

City Council of Peachtree City
Minutes of Meeting
August 4, 2011

The Mayor and Council of the City of Peachtree City met on Thursday, August 4, 2011, in City Hall Council Chambers. Mayor Don Haddix called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Council Members present were: Vanessa Fleisch, Doug Sturbaum, Kim Learnard, and Eric Imker.

Announcements, Awards, Special Recognition

Mayor Haddix recognized Camp Counselor Dave Wojcik and Lifeguards Anna Lee and Kristen Mitchell for their lifesaving efforts in a recent near-drowning incident at Kedron Fieldhouse and Aquatic Center. Haddix recognized the graduates of the summer teen and adult Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) courses. Public Information Officer/City Clerk Betsy Tyler announced that the Peachtree City History Time Line Committee would be holding public presentations about the project on Sunday, August 7, 4:00 p.m., and Tuesday, August 9, 7:00 p.m., at City Hall.

Citizen Comment

There was none.

Agenda Changes

There were none.

Minutes

Haddix noted three additional documents on the dais with proposed amendments submitted by Imker for each set of minutes.

Learnard moved to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2011, workshop and the July 11, 2011, workshop as amended. Imker seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Learnard moved to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2011, regular meeting as amended. Imker seconded. Motion carried 4-0-1 (Sturbaum).

Consent Agenda

1. Consider Alcohol License – Judy's Nails, 244 Commerce Drive

Imker moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Fleisch seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Agenda Items

07-11-08 Reconsider Intergovernmental Agreement with FCBOC for E-911

City Attorney Ted Meeker said that, following Council approval of the agreement on July 21 subject to legal review, additional changes had been made that he felt needed Council approval. The previous version had a penalty clause that had concerned Meeker and Tyrone attorney Dennis Davenport, and the wording change was discussed at the last meeting; however, the County had increased the term of the agreement from 10 years to 50 years, but participants still had the ability to opt out of the agreement on the decennial years.

Fleisch moved to approve the agreement. Learnard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

07-11-11 Consider Resolution to Censure Mayor Haddix

Learnard opened the conversation by explaining why the resolution had been brought forward. She said she believed Peachtree City was the best city in the nation, and felt it was no wonder it continued to garner awards. The residents were used to the recreational amenities, the paths, and all the other things the community took for granted. The negativity in the newspaper was

puzzling to her, and there had been a pattern of negativity over the past 18 months that the City had sent out to its citizens and to those outside its borders through headlines, editorials, blogs, and negative comments and emails.

Learnard said one thoughtless comment could have lasting repercussions, noting a lawsuit between the former Mayor and the current Mayor. She did not understand the negativity and felt every incident took away from Peachtree City and everyone in it. The negativity had reached the County and state level officials, but also reached prospective businesses that might otherwise consider relocating to Peachtree City.

Learnard continued that, last October, the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDED) held a workshop with local agencies to explain how economic development occurred. The GDED worked very closely with Georgia Power and EMC, and if a company was considering moving to Georgia, they contacted someone at the Governor's Office or at the GDED. The project managers at the GDEC then contacted a few communities and brought the company representatives for a brief visit, possibly as little as an hour. If a company only had an hour to learn about a community, they went online and read local headlines and blogs. One hiccup could mean the difference between bringing a quality company to Peachtree City or having it go somewhere else, and the opportunity could be lost before the City ever knew it existed. Six of the eight highest economic development officials in the state lived in Peachtree City, and that was a golden opportunity.

Learnard said she did not want to address the issue at the meeting, but dozens of citizens had contacted her over the preceding months asking her to do something about the problem. A censure of the mayor would be yet another negative headline, but she felt she had to act or she would be sending the message that she was either complicit in the problem or did not care, and neither of those were true. Peachtree City was compromising its future and had to stop being its own worst enemy. The pattern of behavior was coming from one person, the Mayor, and she wanted it stopped. Learnard concluded by asking residents to retain their faith in Peachtree City and its government. She vowed to do her best to represent the City in the most positive manner possible.

