliminary plan. They will hold public hearings before any plans are complete.

Mr. Way stated that Commerce Street had been the main street since 1870. When the late Roger Lawson was on the DOT Board, plans were made to replace the bridge and fortunately for Hawkinsville two bridges were built which opened up traffic onto Broad Street, as well as maintaining the traffic flow on Commerce Street

Mr. Way said many years ago DOT explained that due to the weakness in the north bridge, a new bridge would be built and during that period traffic would be diverted to the south, but nothing was done. Then recently they came in and left this preliminary plan.

The majority of citizens and especially those with businesses on Commerce Street are opposed to the plan. Earlier this year, groups from the State Economic Development made a three day visit and were very impressed with Hawkinsville/Pulaski County. We were one of only five counties to make the study. They were impressed with the facades on buildings on Commerce Street. They did find something disturbing that in an hour's time there was no one on the sidewalks.

They suggested that someone from Georgia Tech Engineering School come and do a study to best utilize both Commerce and Broad Streets and what the consequences would be if the flow of traffic were to be changed. We must be prepared to present our case to DOT when the time comes. He suggested this request be done by the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Way stated he had never seen such cooperation, as in recent years, with the city addressing issues, giving study to them, considering all sides.

Wilson Credle asked if this was timely or not to adopt a resolution in opposition. Tom Arnold stated need to either adopt a resolution or make a motion for a study. Credle questioned whether we need a resolution opposing the current plan.

**LETTER TO DOT OPPOSING PLAN:** Phil NeSmith motioned the City, United Pulaski, the Chamber of Commerce and Archway Partnership to send a letter to DOT advising them of our opposition to their plan. Wilson Credle seconded, motion passed.

Chairman Berryhill, as representative of the City will touch base with others for their support or non-support. He would inform Archway at their next meeting to contact Georgia Tech. Way said the first contact should be with the Regents. Clay Hall said if leave DOT's plan in place, we'll end up headed to Abbeville, need to know the Commissioners back the City and if DOT can't compromise, then we have no use for them.

**MINUTES:** Phil NeSmith motioned to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2011 Regular Meeting, the August 11, 2011 Called Meeting and the September 2, 2011 Called Meeting. Henry Cravey seconded, motion passed.

Chairman Berryhill chose not to discuss the items under old business at this time. The one item TV Program, "Today In America" had been turned over to the Chamber of Commerce and Archway and no further discussion by the City was necessary at this time.

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

1. SOUTHEAST RESTAURANTS CORP.S dba PIZZA HUT 27585  
(135 Broad St., Ste 100- delivery/carry-out Pizza, Rick H. Seagraves, Pres.)
2. TOOTIE BUGS TREASURES  
(118 Commerce St. – retail consignment shop, Lashonda Newman/Tara Staples Arceneau, owners)
3. CYBER HIPPY CAFÉ & SHOP  
(60 N Houston St.- retail Piercing & Tattoos & Bicycle Repair, Pamela Whetzel, owner)
4. CHRISTIAN NEWS NETWORK MINISTRY, INC./HIS SERVICE PRESS  
(8 First St.- print business- programs, buttons, hand fans, flyers, cards, etc., Cynthia Criss, Pres.)

James Colson seconded, motion passed.

**BEER LICENSE:** James Colson motioned to approve the application for a Beer License in the name of;

WILKINS SEAFOOD & GRILL  
(123 Commerce St.,- Bryan A. Wilkins and Alicia McBurse Wilkins, applicants)

Phil NeSmith seconded, motion passed.

**RESOLUTION HONORING TONY REID MULLIS:** Phil NeSmith motioned to adopt the Resolution recognizing the Honorable Tony Reid Mullis, for his dedicated commitment to the United States of America and commend him for his sacrifices which help this community and all the citizens of the United States enjoy freedom and further amend the resolution by declaring September 3, 2011 as Tony Reid Mullis Day. James Colson seconded, motion passed.

**DNR LAB TESTING AGREEMENT:** Henry Cravey motioned to approve the agreement with DNR for lab testing of chemicals in the City's Water Treatment with cost being raised to \$7,600. per year for the next two years. James Colson seconded, motion passed.

Manager Murkerson stated according to Water staff, DNR does this testing as economically as any other group.

**TREASURE TROVE AGREEMENT:** Shelly Berryhill motioned to table. Wilson Credle seconded, motion to table passed.

**ANIMAL CONTROL:** Phil NeSmith motioned to accept Animal Control Officer, Sarah Tenon's resignation and directed City Manager Murkerson to explore the use of private vendors, their cost, with a proposal deadline. Wilson Credle seconded, motion passed.

