

MONTICELLO CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
April 13, 2021
MINUTES
6:00 P.M.

Members Present – Mayor Pro Tem Gail Harrell, Councilmembers David Wease, Cynthia Miller, Jennifer Murphy, and Larry Thurman were present. Mayor Bryan Standifer was not present.

Staff Present – City Manager Angela Redding, City Clerk Karen Pennamon

Media Present – Kathy Mudd - The Monticello News

Called Session – Mayor Pro Tem Harrell called the meeting to order. The Invocation was given by Reverend William Gibson, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. City Clerk Karen Pennamon called the roll.

Agenda Approval – Councilmember Wease requested to move Item 11 – Executive Session to Agenda Item 2b. Motion by Councilmember Wease to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Councilmember Miller. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

Citizen Comments

Adam McGinnis – discussed concerns with the City of Monticello’s FY 2021 budget.

Reverend William Gibson – thanked City Council for presenting a street sign honoring Officer Robert Lee Gotel.

Mayor Pro Tem Harrell informed everyone about a City Council Work Session on April 20, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. to discuss electric rates.

Downtown Development Authority - Michele Celani, Executive Director, gave an update on Downtown Development Authority events. The DDA welcomed new board members Nanette Manning and Daniel Jeffries at their regular board meeting. She stated the next Youth Advisory Council Work Session is April 19, 2021. The DDA Stakeholders Meeting held on March 8, 2021, was facilitated by the Georgia Economic Development Specialist Tara Bradshaw. Georgia Department of Community Affairs District Representative Beth Eavenson was the speaker at the DDA Retreat held on March 15, 2021. The Downtown Development Authority board has selected three strategies for their organization: community-serving, foundation, and placemaking. The Four Corners and Art Alley projects are in progress, and the directional Art Ally Mural is almost complete. Mrs. Celani stated nominations are needed for an African American Artist to

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paint the mural on Funderburg Drive. The Commerce Mural is in the design process. The Downtown Development Authority met with the Monticello Garden Club on March 23, 2021, regarding public art projects and collaborations with the Historic Preservation Commission and Jasper County Charter School District. They are also collaborating with the Jasper County Senior Center and Chamber of Commerce to celebrate Older American Month on May 21, 2021. This event will start with a proclamation and dance by the senior citizens, followed by lunch, shopping in Monticello's central business district, and a scavenger hunt. The DDA Board of Directors is providing \$200.00 in downtown dollars so that each senior citizen has \$10.00 to spend. The Downtown Development Authority administered a stakeholder survey that indicated that 89.9% of the respondents revealed that the City of Monticello needs an identity and marketing campaign and does not need a separate campaign from Jasper County. The stakeholders ranked the concerns for the central business district as follows: Parking, Pedestrian Safety, and Traffic. The Downtown Development Authority will continue to meet with stakeholders regarding the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission's (NEGRC) recommendations for approved pedestrian safety, traffic concerns, and parking.

Chamber of Commerce – Mandi Tanner, Executive Director, gave an update on Chamber of Commerce events. The Chamber of Commerce is collaborating with the Jasper County Senior Center and Downtown Development Authority for Older American Month, May 21, 2021. The Market on the Square opens on May 22, 2021. The Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner is April 21, 2021, at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center, Mansfield, Georgia. They are at full capacity with 150 attendees. Dirt Road Social Club band will be the local band at this event. The Chamber of Commerce is featuring new members in the local newspaper. Mrs. Tanner noted the Chamber of Commerce is working on a walking brochure on local houses in the historic district. The DDA has received a \$500.00 Market Grant from AgSouth to help market the 2021 Market on the Square. Mrs. Tanner stated the Chamber had received two park reservations from Kristi Thomas for a candlelight vigil on April 16, 2021, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. for family and from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. for friends. The Sheriff's Department was notified of this event.

Historic Preservation Commission – David Thompson, Chairman – Mr. Thompson stated the Historic Preservation approved a Certificate of Appropriateness for a fence at 445 College Street. The Historic Preservation Commission met with Joe Otis and Jason Parr concerning containers placed on the property at 336 Forsyth Street. He noted Mr. Otis agreed to remove the containers and renovate a metal building behind the thrift store. City Manager Redding stated she would contact Joe Otis and issue a deadline for removing the containers. Mr. Thompson stated the HPC and the Chamber of Commerce are collaborating on a walking tour. They are also collaborating with the Downtown Development Authority on a grant to study the cemetery at the Methodist Church. Mr. Thompson stated the Historic Preservation Commission's qualification requirements need to be modified because they are too strict and rigid to attract members. The Historic Preservation Commission is preparing a proposal for the qualification requirements and putting together a packet on rebuilding structures in the historic district.

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Approval of Minutes – Councilmember Wease made a motion to approve the following minutes: Regular Meeting of Mayor and Council – March 9, 2021, seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

Public Hearing to receive comments on Request from Monticello Baptist Church – Abandonment of Road – Motion by Councilmember Murphy to exit the regular meeting and enter the public hearing session at 6:30 p.m., seconded by Councilmember Wease. Voting for the motion was unanimous. No one spoke in opposition to the request. Motion by Councilmember Wease to exit the Public Hearing session and enter the regular meeting at 6:33 p.m., seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Voting for the motion was unanimous. No action was taken in the public hearing.

