

March Minutes
Mayor and Council Work Session
Commerce City Hall Conference Room
March 5, 2007
6:00 P.M.

The regularly scheduled work session of the Mayor and Council was held on Monday, March 5, 2007 at 6:00 P.M. in the City Hall Conference Room, 27 Sycamore Street. Those in attendance were Mayor Charles Hardy, Mayor Pro Tem Dusty Slater, Council members Wayne Gholston, Donald Wilson, Mark Fitzpatrick, Bob Sosebee and Richard Massey, City Manager Clarence Bryant, City Clerk Shirley Willis, Steve McKown, David Zellner and one member of the press. Mayor Charles Hardy talked about the other industrial park in Commerce and the IDA's request to sell the remaining three lots. They were first offered to Rooker and they declined the offer. IDA will turn the lots over to Norton for sale and get the property back on the tax rolls.

The Jackson County Chamber of Commerce breakfast would be held on Wednesday, 3/7/07 at 7:30 A.M. in the Commerce Civic Center. Doug Batell from the University of Georgia would be the guest speaker. Also, Mayor Charles Hardy said the next three breakfasts would be held in the Civic Center.

The next item of Mayor Hardy was that the Town Hall Meeting on skateboarding would be held on Thursday, March 8, 2007 at the Civic Center. Hasco Craver was looking for someone to head the meeting. Adam Tomblin, student at Commerce High School would be holding the meeting as a school project and to gather input from citizens regarding the interest of possible construction of a skateboard park.

Mayor Charles Hardy said at the council meeting on Monday night Hasco Craver would be recognizing several businesses and people. The recognitions were for donations for renovation of Spencer Park.

Mayor Charles Hardy then turned the work session over to City Manager Clarence Bryant to go over the agenda items.

City Manager Clarence Bryant gave an update on the utility projects.

- A. There were two water main projects under contract.

The water main on Steve Reynolds Industrial Boulevard was about 75% installed.

- B. The main on Homer Road from Mount Olive Road was installed to the location of the Utility Building on the Homer Road.
- C. Andrews Jackson Force Main project was scheduled to begin the week of March 11, 2007.

- D. The Electrical Contractor was continuing with the final phase of the re-build on the Homer Road section.
- E. The Natural Gas contractor was almost finished. He was making his last long bore through some wetlands on the I-85 section. The tie-in on the south section of the city still had to be done.

Mr. Bryant then went over the agenda items as follows:

2. Water Sales Agreement with Banks County

Banks County normally used water two major months in the summer. They now had an area they wished to serve in the low pressure area in a section of Banks County. It was necessary for them to execute an agreement for that capacity.

3. Planning Commission Hearing Items:

Mr. Bryant said the back up for the items would be included in the agenda package. He covered those items as follows:

- A. Mr. Ross Kestern, KRC Development, Inc., rezoning of property located on Map C20, Parcel 010 (Old Maysville Road) from R-2 to R-3 with the recommendation of approval from the Planning Commission.
 - B. Mr. Tracy Booth, Booth Enterprises, Inc., (CARQUEST) requested a variance on a building sign from 45.5 sq. ft. of surface to 151 sq. ft. The Planning Commission had no recommendation on the request.
 - C. Map Amendment – The Planning Commission recommended a map amendment for an Office-Commercial-Residential District on North Broad Street and along Homer Road.
4. DDA Appointment – There was a recommendation from DDA to appoint Mrs. Claudine Smith for a four year term that would expire in December 2010.
5. LARP Street Approval

Mr. Bryant covered the streets submitted to DOT for resurfacing under the LARP program. He gave the street names awarded by DOT and they were Georgia Avenue, (1,022 feet), and portions of Harmony Street (2,400 feet) and Williford Street (1,400 feet). Mr. Bryant said he had made contact with the County regarding resurfacing the other streets and he may have the information from them by Monday night to report at the meeting.

Councilman Bob Sosebee asked about the widening of Peach Street. Mr. Bryant said he had contacted DOT regarding their grading order for the worst streets. He said DOT would not resurface Locust Street because it was too narrow. Mr. Bryant said that the cost to widen Peach Street would be between \$4,000 and \$6,000. The Public Works Department could take some time away from Spencer Park and complete the widening of Peach Street if that was the decision that was reached.