Freddie Yates will fill in until either contract with private vendor or employ person to fill position.

**CLCP FUNDING:** Henry Cravey motioned to fund the CLCP Help Network Local Board the \$2,000. they requested. James Colson seconded, motion passed. Wilson Credle added, if this is a worthy program would go up to \$3,000. an option to bring back for consideration. The County also agreed, the School System did not.

## **CITY MANAGER'S UPDATES:**

I have included a summary report about dilapidated housing and unclean lots from Codes Enforcement.

I have included a work order synopsis for the month of April from our customer service system. These are completed work orders only.

I have also included an arrears report listing commercial customers who are behind on their bills.

The work at the community market building is progressing.

As suggested at our last regular meeting, two benches and tables have been constructed and installed at Colson Park playground.

We are planning to use community service workers to paint the fence at the harness training facility. The track account has funds available to pay for the paint.

Our animal control officer has submitted her resignation effective September 14. In a discussion with Commissioner Brooks Bailey about animal control activities it was suggested we look at privatizing that function. With your direction we will move forward with getting proposals from private firms to accomplish animal control in the City and County. Our current budget dollars for animal control is \$56,470 with half of that amount reimbursed by the County.

I have asked an engineering firm, Ocmulgee Site & Engineering, to begin design and plans for paving of Oak Street. As soon as the plans are completed, we will ask for proposals from contractors. Our SPLOST account has accumulated enough to pave that street.

Please remember the GMA District 6 Fall meeting Wednesday, November 2, 2011 at Middle Georgia Regional Commission from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM.

Law Enforcement Report was included in Commissioner's notebook.

Better Hometown Report:

**HBHT Board of Directors** will meet September 27, @ 11:00 am in the Opera House. Board Chair, Mrs. Jill Niblett & the board extends the invitation to the Hawkinsville City Commission to have a representative to serve on this board.

### **HBHT Promotions Committee**

**2011 Harvest Festival**— will be held on Saturday, September 24, 10 am – 4 pm. The committee thanks Mr. Murkerson and the city commission for the request to gain permission from GDOT to re-route traffic away from Commerce St. onto Broad Street to be able to provide a safe downtown event. Last year over 3,000 attended.

### **HBHT Design Committee/ Hawkinsville Historic Preservation Commission**

HHPC will meet in the Opera House on Tuesday, September 20, 2011 @ 4:00 pm.

### **Ongoing Preservation related projects include:**

A volunteer committee has been working with Karen & Ms. Kristi Harpst, Preservation Planner with MGRC to continue work on the new historic tour guide brochure. We have received a grant from HPD to help with the cost of this project.

A volunteer committee has been meeting with Karen & Ms. Kristi Harpst - who is facilitating the organization & planning for the old fire house restoration for use as a Scenic Byway trailhead, a museum for Katie our steam pump fire engine&

visitors center. We plan to submit an application for a Scenic Byway grant that could help fund this project. We hope to identify as many funding sources as possible to help with the project.

Better Hometown / HHPC will sponsor an Oral History Forum to be held @ the Opera House during the month of February 2012 in celebration of Black History Month. Guest speakers will be announced at a later date when confirmed.

BHT will partner with HHS to sponsor a cemetery tour to be performed for the public by HHS students on Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup> @ 11:00 am in conjunction with the Harvest Fest activities.

Better Hometown is the project sponsor & hosts “**Enduring Farmlands Scenic Byway**” meetings for Pulaski & Wilcox county representatives ~ who will partner to work on a brochure to promote the Byway. This effort is also facilitated by Ms. Kristi Harpst, MGRC Preservation Planner.

#### **HBHT Organization Committee:**

A UGA Archway project has been requested for an “Over- Under Study” for downtown. This study will be used to show us how Hawkinsville is “over” or “under” served in specific businesses & services. This information will be most helpful for business recruitment. BHT Signage Committee is working in partnership with the City & the Hawkinsville Garden Club to implement more Welcome signs, way finding & directional signage for downtown.

#### **HBHT River Parks Advisory Council :**

The 2011 Rivers Alive Cleanup will be held on Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup>. BHT is an event partner.

This committee of volunteers is working with our local Rivers Alive & Karen is working with representatives at the state and federal level organizing a program to be presented at the paddle event October 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>. The special program will be presented on Saturday evening, Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> @ Mile Branch Landing. The Georgia Canoe Association & The Georgia Conservancy will join for the first time. This huge event is being held to promote the Ocmulgee Blueway efforts.