Agenda Items

1. Employee Service Award - Johnny Ward (30 Years). The Mayor and City Council honored Johnny Ward for thirty (30) years of service with the City of Monticello. Mr. Ward began employment with the City of Monticello on January 15, 1991, in the Street Department. Mayor Standifer proclaimed April 15, 2021, Johnny Ward Day in Monticello, Georgia.
2. Consider Vendor for Website Hosting. TABLED for City Council to further review the proposals.
 - b. Executive Session – Motion by Councilmember Wease to exit the regular meeting and enter executive session at 6:52 p.m. to discuss personnel, litigation, and real estate, seconded by Councilmember Thurman. Voting for the motion was unanimous. Motion by Councilmember Wease to exit executive session at 7:26 p.m. and enter the regular meeting, seconded by Councilmember Thurman. No action was taken in the Executive Session.
3. Consider Award for Code Enforcement Services. Representatives from Safebuilt and Bureau Veritas gave a brief overview of their companies and code enforcement services. Motion by Councilmember Wease to award the Code Enforcement Services Contract to Safebuilt contingent on the previous discussion in the Executive Session, seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Voting for the motion was unanimous.
4. Consider Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for Code Enforcement. City Manager Redding stated the Intergovernmental Agreement for Code Enforcement addresses individuals that are not compliant after being approached by code enforcement, given a citation, and given the appropriate time to make the necessary repairs or clean up. She noted the agreement provides for these cases to go to the Magistrate Judge. Motion by Councilmember Murphy to approve the

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Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for Code Enforcement, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

5. Consider Resolution to Establish Budget Calendar for FY 2021-2022. Motion by Councilmember Murphy to approve the Resolution except for the April 20, 2021, meeting to discuss electric rates, seconded by Councilmember Miller. Voting for the motion was unanimous.
6. Consider Resolution to Appoint Elections Superintendent and Approve Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for 2021 Elections. Motion by Councilmember Murphy to approve the Resolution, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell. Voting for the motion was unanimous.
7. Consider Resolution to Appoint Absentee Ballot Clerk for 2021 Elections. Motion by Councilmember Wease to approve the Resolution, seconded by Councilmember Miller. Voting for the motion was unanimous.
8. Consider Resolution for Monticello Baptist Church - Abandonment of Road. Motion by Councilmember Murphy to approve the Resolution, seconded by Councilmember Wease. Voting for the motion was unanimous.
9. Consider Proposed Increase to Retirement Benefits for Elected Officials. Motion by Councilmember Miller to approve the Increase to Retirement Benefits for Elected Officials from \$7 times per year of service to \$25 times per year of service, seconded by Councilmember Murphy. Voting for the motion was unanimous.
10. Discussion of Proposed Salary Increase for Mayor and Council. Motion by Councilmember Thurman to move forward with the proposed salary increase for Mayor and Council based upon running the ad for three weeks before formally approving the following salary increase: Mayor from \$900 to \$1,200 per month, Mayor Pro Tem from \$650 to \$900 per month, City Council from \$450 to \$750 per month, seconded by Councilmember Miller. Voting was 3-2, with Councilmember Wease and Councilmember Murphy opposed.
11. Consider 911 Authority Board Appointments. Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell to appoint Angela Redding and Cynthia Miller to the 911 Authority Board, seconded by Councilmember Thurman. Voting for the motion was unanimous.
12. Discussion of Litter Signs. Mayor Pro Tem Harrell discussed placing four signs in each district that read "No Littering, Fine up to \$1,000". Motion by Councilmember Miller to approve the purchase of fourteen litter signs at \$30.00

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per sign, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell. Voting for the motion was unanimous.

13. Consider the Inter Participant Transfer Agreement between City of Monticello and City of Sylvania. City Manager Redding discussed the terms of the agreement with the City Council. Motion by Councilmember Murphy to approve the Inter Participant Transfer Agreement, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Harrell. Voting was 4-1 with Councilmember Miller opposed.

14. City Manager's Report

The Invitation to Bid for Funderburg Drive – The first publication was in last week's local newspaper, and the second publication will be in this week's local newspaper. Bids for the repaving project on Funderburg Drive are due on April 29, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

Georgia Municipal Association's "Worth a Shot Campaign" encourages everyone to get the COVID-19 vaccine. Jasper Memorial Hospital and Jasper County Health Department reached out to the City, and three employees received the vaccine from Jasper Memorial Hospital.

The Art Alley Project is moving forward.

The City of Monticello was named the Best City to Retire by Insurify and received award badges for the website.

Cares Act Funds – The City of Monticello received \$42,700.01 in Cares Act Funds and the money was distributed in two phases. The City submitted over \$20,000 for purchases of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that was not included as part of the budget, i.e... laptops to work from home, mask, hand sanitizer, and Lysol. The State of Georgia decided that instead of sending the second round of funding to cities and counties, they kept the money to offset the deficit from unemployment.

12. Comments by the Governing Body

Mayor Pro Tem Harrell thanked City Manager Redding for assisting her.

Councilmember Wease thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting.

Councilmember Miller thanked City Manager Redding for everything that she does for the City of Monticello.

Councilmember Murphy had no comment.

Councilmember Thurman had no comment

13. Meeting adjournment at 8:26 P.M.

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