**Approved by the City Council September 12, 2023**

**Regular City Council Meeting**

**August 1, 2023**

**6:30 P.M.**

The Young Harris City Council met Tuesday, August 1, 2023, at 6:30 PM for their Regular Monthly Meeting. Present at the meeting were the Mayor: Andrea Gibby; City Attorney: Marvin Harkins; City Clerk: Nicolette Wade; Finance Officer: Ana Hess; City Council Members: Matt Miller, Steve Clark, Terry Ingram and John Kelley; Economic Development Director: Denise McKay; Vice President of Finance and Operations at Young Harris College: Bo Wright; Towns County Herald Staff Writer: Brittany Holbrooks; Towns County Civic Association members: Jim Olson and Gordy Jones. Council Member Donald Keys was absent from the meeting.

**Call to Order:** Mayor Gibby called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM stating that we do have a quorum. John Kelley was not present at the beginning of the meeting but arrived at 6:40 PM.

**Agenda:** Mayor Gibby asked for a motion to approve the Agenda. Matt Miller made a motion to approve the Agenda, seconded by Terry Ingram, and approved by Steve Clark, Matt Miller and Terry Ingram. This was prior to the arrival of John Kelley. A copy of the Agenda is attached and incorporated herein by reference.

**Approval of Minutes of Regular City Council Meeting – July 11, 2023 – 6:30 PM:** Steve Clark made a motion to approve the Minutes of the July 11, 2023 City Council Meeting, seconded by Terry Ingram, and approved by Steve Clark, Matt Miller, and Terry Ingram. This was prior to the arrival of John Kelley. A copy of the Minutes is attached and incorporated herein by reference.

**Financial Report- Ana Hess:** Ana told the Council that everything is as expected this time of year with no surprises. The percentages are on target. She applied for a grant for equipment. A copy of the June 2023 Financial Report Package is attached and incorporated herein by reference. She also obtained three audit proposals and based on the size, structure of the firm and costs one firm has her approval to go forward.

Attorney Harkins asked the cost what is the cost involved. Ana’ answer was about $14,000 which Attorney Harkins said is well below the costs that requires bids. Mayor Gibby said the Council had already given Ana permission to get the proposals. Steve Clark made a motion to accept Ana’s recommendation for an Audit Firm, seconded by Terry Ingram, and approved unanimously.

Ana also explained she is doing a lot of cleanup on the financial information before the new billing system is downloaded. She wants the reports to be fresh with all accounts correct. There are problems with the customer deposit accounts for several years back so she wants those accounts to be correct before the new billing system goes into operation.

**Date of September Meeting:** Mayor Gibby reminded the Council that due to the Labor Day Holiday the date of the September Council Meeting was changed at the Organizational Meeting in January from September 5 to September 12.

**Sewer Line Rehabilitation**: Steve Clark said he is waiting on proposals for 2 sewer lines. They are still talking about manholes. Since the manholes have never been done before it will have to be bid out. He does not know how many manholes there are or what type of rehab there will be.

Steve said the SCADA was installed on the two tanks and three pumps and the lift station. It is real easy to follow. We are still waiting on some equipment for the SCADA on the sewer plant.

**Timberline Pumps:** The engineers have looked at the plan previously discussed. The two pumps that are larger will not fit into the existing pump house. There are two options. One is to have to build a new building where the existing pump is that will be large enough for the new pumps. The second is to use the existing pump and add a new tank at the lower level which will have two sensors that tell the lower pump that the tank above needs to be filled and tell the upper point that I’m empty don’t burn me out.

John Kelley asked Dean what the life of a booster pump is and Dean said it depends on the demand. He said that is the weakest link in any water system. Dean explained there is a vertical pump on Raleigh Ridge that has not had problems in 10 years.

John asked Dean how he feels about keeping the old pump. Dean explained he had Byers come in they can retrofit where there are two alternating pumps that will fit in the existing pump house. All they have to do is flip a switch to make the other pump work and they can go the next day and switch out the broken pump.

John Kelley made a motion to give Steve the authority to get some estimates on the second plan, seconded by Terry Ingram, and approved unanimously.

**Water/Maintenance Report:** Dean Stanley reported the receipt of 196 meters so we have half of the total. In August we should receive another 196 meters and September should be the final shipment. In August we should receive the 8 test meters to make sure they are programmed where no one else can interfere with our meters.

Dean also said he received all the lead and copper sample reports. They have had several leaks and they are marking meters with a flag and paint getting ready for switch out when the contractors come.

**Mayor’s Report:** Mayor Gibby said we received the Wastewater Plant permit that is pretty much like the previous permit. There are a couple more tests Wayne said he would have to do.

**Main Street Georgia:** Rosemary Royston gave the Council a map that came out of the Placemaking Committee that identifies several businesses. She gave everyone information about Porchfest on Sunday, September 17. She has 6 bands, 6 venders and food trucks and is still taking applications. A copy of the map and Porchfest information is attached and incorporated herein by reference.

Rosemary also presented an Agreement for the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission to help the City of Young Harris develop a Master Plan for a cost of $3000. A copy of the Application is attached and incorporated herein by reference. Mayor Gibby can approve the Master Plan and the Council was in agreement with the proposal.

Mayor Gibby said she, Denise and Rosemary are looking into some grants with the National League of Cities.

**Economic Development:** Denise McKay reported 27 families on the waiting list for the new apartments. The apartments are under Title 42 which means there are tax credits and certain guidelines for a private company to develop them. Mayor Gibby said it is not a done deal yet but if we get it, it will help people find an affordable place to live. She and Mayor Gibby have been working with the school to develop a Youth Leadership Program for third graders.

**Attorney’s Report**: Attorney Harkins has talked to Ron Bell, the surveyor for the property donated to the City by Shirley Miller, and we are waiting on confirmation from GDOT. We are on schedule to close on the property by September.

He spoke with Stephanie McConnell about the road vagaries issues in Towns County. She said the County has similar issues. She said the best thing to do is develop a policy stating which areas the city will maintain. If the owner says the city needs to do more they will have to bring documentation showing why. Attorney Harkins said he will have a draft policy by the next meeting.

Regarding the new Employee Handbook. He has shared some of the handbook with Ana and wants to get Nicolette and Dean to look at it. He is changing some policies. He hopes to have some of it in writing in September.

There was discussion about a complaint from Walker Street and the ordinance that applies to trimming trees that hang over the road. Attorney Harkins said if the trees are hanging over the street the city has a liability. Mayor Gibby said the staff would love to have a policy. Dean said if the city clears the trees on Walker Street it will cost $3400 but an outside contractor’s cost is $2500. Mayor Gibby asked Dean to bring in some proposals for next month’s meeting.

Matt Miller made a motion to go into Closed Session to discuss personnel and real estate issues, seconded by Terry Ingram and approved unanimously. While in Closed Session the Council authorized the Mayor to sign an affidavit stating that the only issues discussed were personnel and real estate. A copy of the affidavit is attached and incorporated herein by reference.

John Kelley made a motion to return to Open Session, seconded by Terry Ingram and approved unanimously. There were no items to discuss in Open Session so John Kelley made a motion to adjourn Open Session, seconded by Matt Miller and approved unanimously.

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Andrea C. Gibby, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Nicolette Wade, City Clerk