

City Council of Peachtree City
Special Called Meeting Minutes
August 9, 2012
7:00 p.m.

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Peachtree City met in special called meeting on Thursday, August 9, 2012. Mayor Haddix called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Other Council Members in attendance: George Dienhart, Vanessa Fleisch, Eric Imker, and Kim Learnard.

The purpose of the meeting was to consider adoption of the 2012 millage rate.

Financial Services Director Paul Salvatore addressed Council, asking for adoption of the rollback millage rate for 2012 property taxes of 6.756 mills for Maintenance and Operation and 0.422 for Bond.

Dienhart moved to postpone the public hearing for two weeks. Learnard seconded the motion for discussion.

Dienhart said he and Imker had items in the proposed budget they wanted to investigate, adding that the rollback might not be needed. He felt it was important the City looked at those items.

Imker asked what the legal implications were of postponing the public hearing and adoption of the millage rate.

Salvatore said the advertising process would have to start again. State law required the hearing for the millage rate be advertised two weeks prior, assuming what was adopted was either at the rollback rate or lower. Otherwise, the law required three public hearings and a notice of tax increase. The ad could run in the Saturday, August 11, edition of **Today in Peachtree City**. The earliest date the hearing could be held was August 27. Salvatore said he needed a specific date for the ad. Council consensus was August 27 at 8:00 a.m.

Imker said Council needed to know the big picture before voting on anything. He had not heard any alternative plans to the proposed budget or millage, adding Council needed to look at the following years and what would happen. If Council did not rollback the millage rate this year the \$635,000 shortfall in revenue in FY 2013 due to the decrease in the tax digest, the loss would be \$3 million when it was all added up. He wanted someone else on Council to take the lead in looking at where \$3 million could be cut and bring those ideas to the August 21 workshop.

Haddix said a needs assessment had to be done before cutting that much from the proposed budget. Council needed a concrete knowledge of what was wanted and needed before moving forward on a long-term basis. The budget could not be trimmed here and there without something firm in place to know where the City wanted to go. They did not have that.

Learnard noted the college and career academy project she was working on with local businesses and the Fayette County Board of Education. It had started in March when she was talking to industries and learning there might be a hiring problem or disconnect. There was a misalignment between what the schools were putting out and what was needed in the workforce. She brought in the industry and education system leaders, as well as some politicians. It did not take many months to pull something together that benefited everyone.

Learnard said it might be time for Haddix to pull his ideas together, adding that staff was stretched thin and leadership was needed to pull things together.

Haddix said he could put a committee together, but it would not be an instantaneous thing. He applauded Learnard's efforts with the school and wanted it to continue. Work had been done on a similar idea in 2008 and 2009 that had started moving forward and fell apart. He wanted it to succeed no matter who was heading it up. Haddix said he could definitely pull a committee together, but it would take time. Learnard applauded Haddix for his willingness to pull things together and examine things, adding that he had ideas that needed to come to the table. Haddix said he would get with staff to formulate a request to the community and pull together the correct people. Learnard said she had done everything on her own, and there was no need to give staff homework. Haddix said he was only talking about the advertising portion.

Fleisch said there was no need to advertise. She worked on the partnership with Fayette Senior Services for seven months prior to bringing it to staff. Her concern was that Haddix wanted a needs assessment done in August when staff started working on the budget in January, which was when forming a needs assessment committee should have happened. Haddix said he had requested it earlier but had gotten no feedback from Council. The work with Fayette Senior Services actually began years ago, not this year. There was a lot already formulated to move forward on, making it easier. Fleisch disagreed, saying they needed to move on.

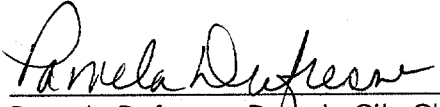
Dienhart said they needed to get back on track and talk about the budget. He applauded Haddix for moving forward with the committee.

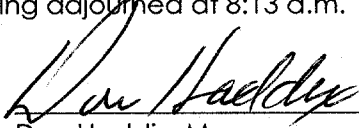
Imker said the City Manager and staff had given Council a proposed budget, which was what staff said they needed to do the job Council set up for them to do. He was dumbfounded with the referral to needs. There had been a budget workshop and public hearing, and there had been minimal input from citizens. They were trusting Council to do its job and determine how to spend their tax money. Council determined what needs to present to the citizens. It was up to Council to determine the priorities of what was needed versus what was wanted. He had held his own citizen workshops in the past. He had gotten very good support from those workshops. The last hour request for a needs assessment from the citizens was outrageous. Council needed to come back to the next few meetings with recommendations on where to cut the budget. The citizens trusted them to do the right thing, and if they did not, the citizens would change things next year.

Haddix said it was not a last minute request. He had requested it in pervious years. The distinction was he could form a committee, and he was going to do so.

Council consensus was to continue the public hearing to August 27 at 8:00 a.m. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business to discuss, Imker moved to adjourn the meeting. Dienhart seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:13 a.m.


Pamela Dufresne, Deputy City Clerk


Don Haddix, Mayor