Imker then spoke, saying he agreed with many of Learnard's comments and that he did not want to address the agenda item either. He said one example, taken from the resolution, dealt with the Economic Development Coordinator the City had hired in January. That employee had actually resigned twice. The first time, Council talked him into staying because they felt his potential contribution was so important. He ultimately left again and was back in Texas before Imker could reach him to ask why he left. Imker read the reply he received, with the former employee's permission:

Hey Erik,

I left because of Don Haddix and the unstable nature of the position, as well as being away from my family. You, Vanessa, and Kim were the reason that I stayed the first time I thought about leaving. You three were great and gave me tremendous support - cannot say that for others who are more focused on ego development rather than economic development.

Good luck!!

Imker said that, a few weeks later, he read a letter to the editor in **The Citizen**, in which the Mayor stated, "The Fayette County Development Authority (FCDA) did not proactively pursue good employers." Imker was shocked by the quote and emailed the FCDA Chairman, Randy

Hayes, to apologize for the comment. Imker said the FCDA had recruited a number of local industries, and over 90% of the industry that came to Fayette County came to Peachtree City.

Hayes responded to Imker as follows:

Thanks Eric.

[It is very unfortunate that] the Mayor takes this tactical approach to Community building. These are the types of instances that our competitors seize upon to denigrate our great County and especially PTC. I recoil at the thought that the Sany, NCR, and Cooper employees and management read such statements and think that they are lumped into the category of "not good employers" . . . These companies, and many others, recruited to PTC, are wonderful corporate citizens and provide tremendous volunteers to our community and support many of the smaller local businesses, restaurants, and sponsor many of our local efforts such as the Fred, the Fayetteville amphitheatre, blood drives, cancer walks, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, etc. The FCDA is not going to change our mission of recruiting quality companies and employers to come to PTC because of this. Eric we appreciate your comments and assure you that the FCDA Board and Brandt will continue to work with you.

Randy

Imker said Hayes had followed up following the July 21 meeting, writing:

We hope they [Peachtree City] get the situation resolved soon and continue to move forward with positive news about Peachtree City and the County. We certainly appreciate the position the majority of Council has taken in regards to stopping the negative comments and their resolve to govern the city with purpose, integrity, and a clear view of the future. We as a board and staff of the FCDA will continue to promote Peachtree City as a wonderful city at every opportunity and with the resources available as part of our mission.

Imker said the FCDA was in place to support Peachtree City.

Imker concluded that one of the reasons for the censure dealt with his recent request to change the minutes relating to a budget item. The Mayor had used incorrect numbers [in a column], and Imker had the meeting video replayed to confirm the correct numbers in contrast to what was in the minutes. Imker said, despite seeing the truth on the screen, the Mayor voted against changing the minutes based on the truth. Imker asked what that said about the Mayor, saying there was something wrong when Haddix could not admit to making a mistake, and it needed to be fixed so the City could move forward. He continued that he did not like taking the step of the censure, but he was trying to move the City forward and was meeting roadblocks every step of the way. Imker said they would find a way to move forward successfully.

Fleisch then read a statement:

In passing this censure resolution this evening we are sending a message to the citizens of Peachtree City that we acknowledge, and disagree strongly with the actions of Mayor Donnie O. Haddix.

There are a couple of references within the resolution itself that I would like to highlight.

When the Mayor was chosen to be Fayette County's representative on the transportation roundtable he was elected by his peers to carry out the provisions of HB-277 which is a state law. Instead of carrying out the provisions of the law, he used his position on the roundtable as a bully pulpit for Fayette County to pull out of the Atlanta Regional Commission. That is not what his function on the roundtable was supposed to be.

As a member of the roundtable he advocated a move from the ARC to the Three Rivers Regional Commission. In this very room it was shown that Mr. Haddix had not done any due diligence on the Three Rivers Commission yet he wanted a county of 106,000 people to follow him blindly to a place that he had not properly researched.

The Mayor has consistently criticized the Fayette County Development Authority in order to promote the Peachtree City Development Authority. The FCDA is recognized by the state department of Economic Development, the PTC Development Authority is not. It is through the state that the FCDA has helped to bring businesses like Sany and NCR to the city. The mayor has continually charged that the FCDA is reactive and not proactive in bringing businesses to the area. Yet in October, Brandt Herndon of the FCDA will be making a trip to China in order to recruit businesses to Fayette County. Again, it is the FCDA that works with the state; the Peachtree City Development Authority does not. The FCDA's relationship with the state is vital to bringing economic development to the city and county. We should not be spending valuable city resources to build an organization within the city to compete with the county.

