



CITY OF THOMSON
PUBLIC HEARING AND CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 12, 2023

6:00PM

Thomson-McDuffie Government Center

Present:

Kenneth Usry, Mayor
Alton Belton, Councilmember
Keryl Corley, Councilmember
Elaine Johnson, Councilmember
John Smalley, Councilmember
John Waller, City Administrator
Lucretia Ferguson, City Clerk
Jimmy Plunkett, City Attorney

Also Present:

Assistant Chief Robert Brown, TPD
17 Citizens and City Employees
Erin Burdette, McDuffie Progress

Not Present:

Scott Whittle, Councilmember

PUBLIC HEARING

At 6:00pm, Mayor Kenneth Usry welcomed all to the Public Hearing concerning the Planning and Zoning Board's recommendation on a signage variance.

Planning and Zoning Director Chase Beggs was not present; CA Waller presented the signage variance recommendation.

2226 Harrison Road: The current owners of Mavis Tire Store, currently under construction, asked for a signage variance to allow a 70 square foot sign on the side elevation of the building. The ordinance allows 39.34 square feet on this side. The P&Z Board recommended that the variance be approved by a 5-1 vote.

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

There being no questions, comments, or other concerns, Mayor Usry closed the public meeting at 6:01pm.

COUNCIL MEETING

At 6:01pm, Mayor Kenneth Usry called the regularly scheduled City Council meeting to order. City Attorney Plunkett gave the invocation, followed by the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:

Twenty Year Service Award:

Shanda Reese-Grant (HR Director) and April Tomlinson (Water Department)

Recognition of employees nominated for their outstanding contributions from December 23rd to the 26th during extreme cold that caused dozens of water leaks across Thomson and McDuffie County.

Water Treatment: April Tomlinson and Kim Odom

Gas Department: Derick Martin and Trelles Robinson

Water-Sewer Distribution Department: Joe Usry, Mark Huff, Benji Sturkey, Anthony Duckworth and Phillip Kendrick, who also received a Letter of Appreciation for outstanding performance and customer service. These five men make up the entire Water-Sewer Distribution Department.

Reception: Saralyn Dunaway

Directors: Rhonald “Julio” Nickles (Fleet Maintenance) and Rodney Dunaway (Natural Gas Operations and Interim Director doe the Water-Sewer Distribution Department)

CITIZEN INPUT: Julie Klare spoke on Augusta Locally Grown’s director Rebecca VanLoenen, who is a Thomson resident. Mrs. VanLoenen would like to speak to the Council on food access issues and other topics. Mayor Usry assured her Mrs. VanLoenen would be welcome during any Council Meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The motion was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Smalley to approve the agenda as written. A vote of 4-0 in favor was taken.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Called Council Meeting, December 5, 2022—A motion was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Johnson to approve the minutes. A vote of 4-0 was taken to approve them.
- b. City Council Meeting, December 8, 2022—A motion was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Corley to approve the minutes. A vote of 4-0 was taken to approve them.

BUSINESS:

- a. Recommendation of Planning & Zoning, re: Mavis Tire Store Signage Variance: As covered in the Public Hearing, the P & Z Commission recommends that the Council approve the variance requested for the business at 2226 Harrison Road. A motion was made by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Corley to approve the signage variance request. A vote of 4-0 passed the motion.
- b. Ordinance 582: Fats, Oils and Grease Policy - Second Reading: A motion was made by Councilmember Corley and seconded by Councilmember Smalley to approve the ordinance. The motion passed by a vote of 4-0.
- c. Ordinance 583: Purchasing Policy – Second Reading: A motion was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Smalley to approve the ordinance. A 4-0 vote approved the motion.

- d. Election Qualifying Fees and Advertisement: All six elected positions will be on the ballot in November, 2023. Qualifying fees are set by the State of Georgia at 3% of a salaried position including all supplements.
- e. The 2023 Qualifying Fees are calculated as:

<u>Mayor</u>	\$312.00	<u>Council</u>	\$222.00
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A motion to approve the 223 Qualifying Fees was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Corley. A call for vote passed the motion 4-0.

Two notices announcing these fees are required. Councilmember Smalley made a motion to approve the advertisement with Councilmember Johnson seconding. A vote of 4-0 approved the motion.

- f. First Reading of Annexation Ordinance: 0.41 acres on Cedar Rock Road. A request to annex into the City Limits has been received for 0.41 acres at 711 Cedar Rock Road.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Council Report: Councilmember Belton brought up constituents’ concerns about not receiving their utility bills in the mail on time. CA Waller replied that the City may not always have them in the mail on the actual billing day, but that the Postal Service is mainly at fault in the late deliveries. The City billing department has made adjustments as to when late penalties are added to accounts due to the USPS delay. Councilmember Corley congratulated the “Water Heroes” and our twenty-year employees who were spotlighted tonight.

City Administrator: CA Waller brought the Council up to date on the status of our Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) road list. LMIG, which is funded by a percentage of the state motor fuel tax, provides funds to local governments to perform improvements to their roadway network each year. The list of roads needing improvements is being finalized and will be completed soon. Speed humps will be installed on Old Washington Road and a couple in Pine Hills Subdivision. The speed monitor is currently on Lincoln Drive as those residents have requested speed humps also. Enterprise Fleet Management presented a proposal for the City to lease vehicles in place of buying new vehicles and constantly servicing older ones. CA Waller will bring more details back to the Council at a later date. Easements and projects for water and sewer were discussed. Water bills in February will bring more requests for adjustments as many customers had frozen pipes and water leaks over the Christmas holiday cold snap. A new City Limits sign was presented that would recognize citizen or group accomplishments.

Mayor: Mayor Usry spoke on a parcel of land at 111 West Street that was gifted to the City in 2007. The Land Bank Authority has been approached by an interested party and the Mayor would like to deed the property to them. Councilmember Johnson made the motion to gift the property to the Land Bank and was seconded by Councilmember Corley. A vote of 4-0 passed the motion. All were brought up to date on upcoming events.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

There being no other business before the Council, a motion for adjournment was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Johnson. A vote was taken and the meeting was adjourned at 6:46. (4-0)

Respectfully submitted,

Lucretia W Ferguson
Lucretia W. Ferguson, City Clerk

Kenneth L. Usry
Kenneth L. Usry, Mayor

