

**TOWN OF TALLULAH FALLS
STATE OF GEORGIA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
August 8, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
MINUTES**

The meeting for August 8, 2019 of the City Council of Tallulah Falls, Georgia was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Teri Dobbs.

PRESENT WERE: Mayor Teri Dobbs
Councilperson Deb Goatcher
Councilperson Larry Hamilton
Councilperson Mary Beth Hughes
Councilperson Carol Nelms
Town Clerk Linda Lapeyrouse
Fire Chief Mike Early

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE: Town Attorney Warren Tillery

ABSENT: Police Chief Tonya Elrod

OTHERS PRESENT: See attached sign-in list

Mayor Dobbs welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized Chad Dorsett from Sky 96.3 and 100.3 as well as Phylecia Wilson from Volunteers for Literacy.

Reverend Turpen gave the invocation.

Mayor Dobbs requested to add an Immediate Moratorium on Short-Term Rentals under the Attorney's Report, move Phylecia Wilson and the Free Little Library presentation to the top of the agenda, and postpone building use under New Business. **A motion was made by Councilperson Hughes to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Nelms and unanimously approved.**

A motion was made by Councilperson Hughes to approve the minutes of the July 11 Work Session, Regular Meeting and Executive Session and the July 29 Special Called Meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Nelms and unanimously approved.

Phylecia Wilson, Coordinator for the Volunteers for Literacy presented the Council with a proposition to install a Free Little Library in Tallulah Falls. The Free Little Libraries encourage reading and they try to put them in as many towns as possible. Volunteers build the boxes. They keep them stocked with a variety of books. An Eagle Scout will be building the box for Tallulah Falls if approved. Habersham Hardware is donating materials. This is an international movement and locations are shown on a map at littlefreelibraries.org. **A motion was made by Councilperson Nelms to approve the Free Little Library in Tallulah Falls. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Goatcher and unanimously approved.**

REPORTS:

Attorney Report – At the last meeting, there was a building permit approved submit to certificate of ownership. That has now been provided and the permit has been issued.

The Town received an application from Uniti (Windstream) regarding the use of right of way. We have 15 days to respond and 60 days to approve/deny. Attorney Tillery is reviewing the application and will respond. Town would get compensation based on a percentage of revenues up to 3%.

At the July Council meeting, Attorney Tillery was asked to look into an immediate moratorium on short-term rentals in residential areas. Attorney Tillery reported that the Council could do that, but the moratorium must be a reasonable time frame for a legitimate purpose. This doesn't affect existing licensed short-term rental properties. A moratorium of 180 days will give us time to re-write the ordinance and hold public hearings. Council requested that the moratorium be for R-1, R-2, A and PUD districts. The Planning Commission in conjunction with the Zoning Administrative Officer would handle the research with help from the attorney as necessary. **A motion was made by Councilperson Nelms to put an Immediate Moratorium in place for licensing, permitting, regulation and fees associated with Short-Term Rentals in R-1, R-2, A and PUD zoning districts for 180 days. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hamilton and unanimously approved.**

Attorney Tillery read the proposed Camping Ordinance. A public hearing was held. Lynn Pfaender asked where are people defecating when camping? Campgrounds have bathroom facilities. Churches would also have bathrooms. No one else spoke in favor of or in opposition to the ordinance. The public hearing was then closed. Discussion then began on whether or not kids would be able to camp in their own yards. After a lengthy discussion, Attorney Tillery recommended more study and suggested that the Planning Commission take a look at it. Tiny homes were brought up as well as tree houses that needed study. **A motion to defer approval of the camping ordinance subject to additional study by the Planning Commission was made by Councilperson Nelms. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes and unanimously approved.**

Since the camping ordinance was taken up under the attorney's report, a motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to amend the agenda to reflect same. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes and unanimously approved.

Engineering Report – None.

Water Report - Attached hereto and made a part hereof. A Boil Water Advisory was issued on August 6th. This will be lifted once the required sampling has been completed with satisfactory results. The boil water advisory was a result of a leak and subsequent draining of the town's main storage tank. A written report of the verbal report given at the last meeting was also provided by EMS, LLC.

