

MINUTES FOR THE THOMASVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2022 AT 6:00 PM AT 7003 BALLPARK ROAD, THOMASVILLE, NC.

Elected officials in attendance: Mayor Raleigh York, Jr.; Mayor *Pro Tempore* Ron Bratton, and Council Members Doug Hunt, Wendy Sellars, Lisa Shell, Jeannette Shepherd, Hunter Thrift and Payton Williams.

The following staff members attended the meeting: City Manager Michael Brandt; Assistant City Manager Eddie Bowling; City Attorney Misti Whitman; Planning Director Chuck George; Finance Director Thomas Avant; Police Captain Dustin Carter; PC Support Specialist Damon Hartwell; and City Clerk Wendy Martin

3. Call to Order – Mayor Raleigh York, Jr. called the meeting of the Thomasville City Council to order.

4. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

City Manager Michael Brandt asked that Council add the following item:

8. CLOSED SESSION – Attorney/Client and Personnel

Council Member Thrift moved to approve the agenda as revised. Council Member Hunt seconded. No further discussion. *Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.*

5. Proclamations and Recognitions

Developmental Disability Awareness Month (March) Mayor York presented this Proclamation to Teresa McKeon, Executive Director of the Arc of Davidson County, Mary Hargrave and self-advocates Seth Lawser, Rachael McDaniels.

6. Public Forum – Shawntae Lewis spoke regarding Davidson Medical Ministries' 30th anniversary and all the services they provide to the community. She said the County office opened in 1991, and they have been serving patients in Thomasville for over 16 years. The clinic on Randolph Street currently sees 500 – 600 patients a month.

She said, "By the end of the year, we plan to have both a mobile medical unit, as well as a dental unit." Currently, they offer a variety of services, including medical, dental, pharmacy, and behavioral health services for residents of Davidson County. They also offer telemedicine, diabetes education and psychological services.

Their mission is "to minister to the needs of our community who lack the resources to access quality healthcare, regardless of their ability to pay." They are dependent upon the support of donations.

7. Public Hearings on January 18, 2022

Request for Rezoning (Z-22-01)

Applicant/Owner: Martha White, LLC

Location: Payne Road

Tax Parcel ID #: 16-313-0-000-004A

Existing Zoning: R-10 Low Density Residential

Proposed Zoning: M-1 Light Industrial

Conditions: N/A

Mayor York stated that the Board of Planning & Adjustment conducted a public hearing on January 25, 2022 regarding this matter. It was passed unanimously 7-0 because it is consistent with the Land Use Plan and the surrounding parcels.

Planning Director Chuck George said no one from the community offered any positive or negative feedback at the public hearing. He said this 3 acres of land is already part of an industrial park, so the rezoning would be consistent with the surrounding property.

Mayor York opened the hearing and invited people to come forward to speak in favor of this rezoning.

Christopher Crisp, owner of the applicant Martha White, LLC, came forward. He said he wants to get this property zoned for industrial and do something with it to increase the tax base. He said they are only going to be in the industrial area, not near the residential area nearby. He said, "There's plenty watershed and a line of trees there to separate that."

No one else came forward to speak for or against this rezoning. Mayor York closed the hearing.

Council Member Sellars moved that Council approve this rezoning because it is consistent with the Land Use Plan and the surrounding parcels. Council Member Williams seconded. *Motion approved 7 – 0.*

Mr. Crisp said, "Thank you to Chuck George. The folks over there have been really amazing."

8. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of Minutes of the Briefing Meeting on 01/10/22

B. Approval of Minutes of the Council Meeting on 01/18/22

C. Consideration of Update to Thomasville Fiscal Policy, adding Section D. 4. Daily Cash Deposit Requirement

City Manager Brandt explained State law requires daily cash deposits in excess of \$500, but it was not specifically spelled out in our policy. This addition would add language to our policy requiring cash deposits by each department with of funds in excess of \$250 each day.