The majority on this council wanted to hire an Economic Development Coordinator. Hiring an EDC as a city employee and not subject to any kind of "politics" was vital to any chance of success. Our human resources department knew the environment in which the EDC position was being created and they devised an interview process to help find the best person for our city. As a result of that creative and rigorous process we hired Joey Grisham. But because the EDC position was not structured the way he wanted it to be structured, the mayor made Joey Grisham's tenure here short. It is no wonder that he resigned after a few months, who could blame him? The Mayor could not abide by the decision of the majority of council and decided to castigate a city employee on the blogs and in the newspaper.

One paragraph of the resolution deals with the mayor creating an untenable work environment by belittling and criticizing current and former city employees, elected officials and appointed officials.

We here in Peachtree City pride ourselves that we do run efficiently and with fewer employees than any other "class B" city in Georgia, however, how can that continue when the staff knows that there is potential for the Mayor to put their name on the front page of the newspaper? We as a council can no longer sit idly by as Mr. Haddix erodes the morale of the employees from within. We need to be fostering a healthy work environment where we can recruit and retain good employees. Unfortunately, the actions of this Mayor have made that very difficult.

Sturbaum then said he and the Mayor had discussed the resolution, and Peachtree City had to move forward. He did not see Haddix as a threat and had not lost confidence in the Mayor. He said he understood some of the reasons Haddix had criticized the things he had criticized. Sturbaum said he had hoped Grisham would stay and had talked to him personally. He added

that the DAPC could be a complement to FCDA, and Sturbaum said he was not going to censure the Mayor.

Haddix said everyone was entitled to their own opinions. He said he never asked or told Joey Grisham to leave, and he received a lot of complaints about the EDC from citizens who did not like his position of pro-big box and saying that the City needed a centralized shopping area because the village concept was a failed model. He continued that there had been a very big difference of opinion on what the City was about, and the village concept was one of the major things that had attracted Haddix to the City. When someone came in saying the City needed to do away with that model, Haddix found that very troubling, but he never asked the employee to leave. The EDC had his own opinion, to which he was entitled, and he ultimately chose to leave.

Haddix then read from a prepared statement, saying:

A Resolution of Censure has been placed against me. It says I have violated our Code of Ethics, Mission Statement, and City Charter. I will demonstrate those accusations are not only false but constitute a double standard.

Right up front, mentioning anyone's spouse has no place in any such matter as this. As Mayor, I am not responsible for what my wife says as a private citizen. As a private citizen, she is not subject to Council in a censure action. There is no other way to describe this than dirty politics.

Nothing in any of those documents empowers the majority to determine what is acceptable, requires me to agree with them or seek their review and approval. They cannot violate my First Amendment rights.

GMA [Georgia Municipal Association] says consensus on Council is great, but, when there are clear differences, one's conscience and promises to their constituents must come first.

On impeding critical city business, the critical items moved forward on schedule. There was no delay. Choosing to continue with the Agenda Item was their decision.

As for an untenable environment, the word belittle, meaning, "to be rude to or show contempt," was used. Never happened. Disagreement, yes. But rude and contempt, no.

But if you want rude and showing contempt, Councilman Imker said more than once if our employees didn't like his cuts to pay and benefits they could quit. After all, there were 30 people waiting in line for each and every one of those jobs. At various times he has said the others on Council didn't have the courage, guts, or backbone to vote for those cuts.

In 2010, DAPC and WASA [Peachtree City Water & Sewerage Authority] appointees were attacked from the Dais, in one instance resulting in Councilman Imker being called out of order. This year Councilman Imker hung his Budget Binder over his head and mocked me on the dais.

As for an untenable environment on Council, three on Council work together behind the scenes, leaving two of us out of the loop, add agenda items last minute, blindsides us on the Dais with actions such as defunding DAPC, refuse to share such as Budget proposals ahead of time so we could study them, and refuse to answer important questions and share important email responses to others.

This Resolution is an example. It was created in secret, added to the Agenda last minute on the day before the Council Meeting, knowing I had a meeting that evening, and then they refused to continue it because it took away their element of surprise. They actually said I didn't understand a censure action and didn't have a right to respond.

Fact is, once again, it is they who do not understand. A censure is not a legal action. It is a formal statement of their displeasure. As far as procedures, it is no different than any other normal Agenda Item.