Public Safety Report – Attached hereto and made a part hereof.

Police Chief Elrod was unable to be at the meeting due to a regional public safety meeting in Rabun. Chief Elrod has installed the Town logo to the multi-use truck and the bunk room remodeling is progressing. Once done, we can look to add GCIC to that room. There will still be access for the fire department and the public to the restroom and shower. It will be from that point back that will have secured access for police use and GCIC only.

Councilperson Nelms commented that 83% of the fire and rescue calls were medical and of the 10 medical calls, 6 were in the State Park. The Town is bearing the burden of EMS calls at the Gorge.

Mayor Dobbs stated that we need to keep track of all water to determine our actual lost water for water accountability reporting to the State. The Fire Department should notify EMS, LLC of their intent to use any fire hydrants in non-emergency situations and should check out the portable meter at City Hall. During a flow test, the PITO gauge should be used to calculate and document water usage. Hydrants are also in need of painting, numbering and weed-eating around them. Chief Early suggested the school could paint and decorate them, but if not, his department could do it. He indicated that an annual inspection of the hydrants is needed soon anyway. Fire Chief Early will make contact with the school. The Town will provide the supplies. All painting will be done under the direction of EMS, LLC. Chief Early said he would also get with EMS about getting some food-safe grease for the caps to provide lubrication.

Street Report- Councilperson Nelms reported that the signs are working at the dock. There is a culvert on Hickory Nut Mountain that needs flushing and is contributing to the sink hole. Fire Chief Early will take care of flushing the culvert. The engineer is working on recommendation for the LMIG application. Police Chief Elrod removed tree debris on River Street using the tractor.

Councilperson Hughes talked to Jennifer at the park about the dock. They will remove it from their material the next time they have it printed.

Town Clerk/Financial Report – Attached hereto and made a part hereof. There were several positive comments from the audience regarding the new availability of the meeting documents on the website prior to the meeting.

Comprehensive Plan – The Council is continuing to work on the Comprehensive Plan. There will be a joint meeting with the DDA and the Planning and Zoning Commission at the September Work Session to continue work on the Plan and Future Land Use Map.

DDA Report- Councilperson Hughes reported that the DDA Chairman Nelms had met with the Mayor and several state representatives to show what is going on with Tallulah Falls, the Tallulah Center and the Ranger House. They ended their tour at the Tallulah Point Overlook. Rick Story also attended one of the meetings. Bill Turk and Keith Nelms are continuing to meet with several stakeholders. There may be a change to the DDA meeting time for August if the Comprehensive Plan meeting with Adam Hazell conflicts. DDA members Nelms and Irvin will both be in attendance at the Comprehensive Planning meeting.

Founder's Day – October 5th. Contact has been made with Tallulah Falls School, Georgia Power and Dan Hayes. We need to decide where things are going to be. Councilperson Nelms will be unable to handle the artists.

Mayor Report- Mayor Dobbs stated the Town was notified that the rezoning application from J & D Irvin Holdings, LLC is being withdrawn until a later date.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

The T-Mobile application to upgrade equipment on the tower located at the Tallulah Falls School has been reviewed by the Habersham Planning Department as a courtesy to the Town. They did not see any problems. **A motion was made by Councilperson Goatcher to approve the application. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes. Fire Chief Early requested that the approval be conditioned of them providing space for public safety equipment on the tower at no cost. Councilperson Hughes made a motion to approve the permit subject to public safety space on the tower at no cost. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Nelms and unanimously approved.**

A motion was made by Councilperson Nelms to authorize Attorney Tillery to research Franchise Fees on cell towers. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hamilton and unanimously approved. Attorney Tillery said it would not take him long.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ray Morris requested that the Town get a sound system so they can hear better. Mayor Dobbs reported that we have been researching it and getting prices and will follow up on getting it done.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None.

A motion was made by Councilperson Hamilton to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Hughes and unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.



Teri Dobbs, Mayor



Linda Lapeyrouse, Clerk