

MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
January 18, 2021

The January 18, 2021 Regular meeting of the City Council was held at the City of Dillon Wellness Center, 1647 Commerce Drive, Dillon, SC. Notices of this regular meeting of City Council was provided to the media and individuals requesting a copy of the agenda informing them of the date, location, and time of the meeting.

Councilmembers in attendance:

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Phil Wallace
Councilmember Douglas Jackson
Councilmember James Washington

Councilmember Johnny Eller
Councilmember Timothy Cousar
Councilmember Jay David

- I. **Call to Order** - Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Wallace called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Benny Genwright gave the invocation.
- II. **Approval of Agenda**
Councilmember Cousar made a motion to approve the Agenda. Councilmember Jackson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- III. **Approve minutes of the December 14, 2020 Regular Council Meeting**
A motion was made by Councilmember David and seconded by Councilmember Cousar to approve the minutes of the Regular meeting December 14, 2020. The motion passed unanimously.
- IV. **Mayor Pro Tem's Report**
Dr. Wallace began his report saying COVID-19 is all over us. We are getting 30 to 50 cases a day in Dillon. It puts at about 2% mortality and if they deteriorate, they are transferred to Florence. The hospital is very busy not necessarily with COVID patients. We have seen people avoiding healthcare because of COVID-19 and as a result people have postponed their illness and as a result they are in bad situations. We probably have a few weeks where we will see a spike and then maybe ease off. We do have the vaccine. People really need to take the vaccine. I figured that if people knew how much I love life and if they see me getting it then maybe they will think it's ok. If you get the opportunity you need to take the vaccine. Dr. Wallace said the nation needs about 250 million people getting the vaccine to see a real change. The vaccine distribution is being held up politically and it's sad. I think one way the local newspaper can help us with this is to put the status in the newspaper. If you can get in touch with Karen Arnette that would be a tremendous service to the people so they will know where to go. Right now, you have to be 70 and above to get the vaccine. My first vaccine gave me a little arm pain. My second shot I didn't get any reaction. Dr. Wallace went to ask are we going to do anything with the information on Downtown development? Glen stated we are waiting on their last invoice. Dr. Wallace said let's include renovation of the building in the budget. We are using it as a Police station but Benchmark wants to see it used as an incubator for small businesses. I think that would be a good idea but maybe we can do that in another venue. Dr. Wallace stated we need to look at getting police cars in the budget for next year. Councilmember Eller asked what are we going to do about the parking.

Glen said we made an offer that Council didn't agree to it but we have to have available parking for that building. Glen stated parking wouldn't be an issue because we have public parking on Railroad avenue. Councilmember Eller stated we need to find out if we are going to go that route because when we put the police department there we need to look into the parking. Councilman David said he would love to see a Farmers' Market. Dr. Wallace said we should see what will happen with the Junior High School before we make an investment. Councilmember Eller asked if the hospital is really at 100% capacity with COVID-19 patients. Dr. Wallace responded with no but it is full of sick people that haven't take care of previous illnesses. People are mostly contracting COVID from family gatherings. He said your most contagious time is 24 hours before you are symptomatic. Glen stated that DHEC reached out to him late last week and had scheduled two dates to do vaccines for phase 1a and 1b. 1A are first responders. A week ago, this past Friday McLeod Dillon opened the door for 1A to get vaccines. It was supposed to be every Friday through January but they ran out. Dr. Wallace said they were supposed to get their shipment today. Councilmember Eller asked are we encouraging our First responders? Glen answered yes. Glen stated he has heard that people are doing things to get them to get the vaccines but he's not sure if we should give incentives for that. Councilmember Eller stated maybe Dr. Wallace can encourage the First responders and speak to them about getting the vaccine. Dr. Wallace stated that if you want to get rid of COVID you have to have immunity. We need about 60% of people to have immunity. Glen asked will you have to have this vaccine annually. Dr. Wallace responded that he is not sure of that yet. I think this will probably be a once every three-year thing.