D. Consideration of Amendment to Ordinance Sec. 78-463.1, Schedule 3.1: Thirty-Five Miles Per Hour Speed Zones on Streets in State Highway System

City Manager Brandt explained that this ordinance amendment would fix an error in a previous ordinance that accidentally changed the speed limit on Randolph Street between Main Street and Colonial Drive to 35 MPH. This removes that section and re-instates the 25 MPH speed limit on that road.

Council Member Thrift moved that Council approve the items on the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Williams. No discussion. *Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.*

9. Regular Agenda

A. Consideration of ARPA Grant Project Ordinance

Finance Director Thomas Avant explained that this ordinance includes all items previously approved by Council with the addition of:

- 1) \$1,024,194 of premium pay for employees serving during the pandemic,
- 2) \$50,309 for golf cart batteries, components, and installation; and
- 3) \$325,000 for a bulk alum tank addition at the Water Treatment Plant.

The ordinance appropriates a total of 2,435,488 of grant funding, with \$6,057,480 of federal funds unallocated and unbudgeted at this point.

Council Member Sellars moved to approve this ARPA Grant Project Ordinance. Council Member Hunt seconded.

Council Member Bratton said, "I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our city employees. When COVID started in 2019, we knew very little about it, but our employees did their jobs and worked. And I just want to thank them so much."

No further discussion. *Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.*

B. Consideration of General Fund Budget Amendment – Appropriation of City Contribution to Unilin - Project Tower CDBG Project

Finance Director Avant advised Council that the N.C. Dept. of Commerce awarded the City a Rural Economic Development Grant for the Unilin/Project Tower expansion at the Unilin facility at 550 Cloniger Drive in Thomasville.

He said, “These grants are purposed for stimulating economic activity and job creation for local communities. Grants are provided to local government units to productively reuse buildings and properties. The City’s contribution is \$25,000, which is five percent (5%) of the total \$500,000 State grant.”

This amendment would appropriate the City’s contribution of \$25,000 from Contingency, leaving a balance of \$190,906 in the General Fund Contingency account.

Council Member Hunt moved to approve this Budget Amendment. Council Member Shepherd seconded. *Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.*

C. Consideration of Unilin - Project Tower CDGB Grant Project Ordinance –

Finance Director Avant said this is the Grant Project Ordinance that establishes a budget and appropriates the funding for this project. He said it is \$500,000 of State funding and \$25,000 for the administration of the award, which is the City’s equity contribution.

Council Member Shepherd moved to approve this Unilin - Project Tower Grant Project Ordinance. Council Member Sellars seconded. *Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.*

D. Consideration of Initiating Foreclosure Process on 200 Kern Street Property

City Attorney Misti Whitman advised that the property owner has not complied, so the City has not been able to do anything with this property. Title work revealed outstanding liens, and there was no insurance to pay for the cleanup.

Therefore, she recommended that the City move forward with initiating the foreclosure process. She said the property would go to public sale where third parties would be able to bid on it.

Council Member Thrift moved to initiate the foreclosure process on this property. Council Member Williams seconded.

Council Member Sellars asked how long this process would take. The City Attorney responded that if everything goes smoothly, it could potentially be resolved in 4 to 6 months. However, if there were any upset bids, it could take longer.

Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.

E. Consideration of Personnel Policy Amendment 2022-01 – Article XVIII. Pay Plan Section 14

City Manager Brandt said this amendment adds language that would permit the City Council to make modifications to the pay plan.

Council Member Sellars moved to approve this policy amendment. Council Member Hunt seconded. *Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.*

F. Consideration of Personnel Policy Amendment 2022-02 – Article XVIII. Pay Plan

Section 15

City Manager Brandt said the Pandemic Premium Pay Plan, provided by the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), may be applied by local governments to compensate their employees that worked through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The intention of the premium pay is to compensate essential workers for the risks they have taken throughout the pandemic. Specifically, the US Treasury Department's Interim Final Rule states, "The heightened risk to workers who must be physically present at the job site and, for many whom the costs associated with illness were hardest to bear financially."

