

Summary of April 22, 2021 Council Meeting

Mayor and Council met on April 22, 2021, via Zoom due to the ongoing Covid 19 Pandemic. Mayor Walton, and council members Donna Gantt; Brian Kopenick; and Marilyn Walton were present. Council member John Barber was not present and the Clerk had been excused from the meeting due to an unexpected conflict. Honorable council member Kiren Thurmond was present along with his wife.

Minutes and Financial Reports were approved as presented;

Newly elected council member Donna Gantt was welcomed to the meeting along with Mr. and Mrs. Thurmond.

Under old business Mayor Walton gave a re-cap of the problems the City had experienced with the prior auditing firm of Hawkins and McNair and advised that he had filed a formal complaint with the State governing board with respect to same a copy of which had been provided to everyone. Mayor Walton also advised that the new auditing firm the Wesley Peachtree Group had completed the 2019 audit and the feasibility study needed for the loan application for the new city hall.

Under new business Mayor Walton advised that work had begun on the beautification of highway 72 which was being done with the \$46,803.00 grant the city had received.

Mayor Walton then explained to those present the three forms of City Government and pointed out that our City operated under a “Strong” Mayor government. Under this type of government the Mayor can vote in the event of a tie and veto action taken by the council. Council members make policies; approve local legislation; and bring items to the table such as ordinances; resolutions and concerns of city residents.

Various ways of reaching out to citizens of Hull were discussed both things that were being done and ways to reach out going forward. Several ideas were discussed to improve the city such as establishing a playground however at the present time there was not much available land.

Mayor Walton also advised council of some issues with the Well and well area; the roof is in bad condition and in need of repair along with some painting needs, etc. It was the consensus of Mayor and Council that the City should move forward with getting ideas and prices for upgrading the Well area. It was suggested that College Pro be consulted for ideas and costs since they were doing the beautification work on 72. Council member Koepnick was asked to follow up with College Pro and Mayor Walton will request council member Barber obtain cost estimates on replacing the roof. This will be re-visited at the May meeting.

Mayor Walton updated council on the progress with respect to the status of the new City Hall financing. He advised that everything had been submitted to the State for review and approval. If approved next step would be to find an underwriter for the \$982,000.00 loan. Once

completed USDA would pay off and finance for a 40 year period.

Mayor Walton advised that he was meeting with the Mayors of Winterville and Athens and John Devine with NEGRC to discuss the possibility of the FireFly Trail connecting through Hull with the existing trail.

Mayor Walton advised that he had submitted paperwork to CSX Railroad with respect to obtaining a \$2,000.00 community service grant at the suggestion of Craig Cummuso of CSX due to the work the City had done to beautify Highway 72 along the railroad.

Honorable Council Member Kiren Thurmond was recognized and thanked for his service. Mayor Walton advised that this was a good opportunity to get more citizens involved and looked forward to this ongoing project.

Mayor Walton advised that the first week of May would be Municipal Clerk's week and he would like to see Mayor and Council do some things to recognize the City Clerk. He encouraged council members to e-mail him with ideas and input.

The matter of the 2020 Christmas decorations was tabled until May so that the Clerk could be in attendance.

Mayor Walton advised that he had been contacted by Eva Kennedy with NEGRC indicating that the city needed to address a couple more questions with respect to signage under the proposed zoning ordinances. Mayor Walton will schedule a work session with council as soon as possible so that the final approval of the zoning ordinances could be presented at the May meeting.

Mayor Walton also advised that there is a need for an additional security light on Carrie Lane in Hidden Falls subdivision. There is no charge for Jackson EMC to install and the City will just pay for the monthly service at the same cost as the other security lights. Council member Donna Gantt made a motion to move forward with installing the light for safety and council member Brian Kopenick seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Council member Marilyn Walton had some questions about when the City would be in a position to pave the two cul-de-sacs in Hidden Falls. Mayor Walton advised that the city should be receiving funds for the American Rescue Act and he is hopeful that some of those funds can be used to complete that project. The City should receive approximately \$63000.00..

Council member Donna Gantt advised that she was going to attend a webinar dealing with how the community can help students who are reading below grade level through a summer reading program. She will bring the information back to Mayor and Council for further discussion. She will share the webinar information with Mayor and Council in the event anyone else is able to participate.

There being nothing further the meeting was adjourned.

Sandra Pou, City Clerk