On the lawsuit, Norsouth was about inadequate low income housing for seniors. That was a 4-1 vote and our own Staff report supported the accusation. There was no finding of racism because there was no accusation of racism.

As for another lawsuit, apparently they are naming the Logsdon lawsuit.

Now, as for lawsuits caused by someone on Council, Councilman Imker resurrected a resolved issue with an HOA and claimed they were in the right, resulting in a lawsuit. In a 4-1 vote he voted against the City and the case was ultimately withdrawn by the HOA. On another matter, he told some people we were going to drop the issue into the laps of the homeowners, so, we were sued.

Imker asked to make a comment, and Haddix said he could not interrupt. Imker said, when he heard lies, he could interrupt. Haddix said he had the floor. Imker said he was astounded. Haddix continued:

There is another matter where his words might result in yet a third lawsuit. We know some research has been made.

Regarding the FCDA, I have complimented them for the work they do and have worked with them on more than one project.

The companies listed in the Resolution were not proactively found and brought here by the FCDA. They were brought here by others, in example the State.

For clarity, proactive means, "controlling a situation by causing something to happen rather than waiting to respond to it after it happens." Thus the FCDA assistance was reactive, meaning: "done in response to a problem or situation." Their charges do not even address what I actually said. The FCDA does not work on redevelopment at all and an EDC cannot. That is why Fayetteville has its own Downtown Development Authority, in example.

Councilman Imker referenced an email from FCDA Chairman Randy Hayes. Note that while I am criticized, and he attempts to discredit me with semantical statements, the fact is he never claimed they proactively went out and brought those companies here on their own.

As well, I have had more than one meeting with Panasonic, NCR, and Sany this year and enjoy an excellent relationship with these fine world-class companies.

Matt Forshee, the former FCDA President, made it very clear Peachtree City needed a funded and active DAPC.

In an email from Commissioner Brown he said, "As for our county's development authority, they appear to be stuck with very little in the way of new blood or innovation. They have possibilities but I have yet to see them stretch to the point of being pro-active on the development side."

We are not alone among those elected who know this.

Mayor and Council represent Peachtree City. Our job is to do what is right for Peachtree City on economic development. The FCDA works for the County representing their interests. When something exclusively is for the benefit of Peachtree City, they always say no, it is not a County matter.

Rest assured every business in that list that they presented generates property and sales tax for the County.

On ARC, I have worked with them since 2008 and many elected within the ARC agree with my positions. There has been no damage. In fact, [County Commission] Chairman [Herb] Frady has recently come to the same conclusion as I on being a donor county. We are not alone among elected officials with that view. On leaving the ARC, I am not alone as well.

I have worked with GDOT since 2008. I worked beyond the meeting Councilwoman Fleisch attended on getting the BSC sign approval. That is along with work in getting millions of dollars in projects moved from the rejected to Constrained List on the TSPLOST. All of that this year alone.

In an issue related to the TSPLOST, Council removed the Commuter Rail Station from the Peachtree City Transportation Plan in 2010. Councilwoman Learnard wrote to then Chairman Smith, praising him and asking that he override the Council decisions and keep the station in the plan.

Learnard said she did not ask for the station.

Haddix continued:

So we have a very distinct difference of opinion on rail in Fayette.

There was no need for the "Apology Tour." There was nothing to apologize for by me. We are not here to tell every other agency we will do whatever they wish. We are here to work for what Peachtree City needs.

Differences and disagreements between agencies and cities are the norm, as are differences within Commissions and Councils. They are not the exception, but we still work together. All one has to do is open the AJC to see these conflicts on an ongoing basis.

Clearly, we have issues of disagreement here on Council, but nothing that rises to the level of censure. I will not resign and I will keep my promises and continue to abide by the Ethics Codes, Mission Statement, and City Charter. These disagreements are election issues. The voters will judge all of us if we choose to run again.

Haddix said his only additional comments were that the vote to amend the minutes had been a 3-2 vote, not a 4-1 vote.

Imker said the Mayor's statement was the reason for the censure, and that the Mayor was delusional. Imker could not believe he was now being called the cause of the lawsuit, and said he was surprised he was not the cause of the \$21 million problem he found when he took office. He said he was flabbergasted.

Imker continued that he did not refuse to answer questions, and was always trying to get the most information out to the citizens, and anyone could ask him a question at any time. He had never refused to provide answers.

