Minutes of the Town of Jonesboro Board of Aldermen

Regular Monthly Meeting

December 14, 2021

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Leslie C. Thompson.

Roll established a quorum with the following members present: James Ginn, Pete Stringer, Devin Flowers, Robbie Siadek; absent: Nia Johnson

Invocation led by Flowers

Pledge of Allegiance led by Stringer

A public hearing was held on Ordinance 2021-006 Tax Collector compensation. There were no public comments on this issue.

Mayor Thompson called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

There were no Public Comments.

Flowers made the motion to approve the minutes from November 9, 2021, second by Stringer with unanimous approval.

The agenda was amended as follows on motion from Stringer: Change Attorney L. Person from item 19 to item 12A; Move item # 15 to # 13A following the ordinance on Tax Collector compensation; Add approval of mobile home as 12B. Seconded by Siadek unanimously approved.

Mayor’s update: Kenneth Folden & Company CPA contract termination: the CPA firm tendered notice to the town that he would be terminating his services effective December 31, 2021. The Mayor and staff are currently running ads in local newspapers and on-line to seek a replacement either in-house or as a contractor. Mayor reminded council that Folden’s office was owed money which a significant amount has been paid leaving a small balance due. He indicated that he has been told by the audit firm of Bosch and Statham, CPA that the audit for 2020 should be completed by the end of the current year and the 2021 audit should be completed by March 2022. This will remove us from the conditional non-compliance list and allow us to pursue more grant funding.

Approval of November bills: after review of the bills motion to pay made by Stringer, second by Flowers, unanimous to approve November bills.

Approval of November financials: after reviewing the financials, Flowers moved to approve, second by Stringer with unanimous approval.

Stringer offered a motion to go into executive session to handle the Stringer vs Town of Jonesboro litigation against the town. Attorney Lance Person of the law firm Haik, Minvielle, Grubbs and D’Albor representing the Town was present. Stringer moved to come out of executive session and go back into regular session, second by Flowers.

Ordinance 2021-006 Tax Collector compensation: Stringer moved to approve the ordinance, second by Flowers, unanimous approval.

Mayor’s recommendation for hiring Tax Collector: Kasey Belton was recommended to be hired. Stringer moved to make this appointment with change to the ordinance from hourly to salary based on $16.00 per hour, or $33,280 per year plus benefits, second by Flowers and unanimous approval.

Two mobile homes were on the agenda for approval. The Zoning Board has approved both mobile home placements. Stringer moved to table the Nichols mobile home and move forward with the Redding placement, second by Flowers, unanimous approval. Stringer moved to approve the Redding home, seconded by Flowers, unanimously approved.

Renewal of HI Tech contract – The current contract expires on December 31. The Mayor presented a proposal from Hi-Tech, the Towns current tech provider. Computers, the server and software are seriously out of date and needs updating. The Mayor requested that he be allowed to negotiate with the company for the best deal for the town. Mayor Thompson has had the company agree to give us a one year contract vs three years and is requesting of council to be allowed to negotiate this contract without the need for a special called meeting. There is a question about $1,900 vs $2,400 per year for a software package. Flowers moved to give the Mayor authority to negotiate and enter into a contractual agreement on behalf of the town, seconded by Stringer. Approval was unanimous.

Some discussion centered on the ARPA monies and consideration for broadband for the Town.

Stringer questioned the amount of funding coming from ARPA in January and whether any of that money has been allocated for infrastructure. Getting a new server and associated costs were discussed.

Signature Authority Deputy Clerk: After explaining that only he and one other person are authorized to sign Mayor Thompson recommended that signature authority be given to Deputy Clerk, Janice Simmons to sign on behalf of the Town. Flowers moved to approve this action, second by Stringer, unanimous approval.

Department head reports were submitted in council board packets. There were no oral reports given.

Introduction of Ordinance #: 2021-026 Hours of Sunday sales of alcohol: Mayor Thompson is attempting to clarify the current ordinance on Sunday sales so it is clear that businesses can sell liquor on Sunday. Ordinance was introduced and a public hearing will be held at the regular council meeting on January 11, 2022.

Council’s comments: Flowers, Siadek, Stringer wished everyone a Merry Christmas and thanked them for coming.

Mayor’s comments: Mayor Thompson thanked everyone for coming out.

Adjournment: Flowers moved to adjourn, second by Siadek, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

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Janice M. Simmons, Deputy Clerk Leslie C. Thompson, Mayor

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