

**TOWN OF TALLULAH FALLS
STATE OF GEORGIA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
255 MAIN STREET, TALLULAH FALLS, GA 30573
WITH VIDEO CONFERENCE STREAMING AVAILABLE FOR THE PUBLIC
AUGUST 6, 2020, 6:00 PM**

MINUTES

The Council meeting for August 6, 2020 of the Town Council of Tallulah Falls, Georgia was called to order at 6:10 PM. A simultaneous live-stream view of the meeting was available through YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCytr3V3naaBwBwlzBlg-y8A> and had been previously circulated to the media and citizens through e-mail notification and the Town's website. The public was also able to participate in the meeting via Webex with Meeting #794 499 414. Social distancing protocols were observed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and overflow seating was available in the engine bay with audio feed of the meeting.

PRESENT WERE: Mayor Mike Early
Mayor Pro tem Larry Hamilton
Councilperson Deb Goatcher
Councilperson Craig Weatherly
Councilperson Joey Fountain
Town Clerk Linda Lapeyrouse
Police Chief Tonya Elrod

PRESENT VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE: Town Attorney Warren Tillery

OTHERS PRESENT OR VIA VIDEO: Public at large – see attached list

Mayor Early welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for a moment of silence.

AGENDA:

Mayor Early asked for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. A motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Weatherly and unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA:

The Consent Agenda included minutes of the Public Hearings and Regular Council Meeting July 9, Executive Session July 9, Special Called Council Meeting July 23, department reports from Water, Police, Fire, Financial, Volunteers and Zoning. Copies are attached hereto and made a part hereof. **A motion was made by Councilperson Weatherly to approve the items on the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hamilton and unanimously approved.**

REPORTS:

Attorney Report – None.

OLD BUSINESS:

Jeffrey Cope owner of Main Street BBQ and Grill made application for an alcohol license to sell beer. Town Clerk Lapeyrouse updated the Council on the background check. The necessary ORI number has been issued and the required training has been completed. Habersham County Sheriff's Department is in the process of having our information updated in their system to allow them to run the background checks for us. Councilperson Hamilton requested that the license be approved conditional on the background check. Attorney Tillery agreed that if the background comes back with nothing, he thought that would be fine, however if there is something more in a gray area, then a designee would need to decide or it would need to come back to Council for a final decision. **A motion was made by Councilperson Weatherly to approve the alcohol license conditional on a satisfactory background check with nothing returned other than minor traffic offenses. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Fountain. The motion passed unanimously with Councilperson Hamilton abstaining due to a potential conflict.**

A Resolution to Appoint Directors of the Downtown Development Authority for the Town of Tallulah Falls, Georgia was presented. The Resolution appoints and/or ratifies prior appointments as follows: Ann Irvin – 6 year term beginning 06-21-2018, Mary Beth Hughes - 6 year term beginning 06-21-2018, David Hart – 6 year term beginning 06-21-2018, Kristi Early – 4 year term beginning 06-21-2018, Keith Nelms – 4 year term beginning 06-21-2018, Dustin Rogers – 4 year term beginning 06-21-2020, and Joey Fountain, as member of the Governing Body, beginning 01-01-2020 with his term to end upon vacancy of his elected office. **A motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to approve the Resolution as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Weatherly and unanimously approved with Councilperson Fountain abstaining due to his appointment on the DDA.**

NEW BUSINESS:

A Resolution to Authorize the Execution of the Coronavirus Relief Fund Terms and Conditions and Accept Grant Payments was presented by Mayor Early and Clerk Lapeyrouse. **A motion was made by Councilperson Fountain to approve the Resolution as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hamilton. Councilperson Goatcher suggested purchasing sanitizing equipment for use in vehicles and city hall. The motion passed unanimously.**

A sign permit for The General Store by applicant Mary Beth Hughes was presented. **A motion was made by Councilperson Fountain to approve the permit as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Weatherly and unanimously approved.**

