



MINUTES

PUBLIC HEARING

December 22, 2009, 5:30 pm – 2009 Tax Millage Rate
December 22, 2009, 5:45 pm – Closing of Railroad Crossings

CALLED COUNCIL MEETING

December 22, 2009 at 6:10 pm

Public Hearing:

Call to Order: The December 22, 2009 Public Hearing regarding the 2009 City Tax Millage Rate was called to order by Mayor Bill Stewart at 5:30 pm.

Attendance: Mayor William C. Stewart, Jr., Keith Turman, Mayor Pro-Tem Jason Phillips, Angie Pressley, Kenneth Roach, Wayne Braswell, Clark Williams, City Attorney, Mike Green, and City Clerk, Gloria Brown

Mayor Stewart called for any public comments: David Jordan of 525 Hartwell Street, Royston, GA. asked Mayor and Council to consider lowering the tax millage rate to 9 mills for at least one year to compensate for the lack of a homestead exemption this year and present economic distress. Discussion held and comments made.

Public Hearing closed at 5:45 p.m.

Call to Order: The December 22, 2009 Public Hearing regarding Closing of Railroad Crossings was called to order by Mayor Bill Stewart at 5:45 pm.

Attendance: Mayor William C. Stewart, Jr., Keith Turman, Mayor Pro-Tem Jason Phillips, Angie Pressley, Kenneth Roach, Wayne Braswell, Clark Williams, City Attorney, Mike Green, and City Clerk, Gloria Brown.

Mayor Stewart asked Dave Bishop of Hartwell Railroad to elaborate on the need to close Railroad Crossing #7174768, Tony Jones Street Crossing, and Crossing #717470S. Mr. Bishop related the City's desire to lease railroad right-of-way from City limits to City limits with no degradation on property owners' current leases, as well as public safety issues. He also stated that the State of Georgia has expressed the desire to eliminate as many crossings as possible. Mr. Bishop also advised that the City has many redundant crossings that could be moved to gated crossings; also that with an agreement to close three crossings, the lease will be at no charge to the City.

Mayes Davison, Woodrow King, and John Ingle all had public comments with desires to keep the proposed railroad crossings open. Discussion held and questions asked. Bob Adamson, speaking for the DDA, all members were in favor of greenspace downtown.

Public Hearing closed at 6:10 pm.

Called Council Meeting:

Call to Order: The December 22, 2009 Called Council was called to order by Mayor William C. Stewart, Jr. at 6:10 pm.

Attendance: Mayor William C. Stewart, Jr., Keith Turman, Mayor Pro-Tem Jason Phillips, Angie Pressley, Kenneth Roach, Wayne Braswell, Clark Williams, City Attorney, Mike Green, and City Clerk, Gloria Brown.

Additions or Deletions to Agenda:

1. Purchase Used Van for Whitworth Crew – Kenneth Roach
2. Roof at Gas Store – Clark Williams

Approval of Agenda: Kenneth Roach made a motion to approve the agenda; Clark Williams seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.

New Business:

- A. **Set 2009 Tax Millage Rate – Mayor Stewart:** Discussion held. Wayne Braswell feels that adjustments to tax millage should be considered at budget time. Keith Turman made a motion to leave the tax millage at 10 mills and to look at a referendum to reduce taxes for persons 65 and over; Kenneth Roach seconded the motion; motion carried 5-1.
- B. **Approval of Railroad Leases and Closing of Railroad Crossings – Mayor Stewart:** Discussion held; Mr. Bishop was asked if the railroad would negotiate and he indicated the Railroad's position would be to close all three crossings, but could possibly eliminate one of the crossings. Angie Pressley made a motion to close the three crossings in question; motion died for a lack of a second. Further discussion held. Keith Turman made a motion to table for further study until the next regular Meeting; Jason Phillips seconded the motion; motion carried 5-1.
- C. **Purchase Used Van for Whitworth Crew – Kenneth Roach:** Kenneth advised Council that the a new van was needed for transport of the Whitworth crew as the present one was in need of major repairs. Billy Parham advised that he and Tommy have looked at several used vans and recommends purchasing the 2006 Ford van for \$16,797.00. City clerk verified that the department had funds budgeted for the van. Kenneth Roach made a motion to approve purchase of the recommended van; Angie Pressley seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.
- D. **Roof at Gas Store – Clark Williams:** Clark advised Council that the roof at the gas store has a severe leak and three companies had looked at the roof and given prices on repair. David Pressley is recommending Fortified Roofing as they have included removal of ruined roof material as well as the repair at a reasonable price. Clark also advised that the gas department has only about \$7,000.00 budgeted for site improvements, but Mr. Pressley advised that he can move additional funds to this area of the budget to compensate. Keith Turman made a motion to approve the Fortified Roofing quote; Jason Phillips seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0.

Adjourn: Keith Turman made a motion to adjourn; Jason Phillips seconded the motion; motion carried 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:36 pm.

Mayor William C. Stewart, Jr.

Gloria A. Brown, City Clerk/Financial Manager

(SEAL)

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