To the charge of orchestrating the resolution in secret, Imker said he did not know the resolution was occurring until heard about it from Meeker. Imker accused Haddix of making assumptions and then developing stories to support those assumptions, and said sometimes the lies were unbelievable. He said Haddix had political supporters attacking Imker left and right, coming up with outright lies in the newspaper. Imker did not understand where the information was coming from – people were telling him the Mayor said he had gone into Haddix's office and apologized that he could not keep his campaign promises, asking what kind of lie that was. Imker said he did not know the Mayor had another meeting prior to the Council meeting and did not keep track of the Mayor's schedule.

Imker agreed that every member of Council had the right to speak on every agenda item, despite what he may have said at the previous meeting or if he incorrectly cut the Mayor off. The reason for the censure was self evident, and he wished people would not get a negative impression of being a politician from this issue. Imker said people had warned him about running for Council 19 months previously, telling him that it would get ugly, but he never knew it would include outright lies against him.

Imker said he only had one goal when he ran for office, and that was the budget. He was getting off point of the issue of the censure for all the negativity, but Haddix did not see the problem. Imker apologized for going offline but said he had to react to the things he had heard, and he could not believe he was being blamed for the lawsuit.

Learnard said the purpose that evening was the hope that the Mayor and Council could turn a new leaf. It was not about defending past actions. It was about a new start. She asked Haddix if he was Mayor enough to tell Council it was time to start working together in a positive manner, putting only the best face of Peachtree City forward.

Haddix said that was a loaded question. Learnard said it was not, it was very simple. Haddix said he ran on a platform in 2007 and 2009 and made promises. Those platforms and promises remained the same, and he was going to keep his promises. Learnard asked him to keep them in a positive manner.

Haddix asked if they could get past the politically correct jargon. He said Council Members had differences and disagreed, and had the right to express their differences. That is what they were

elected to do. It had gotten contentious on all sides, but his problem was that the blame went both ways. The censure motion was not helping the matter. It required honest and open discussion when members knew where each member was coming from, and should not include terms like "liar" and "delusional," which halted open conversation.

Haddix said they could try to change it in the future, but it would take all five members. Discussion was not three members saying they had the majority and requiring everyone to get behind them and push that agenda. Haddix said he was elected to stand on the principles of his campaign, not agree with everything just because the majority said it. Compromise meant that both sides gave some ground. There had been no willingness to give from the other side, merely the assertion that the other side had three votes. That approach shut the door on compromise.

Steve Thaxton asked for the resolution of censure to be read.

Fleisch read the resolution:

A RESOLUTION TO CENSURE MAYOR DONNIE OWEN HADDIX
AND TO CALL FOR CORRECTIVE ACTION IN ORDER TO BETTER PROTECT AND SERVE THE
CITIZENS OF PEACHTREE CITY, GEORGIA.

WHEREAS, the Peachtree City Code of Ethics states as a declaration of policy that its officials are to, "Create an environment of honesty, openness and integrity"; and

WHEREAS, the Peachtree City Code of Ethics states as a declaration of policy that, "The citizens of the City have confidence in the integrity of their government"; and

WHEREAS, the Peachtree City Code of Ethics states as a declaration of policy that, "The proper government and administration of the City requires that its officials use the power of their position for the well being of their constituents"; and

WHEREAS, the Peachtree City Mission Statement compels the elected leaders of Peachtree City to ensure residents a "healthy environment in which to live, work, and enjoy leisure time"; and

WHEREAS, the Peachtree City Mission Statement compels the elected leaders of Peachtree City to "promote a sense of community"; and

WHEREAS, Peachtree City Mayor Donnie Owen Haddix has created an untenable work environment by publicly belittling and criticizing current and former city employees, elected officials, and appointed officials, resulting in at least one lawsuit with related costs to the City; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Haddix has publicly criticized the Fayette County Development Authority, the Atlanta Regional Commission, and other agencies in a manner that has damaged Peachtree City's relationship with those and other agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor's criticism of the Fayette County Development Authority ignores the fact that such entity has assisted in bringing the following businesses to Peachtree City: Sany, Cooper Lighting, Panasonic, Aventure Aviation, Hoshizaki, Shinsei, AIM Aircraft Spares, Rinnai, NCR, and more; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Peachtree City and the City Council expect a return to civility, respect, integrity, and trust.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Peachtree City, Georgia, that:

Section 1: The City Council has lost confidence in Mayor Donnie Owen Haddix.