#### **HBHT Economic Restructuring Committee / Hawkinsville Downtown Development**

**Authority:** No DDA meeting scheduled.

Karen has recently met with 3 different individuals who are interested in setting up businesses in downtown.

Karen will attend the annual Georgia Downtown Association conference in Rome, GA to be held on Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>.

Karen continues to serve on the *UGA Archway Partnership Steering Committee*.

Karen serves on the **Planning & Steering Committee** & also on the **Program Development Committee** & the **Graduation Committee** for *Pulaski Tomorrow Leadership*

& she will participate as a Facilitator for the current 2011 Pulaski Tomorrow Leadership classes. Karen participates in a mentoring program which is a project of the

*Georgia Downtown Association*. Karen serves on the *Communities of Opportunity* project committee &

also serves on the City & County’s *Comprehensive Plan Committee* facilitated by MGRC staff Mr. Bob Rychel & Ms. Kristi Harpst.

Karen continues to serve as a director of the *HELP Network, Inc.* board. This is the Hawkinsville- Pulaski County Certified Literate Community Program.

Archway Report:

#### **Economic Development**

- Archway participated as a community member in the Georgia Economic Development Agency's "Tourism Assessment Team" July 25-27. The Chamber hosted this 10 person team representing seven state agencies. The team will evaluate the community's tourism assets and present both short and long term plans to residents in a public session to be held in late September. The tourism team will be back in September for a public forum to make their recommendations.
- Working with the DDA and BHT, UGA students have been creating an inventory of existing downtown retail space. UGA grad student, David Tully has presented Karen Bailey with this inventory, trained her on its use and will provide ongoing support to resolve any issues.
- As a complement to the retail inventory, the Executive Committee approved an over/under retail study that was initiated in May by the Applied Research Division of UGA's Small Business Development Center. This study will assist in economic development by comparing existing businesses to those in similar counties to identify over or under represented businesses in several categories.
- Archway participated in the Military Affairs Committee caravan to the Capital in August and attended the Robins regional briefing on the Base.
- Plans are currently underway, through the Co-op initiative, to improve community websites through improved communication. This one day event will bring together community partners to update forms and content, refresh design and educate those responsible for site management.

### **Community Health**

- Archway coordinated the annual Mercer University School of Medicine Rural Health Experience in Pulaski County on August 9<sup>th</sup>. Archway Health Professional Laura Gillman spoke to the first year students and local health care professionals.
- Currently, the College of Public Health is coordinating a needs assessment for the community at the request of the Archway Community Health Issue Work Group. These efforts will be coordinated through the College of Public Health with the assistance of Ms. Gillman.
- The second Communities of Opportunity (Co-Op) initiative for Hawkinsville-Pulaski County is the reduction of teenage pregnancy rates. Under the leadership of local champion, Vonnie Berryhill, the work group will implement a number of community initiatives to reduce teen pregnancy by 25% by the summer of 2013. An introduction to the committee's "Teen Maze" project will be held in conjunction with the Family Connection's quarterly meeting on September 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **Government Service Delivery**

- Recreation surveys produced by UGA students have been included in the new school packets of every student. Archway will also review and analyze the input from these surveys.
- Middle Georgia Regional Commission representatives continue to work with Archway on data-gathering for the Community Assessment portion of the Joint Comprehensive Plan.
- Harry Hayes, from the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, spoke to the community about government consolidation on Monday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> in a public event sponsored by the Archway Executive Committee and Ocmulgee Order.

### **Housing**

- Community members of the GICH team including the Archway Professional traveled to Athens to participate in the GICH conference in August.

### **Leadership Development**

- The Pulaski Tomorrow leadership class for 2011 continues this month. There are 24 new members from the community taking part in this leadership program developed by UGA's Fanning Institute. This five month course focuses on leadership, communication, group decision making and community building and has become a tremendous asset in developing new leadership in the community.
- Archway Professional Michelle Elliott is a participant of the 2011 class.
- Plans are currently underway to have more local facilitators trained by UGA's Fanning Institute.