Councilman Donald Wilson asked about the South Broad Extension because it was dirt. Mr. Bryant said the city previously had kept the street graded and now the county had to do it because the city did not have the equipment. The street could not be paved because it was railroad property.

Mr. Bryant said the railroad in conjunction with DOT would be redoing the junction at the old 441 crossing and Ila Road to install raised islands to prevent wrong way traffic. There were utilities in the area that would have to be relocated.

6. Natural Gas Water Heater Program

Mr. Bryant passed out a flyer that would be printed and the information on the program presented what MGAG was proposing to do. The flyers could be inserted into the customer's utility bills if approved.

Councilman Bob Sosebee said he could see where cities such as Toccoa and Thomson would use this program because they were gas cities. He asked if the City of Commerce installed the program how it would benefit them. Mr. Bryant said the city would make more money on this type system. It would take away from the peak on the electricity but make more money in the gas system.

Mr. Bryant said there was an item that was inadvertently left off the agenda and that was the Easter Parade scheduled for April 7, 2007 at 10:45 A.M. It would follow the same route as previous parades and the egg hunt would be held on the lawn of the First Baptist Church.

7. Greg Lauderman, TechSMART may make his presentation on the results of the three town meetings on broadband access and how it can assist our citizens with their businesses.
8. Activity Reports – The reports would be included in the agenda package.
9. Financial Review – The report would be included in the agenda package.

Mr. Bryant said that Bob Sosebee had brought some brochures (on the table) regarding a Community-Wide Safety Program.

Councilman Bob Sosebee talked about the program where it would automatically call the elderly citizens that signed up to participate on a daily basis. The elderly would be called up to six (6) times per day for reminders to take medications. If there were participants with latchkey children that required checking on that would also be done. The estimated cost per month was under \$500.00. Councilman Sosebee said the cost to the city would be one-third and the remainder would come from grants. If the payment was made on an annual basis there would be a discount.

Councilman Sosebee said if the decision was made for approval at the meeting on March 11, 2007 the calls would begin within the first ten (10) days of April. Pertinent information would need to be secured on the participants at sign up in the program. Councilman Sosebee said Georgia was the first state that the grant had been brought to.

The City of Commerce information would be personalized and stuffed in the utility bills to let the citizens know. An 800 number would be provided for participants to call if they would be out of town or if they were a new participant. If the telephone company could not provide a listing for the company to call the citizens inside the city then they would begin calling every number in the phone book. Councilman Sosebee said he would like for the City of Commerce to try it.

Councilman Donald Wilson asked if anyone had a problem with the request from Tracy Booth for the sign variance. Options were discussed, however, the consensus was to table the request and get research on wording the sign ordinance to accommodate different sign measurements on large buildings with personal parking lots.

Steve McKown reported that the Mayor's Contest participants had completed their essays and four presentations would be made at the council meeting on Monday night.

Councilman Donald Wilson talked about the Skateboard Ordinance. He inquired as to any information being given out at the Town Hall Meeting on Thursday night at the Civic Center. Councilman Bob Sosebee said that cost estimates were to be gotten and presented back to the council. Mr. Bryant said he had some costs but they were not to be presented at the Town Meeting. He and Lonnie Dickerson had looked at two different parks and the costs to construct. One was all concrete, 80 x 8; equipment only was approximately \$35,000. Another type of material was basically the same price. The total cost would depend upon the obstacles placed in the park, however; the minimum range for equipment would be \$25,000.

Mayor Charles Hardy told Councilman Donald Wilson to answer his question, if a committee was formed to investigate costs, if there was interest, the City of Commerce would proceed one step at the time.

Councilman Bob Sosebee stated that as Mr. Bryant had said there must be more public funds plus private money brought in to provide revenue for the project.

Mr. Bryant mentioned that he and Lonnie had discussed that when the new school was constructed there would be four (4) less tennis courts and it may be time for the City of Commerce to do a master recreation plan.

There was no further business and the work session was adjourned.

Charles L. Hardy, Jr., Mayor

Shirley Willis, City Clerk