Section 2: The City Council hereby censures Mayor Haddix for comments and actions that put the City of Peachtree City at financial risk, create an untenable work environment, and damage the City's relationships with other governmental agencies.

Section 3: The City Council admonishes Mayor Haddix for comments and actions directed toward former appointed and elected officials, and former employees of the City.

Section 4: The City Council asks that Mayor Haddix correctly carry out the duties of Mayor, adhere to the City Charter, Council Rules, and common courtesy, work effectively as a member of the City Council, and work effectively in his capacity of Mayor with other state and local government agencies.

Section 5: If Mayor Donnie Owen Haddix cannot or will not take corrective action to carry out the duties of Mayor, function as a member of City Council, and adequately represent the citizens of Peachtree City, the City Council asks that Mayor Haddix resign from office.

Section 6: This resolution is effective upon passage.

Thaxton thanked Fleisch, saying he felt the resolution was clear and factual, and supported the resolution as a citizen. He was shocked that the Mayor tried to turn the censure into a case against Council Member Imker. Venting his dislike about the political process in columns and letters in the newspaper was not a good way to lead the community and the City. It brought the points made in the censure to a head. The discussion was not about anyone else, it was about Haddix, and his leadership had not been in a positive manner.

Bob Grove said this had been one of the worst soap operas he had ever seen. Council represented the citizens, not the other way around, and all five needed to get their act together.

Paul Griffith said he had been a neighbor of Mayor for over 20 years, and they had their differences. Citizens did not have the privilege of knowing all that happened and had to rely on the newspapers. He was well aware of how a Council should operate, having served elsewhere. The Council had been in the news every week, with the last few years being worse than ever. As a citizen, he begged all five to act as adults and operate the business of the City and its citizens.

Caren Russell was very proud of Peachtree City and had attended many Planning Commission and Council meetings over the years. What she found most distressing was that personalities and personal opinions were being stated in the papers about employees and other officials, and those should not be coming from the position of Mayor. It was not positive for the City or its reputation, and Council's apologies issued at government meetings did not compare to the

discussions at local restaurants. Russell said it was very embarrassing. She asked Council to become more professional, to state facts, and check the facts, before writing anything in the paper, to avoid potential lawsuits and to and to refrain from writing opinions about elected officials. She also asked that Council try to support the employees of the City to keep the services at the level expected by residents. Council had worked very hard to bring in a budget, and she asked that they work to keep the services. Council could have personal disagreements, but having someone say they could only look at one year [of the budget] and criticize others for thinking otherwise, when businesses had to plan budgets that were adaptable to reality, was very bad. Russell said, that evening, Haddix said he had supported the EDC. However, she sat in a meeting when Haddix said he would not let all economic development issues be handled by the EDC, but that he would continue to work on economic development on the sidelines without the EDC. This caused more problems and was not supporting the EDC, giving conflicting information to prospective businesses. Russell concluded that she hoped all five would fact check, keep personalities out of it, do the job in a professional manner, and make the citizens proud of the City and its representatives again.

Randy Boyett said he supported the censure. He became very disillusioned last year after working with the Mayor. He believed the Mayor's actions were not in the best interests of the City when he threatened people with loss of service that was never on the table. The people of Peachtree City paid the bills, and at some point Council had to figure out whether to tax people who were not seeing an increase in income. Boyett said the Mayor was wrong. There were valid motions to reduce the budget in lieu of raising taxes, and the Mayor refused. Boyett said he would love to see more of the Mayor's resume because his leadership and management skills were very questionable.

Marsha Hendershot addressed the Mayor's comment that an issue could pass 3-2 but he wanted more discussion, and she asked how actions moved forward once there was a vote.

Sturbaum said that, regardless of the number, once the majority voted, the matter moved forward. Hendershot said the Mayor seemed to expect additional discussion. Haddix clarified that he personally felt there was not enough discussion leading to some votes. After a vote was taken, he was obliged to enforce it, but no issue was ever dead. There was no contradiction in saying that, while he supported and would abide by a decision, he still felt it needed to be change.

Imker said there were two rational choices, to support the decision or to not support the decision and step aside. He said the Mayor was taking the irrational approach of becoming obstructive and confrontational when he did not get his way. No one else on Council was getting the City sued, being deposed regarding statements they had written, or was being personally sued. It said a lot about what was going on in the City, and they were being led by someone who needed to change his ways.