A second sign permit for an off-premises sign for The General Store at the corner of Main Street and Moss Street by applicant Mary Beth Hughes was presented. The owner of the property has consented. **A motion was made by Councilperson Fountain to approve the permit as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hamilton and unanimously approved.**

Mayor Early asked for a motion to table the low-level tank alert system until Mike Sams of EMS can be available. Councilperson Hamilton suggesting waiting until the new tank is in place. **A motion was made by Councilperson Hamilton to table the discussion. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Weatherly and unanimously approved.**

Water meter replacement at the main well has been requested by EMS, LLC. They are pretty convinced that it is not reading correctly. The purchase of a new meter is \$865 plus installation. EMS has

requested the purchase of the new meter and rebuild of the existing meter as a spare. There was no cost presented for rebuilding the existing meter. **A motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to approve the purchase of a new meter and installation not to exceed \$1,200. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Fountain. This does not include a decision on rebuilding the existing meter since they had no pricing. The motion passed unanimously.**

Attorney Tillery suggested that the discussion of options with regard to the sale or lease of the Tallulah Center be done in executive session. **A motion was made by Councilperson Fountain to table the discussion to the executive session. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hamilton and unanimously approved.**

The officer list for the Tallulah Falls Fire Department was presented in a written report by Acting Chief Paul Marsteller. Mayor Early thanked Chief Marsteller for the hard work he has been putting into the Fire Department. **A motion was made by Councilperson Weatherly to approve the officers as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hamilton. The motion passed unanimously with Councilperson Goatcher abstaining due to Bill Goatcher being one of the officers being considered.**

Chief Marsteller submitted a Fire Department purchase request from Patrol Upfitters in the amount of \$1,677.07 to have the emergency lights replaced for the F-150. **A motion was made by Councilperson Weatherly to approve the quote from Patrol Upfitters. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Goatcher and unanimously approved.**

A motion was made by Councilperson Weatherly to use SPLOST 6 Public Safety money to pay for the lights. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Goatcher and unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Councilperson Weatherly to amend the 2021 budget to use the SPLOST 6 funds for the purchase and installation of the lights in the amount of \$1,677.07. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Goatcher and unanimously approved.

Campground and parking fees collected at the Tugalo Park have been historically given to the police department for their use by Georgia Power in exchange for patrolling that area. Assignment of campground donations for the Police Department will allow for any amounts not used within the year to carry-over to the next year. **A motion was made by Councilperson Weatherly to formally assign the campground money to the police department for the department's use and to designate any remaining amount not used within the year as Assigned Fund Balance for the Police Department. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Fountain and unanimously approved.**

MAYOR'S COMMENTS:

Mayor Early thanked Gary and Donna Verdino for all of their work. They have been putting in 60-70 hours per week. He also commended Chief Marsteller for his role with the Fire Department.

Mayor Early suggested that the Planning & Zoning Commission start working on several ordinances including Land Disturbance, Roads and Signs. He will get with them once they have their next meeting.

Mayor Early stated that the annual review for Chief Elrod needed to be done and asked the Council how they wanted to handle it. It was decided that Mayor Early and Councilperson and Public Safety

Commissioner Fountain will meet with Chief Elrod for the review. The remaining council members can provide input prior to the evaluation to be included in the review.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mary Beth Hughes as Chairman of the DDA requested to be included in the executive session to discuss real estate. Attorney Tillery told the Council that they have the authority to invite attendees in the executive session if they want.

No other public comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Councilperson Weatherly to go into Executive Session with Mary Beth Hughes as DDA Chairman for the purpose of discussing real estate. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Fountain and unanimously approved at 6:54 PM.

At 7:23 PM, a motion was made by Councilperson Fountain to exit the Executive Session and re-open regular session. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Weatherly and unanimously approved.

There were no action items resulting from the Executive Session. The DDA will continue working with interested parties to develop a viable plan for the Tallulah Center.

A question was asked about the boil water advisory. It was advised that, although the break did not affect the entire system, the advisory was still in place as a precaution.

There being no other business before the Council, a motion was made by Councilperson Fountain to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hamilton and unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 PM.



Linda Lapeyrouse, Town Clerk