"Essential workers" are defined as employees whose work involves regular in-person interactions or regular physical handling of materials in contact by others. All City of Thomasville staff are considered essential, and all were required to report to duty and perform their work tasks during the pandemic.

In addition, in response to the pandemic, the City budgeted extremely conservatively during 2020-2021 Fiscal Year, and did not provide a cost of living increases in that year.

Pandemic Premium Pay regulations state that no employee may be paid more than \$13 per hour in additional wages, and no more than \$25,000 per employee. In addition, there is a compensation maximum of 150% of the median county or state private sector wages. Any payment made to an employee above this must either be further justified, or paid from other ARPA funds.

Pay can be paid retroactively to the beginning of the pandemic, as long as the City has not already established a premium pay program.

This pay plan meets the requirements of ARPA rules in that no employee will receive more than \$4,400, with most receiving \$3,200 or less. ARPA funds shall be used to pay for all costs associated with this program.

Council Member Thrift moved to approve this policy amendment. Council Member Williams seconded. *Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.*

City Manager Brandt thanked Council for this consideration. Mayor York said, "Our employees do a great job, and they went through some rough times during the height of the pandemic, so we couldn't do any less."

12. Closed Session – Attorney/Client and Personnel matters

Council Member Thrift moved to go into closed session for personnel and attorney/client matters. Council Member Shepherd seconded. *Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.*

Mayor York called the meeting back into open session. No action was taken in closed session.

13. Committee Reports and Appointments, Mayor's Report and Appointments, City Manager's Report, City Attorney's Report

Council Member Williams thanked all the City employees who helped keep Thomasville open throughout COVID.

Council Member Sellars posted Thomasville's African American history on her Facebook page in February for Black History Month. She also partnered with the library to do a virtual Black History Month program. They did some book readings for the youth, and Jessie Wells Martin was the speaker for this year. Recordings can be found on the library's Facebook page.

Council Member Hunt said he was proud to see the growth that Thomasville is making and the direction that the City is headed in. He is looking forward to helping to continue that progress.

On behalf of the Personnel Committee, Council Member Thrift moved to appoint the following volunteers:

ABC Board -	Cran Plyler and Neal Grimes
Beautification -	Carol Brown, Molly Hussey and Nathan Carlisle
Golf Advisory -	Fred Bookman, Keith Tobin, Bradley White
Historic Preservation Regular -	Robert Freeman, Steve Teglas, Paxton Taylor
Historic Preservation Alternate -	Katheryn Byrnes
Multicultural -	Fay Ashworth, Amy Coleman and Bill Tagliaferri
Planning & Adjustment -	Oran Jefferies and Chris Myrick
Recreation -	Kathleen Sarette
Tourism -	Thomas Ballard, Gloria Brinkley and Dana Lambeth

Council Member Shell seconded. *Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.*

Mayor York reappointed Dianne Starrett to the Housing Authority.

He reported that last month he attended a gathering at Cosmos with Akeem Davis Gaither a local resident and member of the Cincinnati Bengals. He said, "We are so proud of him" and his achievements.

Mayor York was sorry to announce that Thomasville Fire Department Battalion Chief Mark Holt passed away unexpectedly. He thanked everyone who took part in the service and who helped block the streets. He said it was well organized and it was a big tribute to a fine employee and a fine man. He asked that the Holt family be remembered in your thoughts and prayers.

City Manager Brandt thanked the community for their outpouring of support for the loss of Battalion Chief Mark Holt, a long-serving member of our fire department and Fair Grove Volunteer Fire Department. He said he appreciated the support that was shown by fire departments all across the State and country.

He reported that the Thomasville Police Department is investigating a murder, and they are working diligently to solve the crime.

City Attorney Misti Whitman reported that 100-year-old local historian Eddie Joiner passed away.

14. ADDITIONAL ITEMS

15. ADJOURNMENT – Council Member Sellars moved to adjourn. Council Member Shell seconded the motion. No discussion. *Motion unanimously approved 7 – 0.*



Raleigh York, Jr.
Raleigh York, Jr., Mayor

Wendy S. Martin
Wendy S. Martin, City Clerk