

MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
May 10, 2021

The May 10, 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. Dr. Wallace gave the invocation.
- II. **Approval of Agenda**
Councilmember Jackson made a motion to approve the agenda. Councilmember Washington seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- III. **Approve minutes of the April 12, 2021 Regular Council Meeting**
A motion was made by Councilmember David and seconded by Councilmember Washington to approve the minutes of the Regular meeting of April 12, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.
- IV. **Election of Mayor Pro Tem**
Councilmember Washington made a motion to nominated Dr. Wallace for Mayor Pro Tem for a term of two years. Councilmember Jackson seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0.
- V. **Mayor Pro Tem's Report**
Dr. Wallace began his report by thanking everyone for nominating and electing him as Mayor Pro Tem for the next 2 years. He said the city is running well and we have a great council. We are in a pretty good place. He went on to say we have growth issues but we are in a pretty good place. Next, he spoke briefly about the Downtown festival. He said he was surprised at the amount of people that were there, even with the bad weather. He said there was no spike in Covid so that was good. Dr. Wallace said maybe 70 or 80% of people in his office are vaccinated and we are still holding at 77 deaths. We are an area that has a lot of elderly people and that's why our percentage is high. He also spoke at the high school for nurse appreciation week. Lastly, Dr. Wallace said he tries to do his best to represent the city in a good manner.

City Manager's Report

Glen started his report saying that we have been hosting Vaccine sites since January or February. He wasn't sure if Mcleod had anymore planned for the Wellness Center but he knows that DHEC has scheduled one for this week. The last one that DHEC had at the Wellness Center was very small, but they are supposed to have another in June. When DHEC has their vaccine sites here it

is mostly people from out of town people. When Mcleod has theirs it is mostly locals. The weather wasn't the best with the festival but we had a good turn out with people and vendors. Next, Glen talked about the Celebrate Main Festival. He said we cut some vendors due to covid but due to the forecast of wind and rain a lot of people didn't come. Turkey legs and funnel cakes were big sellers. He said he thinks everyone had a great time. Glen went on to say the band was moved to the Wellness center and we had about 200 people there. The first 1st Friday event was Friday night and there was a pretty good turn-out. The weather wasn't bad. Next, Glen said last month he spoke about the American bail out he said it was 75% from the previous budget but that was incorrect. The funds are based on the population. We are supposed to get about \$2,600,000 this month. He got an update prior to the meeting but there is still no information on what this money can be used for. All money received must be spent before December 2024. Glen went on to say we are planning Budget Workshop for May 24, 2021. Councilmember Eller asked if the department heads can come. Glen responded, "we will split it up to two sessions". Lastly, Glen said Tina has put information about the MASC annual meeting please let her know by May 18, 2021 if you would like to attend. The meeting is July 22-24 in Hilton head.

Finance Report

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

VI. Citizen's Report

Allen Watts came to Council asking for help with trash pick-up. He said he is spending over \$300,000 in taxes and he has to take his own trash to the landfill. He said all of his areas has a lot of trash. He said we got a dumpster from the county and put it behind a building but everyone is putting furniture there. He said you wouldn't believe the things people leave in houses when they leave. He said we pay enough on property taxes and the county charges him and he shouldn't have to deal with it. It needs to be addressed. He's been trying to keep in clean but with the property taxes that he says he pays he should have some help. Jay David said the problem is people that are not living there are dumping things in that dumpster. The county is putting cameras up in the trees to catch individuals putting trash there and fining them and taking them to court. Allen Watts said he just doesn't know what to do because it's getting out of control. He said I believe the city is doing a good job but they are limited on what they can do so he was told to come talk to council to see what they can do. Glen said Allen has called and said that when people leave the rental house, they leave things in the house. Glen stated he has asked him to call us and we will come pick it up but if we are going to pick this up it will be mixed trash. Burt Rogers said if we pick up this stuff it's called mixed trash and that's why you have to pay double rate. If you pay \$381,000 in property tax then how much is that County? Allen said they make a lot of money off of him but are not helping. Glen stated we only pick up limbs and leaves. We will pick up couches, beds, and refrigerators if you call and tell us it's beside the road. Dr Wallace said can you all come back with some options and verifications of the taxes and weather the liability should be placed on us or the county. Allen Watts said I don't like to see trash all over the place and neighbors are calling me and I don't want to pay the cost of this because I'm a business but I pay property taxes. Allen Watts said it's not all of the time it's periodically but you get tired