City Manager's Report

Glen Wagner began his report saying you all should have in your packet information on the General Election for April 6, 2021. The filing starts on January 22, 2021 at 12pm. I reached out to the Department of Revenue on allowing alcohol sales on Sunday in Dillon. The city does not collect fees at all for alcohol sales. People will still have to go through the Department of Revenue and pay the fees to sale alcohol on Sunday. For local option permits in restaurants on Sunday it is \$3000 for 52 weeks or \$200 per Sunday if you don't want to do it every Sunday. I couldn't find the fees for seven days on and off premises alcohol sales. That has now been granted and anyone that wants to sale they will have to go through the department of revenue for Sunday alcohol sales. Chief Lane and I met with Spectrum about WIFI downtown via a zoom meeting and they are supposed to give us a plan to talk about cost in the downtown area. The hardest part is finding somewhere to put their equipment. They talked about putting wifi in public parks because of COVID-19 it gives people opportunity to do public schooling in parks. We have spoken with a non-profit organization that will maybe help us with the upfront fees. We don't know yet what that cost is and it will be a monthly fee. February we usually have our Father/Daughter dance but we will postpone it and probably do something during the spring. We are still planning to do our St Patty's Day event and Celebrate Main festival as of now. Our girls' softball registration is scheduled to start at the end of February and hopefully it will do better than basketball registration. Lastly, we are having issues with our front-loading garbage trucks. It's about 5 years old and seems like every time we use it, it breaks down. I'm not sure how much revenue it brings us. Brand new it cost us about \$250,000 and next month I will come back with more information and a plan of attack. We have a 16-year-old back up that is no good. I will come back next month with numbers and try to go from there on what's the plan.

Councilmember Eller asked if we had stopping signs for PDRTA? Glen stated yes, we have them at Walmart, shoptalk's, and library.

Finance Report

Finance Director, Janet Bethea gave copies of the Financial Report to the Mayor Pro Tem, City Council, and the City Manager.

V. Citizen's Report

Brad Gough started his report saying he is a Computer Architect and he is willing to help with anything dealing with Spectrum if needed. He went on to say he owns a lot of the downtown area and I will be happy to help with that. He stated he would like to know how to add stops to the PDRTA route. He said he has started buying local businesses to keep them from going out of business. He is working on a lot of different projects. He went on to say he owns 3 buildings between the First Bank and the pawn shop on Main St. Next, he said plans to open a coffee and breakfast spot and I will be offering free wifi. We will be offering healthy food options for lunch and should be up and running within the next two months. Lastly, he stated that his goal is to start a wave by putting his personal money into Dillon and maybe other people will do the same. He said he will try to come to next meeting and if he can help with anything I will.

VI. Old Business

None

VII. New Business

Ordinance #21-01 Annex Robert D. Miller, Jr. Property – 1727 Lila Court

Councilmember Jackson made a motion to accept the property. Councilmember Cousar seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance #21-02 Annex Robert D. Miller, Jr. Property – 1731 Lila Court

Councilmember Jackson made a motion to accept the property. Councilmember Cousar seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Councilmember's Reports

Councilmember Eller wanted to thank the Fire Department for the volunteers stepping up. He went on to tell Brad Gough that he is glad that he is here. Councilmember Eller stated that we have 30 store front buildings that are unused. He said we need to get some of these buildings torn down. If you are going to put a restaurant downtown please do it because these buildings are eye sores and something needs to be done. Our downtown is a disgrace. Councilman Eller said he is asking our council to help these entrepreneurs bring businesses to our town. Brad Gough interjected and stated there is a massive bat issue downtown and the building next to his keeps crumbling on his building. Councilman Eller stated I don't know what kind of leverage we have but I'm sure we can do something. Brad Gough said that he has offered to buy every building downtown to rehab and rent. He went on to say there is no good way to drive into Dillon right now. Councilmember Eller said the building behind American Finance needs to be torn down. That is an eye sore. Glen stated Benny and I will be meeting with those folks this week. We can tear them down but we will never get out money back.

Councilmember David started his report asking about imminent domain. He asked why can't we find an angle in certain properties downtown? I will make it a point to figure that out and bring

it back to the next meeting. He thanked Brad for trying to help us in Dillon. Councilmember David said he has another person who has called and will help us with anything dealing with a hydraulic truck issue and he won't charge anything. He just wants to give to the community and make it better. Also, he asked Burt about all of the bad roads in town and has he helped fix them. Councilmember David went on to say when we get the Benchmark report back, we need to do some drastic measure downtown to regroom it. We need to make these businesses shine. Duke power is changing the LED lightings but it seems like they have stopped. Glen stated they aren't taking the yellow lights out unless they go out or are having issues. Hopefully we can come up with some suggestions about the stormwater drainage downtown. Glen stated it will probably be early summer before we hear anything back.

Councilmember Washington asked what are they going to do about the McLeod building? Benny answered we are consulting with legal.

Councilmember Cousar stated his report saying that it is nice to meet Brad Gouff. Then he asked Benny where do we stand on the burned house. Benny answered we submitted the paperwork and hopefully we will get started next week. Councilmember Cousar said hats off to Chief Keith Bailey, he said they had a house fire and the City stepped in and helped the County out.

IX. Adjourn

With no further business to discuss, Councilmember Jackson made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Cousar seconded and the motion passed 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:23pm.

Approved: _____

Dr. Phil Wallace, Mayor Pro-Tem

Attest: _____

Tina Scott, Council Clerk

Date Approved: _____

February 8, 2021