### **Public Education**

- Pulaski County schools participated in the Office of School Engagement/ Archway Partnership's inaugural symposium *The Power and Promise of Public Schools*. This month Archway and the Office of School Engagement facilitate an issue work group discussion. The Executive Committee and Education issue work group have begun a long-term collaboration with the College of Education to continue education dialogue between the community, Archway and UGA.
- An organizational issue work group on education was held on Wednesday, July 20, 2011. The participants expressed their interest in future meeting topics and formats. Currently, Archway is working to schedule UGA resources to meet the needs of the group.
- Pulaski County Schools will be attending the "State of Education" conference at UGA in September.

Economic Development Report-Lee Slade:

- Attended Congressional Luncheon in Perry on August 9<sup>th</sup>.

- Attended MGMTAC Meeting
- Attended State of GA Competitiveness Meeting
- Attended Middle Georgia RC Board Meeting
- Attended GEDA Membership Meeting in Atlanta
- Attended Community Meeting in Atlanta with MGMTAC and 21<sup>st</sup> Century to promote RAFB. Also met with Governor and Georgia Chamber of Commerce President
- Continue to work on Project Vicking for Spec Building at the Industrial Park
- Attended luncheon at RAFB with community leaders to welcome new General to the base
- Working on consolidation possibilities
- Working on City & County comprehensive plan
- Attended meeting with RAFB General, Community Leaders and all the Mayors in Middle Georgia area
- Participated in several meetings throughout Hawkinsville with Melvin Everson, Director of the Governor's Office of Workforce Development.
- Continue to work with Herty project
- Working on Economic Development plans through Archway
- Working with Pulaski Tomorrow Leadership Committee
- Working with Archway on film project to highlight our community. This video will be hosted by Terry Bradshaw.

#### Chamber of Commerce Report:

- The Chamber BOD meeting was held on Friday, August 5<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 am at the County Annex
- Kim and I attended the first meeting/ telephone conference call for possible video about Hawkinsville. This show would be hosted by Terry Bradshaw.
- Georgia Power Company has been selected Business of the Month for September.

- Thanks to ComSouth, Therisa and Kim worked the Hooters/ComSouth Classic Golf Tournament on Wednesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>. This event helps fund a large portion of our Pulaski Youth Leadership Program.
- The Chamber of Commerce quarterly membership meeting was held at LaCabana on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. The guest speakers were Steve Schleiger, the DNR Regional Supervisor for region 4 and Jimmy Miller, the Ocmulgee PFA manager.
- The Chamber hosted a re-grand opening ribbon cutting for 1<sup>st</sup> Franklin Financial on August 9<sup>th</sup> at their new location located at 11 Progress Avenue.
- Therisa and Kim attended the Georgia Chamber of Commerce Congressional Luncheon in the Miller Murphy Howard building at the Georgia National Fair in Perry on August 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Kim and Therisa hosted the Golden Isles Parkway Meeting and the Bobberthon Meeting on August 10<sup>th</sup> at the Hawkinsville Chamber of Commerce.
- Therisa arranged and attended the August 10<sup>th</sup> Rotary meeting in the absence of Rotarian Jerry Murkerson. The guest speaker was Dr. Michael Stoy, President of Middle Georgia College.
- Kim attended the Magnolia Midlands Travel Association meeting in Eastman on Thursday, August 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Therisa and Kim attended the Robins Region Progress Report for WRAB on Monday, August 29<sup>th</sup> at the Museum of Aviation in Warner Robins.
- Therisa and Kim worked with Kathryn Carver and Rob Chase to organize a welcome home parade for Corporal Tony Mullis. We also volunteered to work the parade line up for this event. This event was held on September 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Therisa and Kim organized several meetings with Melvin Everson the Director of the Governors Office of Workforce Development. This visit included visits to Pulaski County High School, Middle Georgia Technical College and Hollingsworth and Vose.
- Therisa and Kim made a visit to Ol' Roosters Chicken House and spoke with the owner about joining our Chamber.
- Therisa arranged to have Mr. Melvin Everson, Director of the Governor's Office of Workforce Development to speak at the August 31<sup>st</sup> Rotary Meeting. She arranged this program for Rotarian, Ken Mullis.
- Therisa and Kim are currently on the BHT Promotions Committee and have volunteered to take the applications for vendors for the Harvest Fest. The Harvest Fest will be on September 24<sup>th</sup>. The Chamber has donated the use of the stage for this event.

**FINANCE DIRECTOR'S REPORTS:** Mitchell Woods handed out the financial reports for July 2011. He explained the LOST collections are currently 1% more than last year. He also explained that the natural gas revenues were not as good as last year, down by 75% mainly due to the Women's State Prison not using as much. Shelly Berryhill said that by H&V adding another work shift, this would help.