of it after a while. It just seems like because I own these houses that I can't get the service. Dr. Wallace said get with Allen Watts later because he doesn't think this will get worked out tonight. Kim Snyder addressed Council as a VA volunteer since 2007. She has several requests for our veterans. Ms. Snyder said our veterans are being pushed to the side and not treated like they should be. She went on to say since 2007, when she joined Jerry Huggins, she has been doing the Dillon County deceased veterans list. As of now she said she has 83 names on that list. We need more attendance at these military ceremonies from the councilmembers, doctors, lawyers, and judges. She said she is feeding veterans daily because these veterans are not getting what they need. She went on to ask council for a small amount of money so she can purchase snacks for veterans. Ms. Snyder said she is begging council to take this under their wing and give our veterans the upmost respect that they deserve. Next, she said she needs Council help with United States flags for fallen veterans, and putting U.S. Medals into family hands, and appropriate time for burials. Headstones need to be looked at cleaned and flags placed before each funeral. Ms. Snyder asked if Council could provide small snacks at these ceremonies. She said she would like to speak with Dr. Wallace daily or weekly and she would like to thank Councilman David for this opportunity. Glen stated in the previous years the city has paid for the breakfast for the veterans. Kim stated we would still like to have a small number of snacks. Glen asked are you planning a breakfast this year. She was told no due to covid. Dr Wallace said we will see what we can do.

Stephanie Mitchell began her report saying that she has put a lot of money in my businesses and is feeling salty because of the way that our downtown looks. It's not fair to us because some of us have put a lot of money in out properties and it's bringing out city down because people aren't taking responsibility for their business. It's not fair but we have got to get this city under control. Stephanie said the condemned buildings are bringing our property values down. It will only take the city tearing down one building to get people to open their eyes. We have grant money that we have tried to hand out. We have a maximum of \$3000 but we were told it would cost me \$15000 to fix my building and it's not worth it to take that \$3000. We really need to come up with something in our city. If you have a building on Main Street you need to be held responsible for your building. She went on to say we had an excellent turn out for our 1st First Friday. The band was great and a great crowd from all walks of life. We even brought in people from Robeson County. We will continue to have these events in June and July on the first Friday and depending on if we can stretch our funds, we will try to continue to keep these going. If you have any recommendations, please let me know.

Steve Johnson said he echoes the first part of what Stephanie said. She is right we are investing in the city of Dillon and it's not fair to us to have a building next door that looks like a Third world building. He said he doesn't know what the answer is but he knows there is an answer. Steve went on to say he wants to speak on the Dillon Community Alliance. He said we are nine-member board and most of us own buildings downtown. We are not just on a board we are involved. We have to work all day long so for us to plan 1st Fridays and make our downtown look good we need to get tough on some things. We need some financial help to hire a part time director to help us plan some of these things and work with the businesses. We have \$12,500 for hospitality but we don't want to touch that we are asking for money on top of that money. I am going to leave it up to Council but for \$20,000-\$25,000 for 20 hours a week we could be able to get someone. He went on to say if Council would rather have it as a city employee, we would take that too. We

would like to have that in the budget. Councilmember Eller said that he would like for the city to hire their own person as a grant coordinator and also work with DCA. Stephanie said someone would have to manage that person so I think it would be a better option if that person is under the supervision and direction of the DCA.

VII. Old Business

None

VIII. New Business

Ordinance #21-07 -Amending Title 7 Chapter 1, Section 7-1-3 of the City Code of Ordinances in order to change the expiration of Business License Date from May 31 to April 30 of each year – 2nd Reading Councilmember Cousar made a motion to approve. Councilmember Washington seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Resolution #08-21 – Acquire Certain Property from Twin Lakes Enterprises, LLC Councilmember Washington made a motion to approve and Councilmember Jackson seconded. The motion passed 5-1.

Resolution #09-21 – Authorizing Submission of application to the South Carolina Water Quality Revolving Fund Authority Councilmember Washington made a motion to approve. Councilmember David seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Resolution #10-21 – Authorizing the Purchase of a Drone for the Police Department through Community Facility Grant Funds Councilmember Washington made a motion to approve. Councilmember David seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Resolution #11-21 – Safe Workplace Councilmember Washington made a motion to approve. Councilmember David seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Resolution #12-21 – Adopting a personnel handbook Councilmember Eller made a motion to approve. Councilmember Cousar seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

IX. Councilmember's Reports

Councilmember Eller asked are we doing anything with the Benchmark Planning? Glen responded "yes, I will get with the DCA". Dr Wallace, Councilmember David, and Councilmember Cousar decided to serve on the Benchmark Planning Committee.

Councilmember David began his report thanking Betsy Finklea for the article on the dogs that she put in the Dillon herald. I hope something good comes out of it. Glen stated we can't do much about people letting dogs off of the property and we still have a vacancy for an Animal Control officer. Councilmember David said he thinks we need to get the veterans all of the help that we can. Next, he said he still ride around the community and I'm hoping that people will stand up and try to clean up their property.

Councilmember Washington asked can we hire an individual contractor to cut grass on the over grown properties. Glen stated the cost will be more but we can look into it. Next, Councilmember Washington asked what are they waiting on the demolish the property on Main Street? Glen responded, "I am not going to demolish a property without council permission".

X. Adjourn

With no further business to discuss, Councilmember Cousar made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Jackson seconded and the motion passed 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:36pm.

Approved: _____

Dr. Phil Wallace, Mayor Pro-Tem

Attest: _____

Tina Scott, Council Clerk

Date Approved: _____

June 14, 2021