**COMMISSION COMMENTS:**

James Colson had none.

Henry Cravey asked about the Post Office response. Murkerson explained he had received a response from the Regional Office, stating they had no money. Credle stated



we should still pursue parking on Commerce Street, look at the legality of a possible sale of the property, easements, etc., would OSHA be a potential push. Murkerson said City property does not fall under OSHA.

Cravey asked the condition of the Spec. Building, mainly the roof. Lee Slade said the building was still in good shape and that they were still showing it to potential industries. Wilson Credle had none.

Shelly Berryhill requested the City approve a small expense of \$120.00 for a program that will give every Pulaski County Fifth Grader a book that includes the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence and will be handed out on Liberty Day.

**LIBERTY DAY BOOK EXPENSE:**

Phil NeSmith motioned to approve the expense up to \$200.00. Wilson Credle seconded, motion passed.

Phil NeSmith had none.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS:**

Harley Lawson 33 Kamelia Drive questioned the process of consolidation. Wilson Credle stated consolidation was worth pursuing. Commission had already voted to form a study committee. Berryhill had met with County Commissioner Brooks Bailey and he agreed. They will ask the City Attorney to clear some logistical questions. Lawson asked how the committee will be chosen. Berryhill stated last time the City appointed 7 and the County appointed 7 and 1 was appointed to represent both.

Morgan Knowles McDuffie Street stated the HUD CDBG Grant Housing project was going well and he hoped they would start on his home soon. The homes already worked on look real good.

Berryhill explained to those attending the City had been awarded a \$500,000. CDBG Housing Grant that targeted the area of McDuffie Street.

Henry Cravey said he was helping Brandi Gordon promote the Harvest Fest and ask all to attend the events Saturday September 24, 2011.

There being no further business.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Phil NeSmith motioned to go into an Executive Session to discuss future acquisition of real estate, personnel and possible litigation. Henry Cravey seconded, motion passed.

The time was noted at 6:55 p.m.

The meeting was reopened.

The time was noted at 7:09 p.m.

**ACQUISITION OF REAL ESTATE:** Middle Georgia EMC wants to install an electrical plant on the corner of the Industrial/Technology Park. This would be an easy access from Hwy 247 over to Hwy 341. Commission said this would reduce the desirability of the park, would consider behind Spec Building. Commission not agreeable to property wants to purchase, but agreeable to other property less visible. No action taken.

As said previous the TV Program "Today in America" had been turned over to the Chamber and Archway.

**BY-WEEKLY PAYROLL:** Henry Cravey motioned to start the by-weekly payroll for all city employees effective the first full pay period in January, 2012, also allow the sale of annual leave time. Phil NeSmith seconded, Shelly Berryhill opposed, motion passed. Management to notify all employees of change.

**TREASURE TROVE AGREEMENT:** Attorney John Gray Walker said Mr. Littlejohn had made a counter proposal of a 50/50 split based on approval final provisions of

Attorney. NeSmith stated City to counter offer at 70/30, Cravey willing to go with 60/40 split.  
City already authorized to go 50/50.  
Henry Cravey motioned to accept the agreement as per Attorney. James Colson seconded, motion passed.

**CONSOLIDATION:** Wilson Credle gave a synopsis of a letter from Attorney David Walker for the process for city-county consolidation. The process is described as 1. A new charter for the consolidation form of government is drafted; 2. the charter is incorporated into local legislation, which must be passed by the General Assembly; 3 the Justice Department must clear the charter; and 4 there must be a public referendum to approve the consolidated government, which must pass in both the city and the county by a majority of voters. When a city and county consolidate, it is permissible for the consolidated government to provide special tax service districts which have additional, more comprehensive and intensive and higher level of governmental duties, functions and services which benefit primarily the residents of such urban service districts. As long as the taxation imposed by the urban service district reasonably reflects the differences in services, it is permissible.

In conclusion, the process for city-county consolidation is first Georgia Assembly approval followed by voter referendum. It is permissible for the consolidated government to create an urban service district, provided that the increased taxes imposed in the district reasonably reflect the increased services to the residents. However, if there are no increased services to the residents, I see no reason why there should be an increase taxation imposed on the residents of the urban area.

There being no further business.

**ADJOURN:** Shelly Berryhill motioned to adjourn. Phil NeSmith seconded, motion passed.

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Chairman, Board of Commission  
Hawkinsville, Georgia

ATTEST:

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City Clerk