Haddix interjected that there was no lawsuit against the City caused by him.

Laurie Farmer said she commended whoever put the resolution on the agenda. She was tired of the drama and embarrassed by it. She wanted to see teamwork on Council. If there was a 3-2 vote, they should move forward and stop the whining. They had been elected to work together, and that was not happening. She did not like what she was seeing, and wanted each of them to have an equal vote. If the majority voted for an issue, that was the way the City should move forward.

Tom Langley said he lived across from the former Mayor about whom Haddix had made comments. He said, when someone made asinine comments about a person, they deserved to be sued. Haddix should never have made the comments, true or not, and they had made him very angry.

Steve Brown (Fayette County Board of Commissioners) said working together was important. He had talked to all the members, and they were pretty like-minded, but personalities were getting in the way. He said there were a lot of good things that could happen, and they had the ability to do it. Negativity in the paper was a given – someone had written that Brown was beating his children when he ran for the County Commission. If elected officials based all their decisions on what appeared in the paper, which had to sell ads, they were in trouble. The first amendment of the United States Constitution gave everyone the right to their opinions. Council could disagree, but had to move on. An opposing view was not necessarily a negative position in the view of the community, and everyone was entitled to their own opinions.

Brown said, as a County Commissioner, he agreed with some of the Mayor's comments about the FCDA. Fayette was lagging behind, and the FCDA had prevented Georgia State University from putting a campus in Fayette because the chairman served on the Clayton State board. Negativity happened. As Mayor, Brown had a long battle about the extension of TDK Boulevard, and he was very negative and lost future elections due to that. However, his successor, near the end of his term, said the road was not in the best interests of Peachtree City.

Brown continued that proposing a change from the ARC was another example, when everyone maintained the status quo but the region was a disaster. Chairman Frady now agreed Fayette was becoming a donor county, and it was not a sin to look at different options. Mayor Steel of Fayetteville was spreading the rumor that Mayor Haddix was dividing the region, but the region was divided before Haddix ever took office. When Brown attended meetings with the County Commissioners from around the region, he asked their thoughts on the 2012 referendum and asked about their thoughts about Don Haddix, the majority did not know who the man was. Brown asked Council not to proceed with the resolution. He said the discussion that evening had provided a good venting session and had allowed them to get their emotions out. He asked them to pledge to work together in the future, and move forward for the community.

Caren Russell said she took offense at Brown's blaming **The Citizen** headlines when much of the problem was direct quotes from Mayor Haddix. She said it was not a matter of differing opinions, but of how those issues had been made personal by Mayor Haddix.

Randy Boyett said he did not think this was a matter of personalities, but of what was in the best interests of the City. Misrepresentation and manipulation in black and white were detrimental to the City, and the Council was taking the right action.

Bernie Ortman said companies looking at moving needed to see the City polished and looking good, and he did not think a censure helped that cause. Even though there were five individuals on Council, they should function as one entity, and right now they were not functioning.

Steve Allen said he had attended that evening hoping the focus would be on business development. He said that, when the censure was read, something did not feel right, and asked who was the arbiter of confidence, integrity, and best interest. The citizens were the arbiters of those issues, and the censure was overriding the voters. Freedom of speech was the core of this country. He was from Chicago, which had a lot of political issues, but was still a

wonderful city. Allen asked who determined what was allowed to be said, based on the censure, and said one group of Council was telling another group they had to go along with the majority. That action set a dangerous precedent that might feel good at the moment, but Council should step back and realize they were putting a limit on freedom of speech.

Mike King said he had never been more ashamed of the City and its government. The censure did not take away the Mayor's freedom of speech, and the Mayor would not change. The censure was a reprimand, and it was due. King asked all five of the elected officials to accept responsibility for part of the reprimand because the whole group had brought things to this point.

Maryann Grove said she was ashamed of the Council. She said the Mayor and Imker needed to take the issue outside. She had raised children and had businesses here, and the controversy broke her heart. When people had differences, they worked them out. Censuring the Mayor sent a horrible signal.

Haddix said there were a lot of points to think about and consider.

Sturbaum called the question. Learnard asked what that meant, and Sturbaum said that meant that they moved forward with the vote. Imker said he was not ready to vote and said there were more comments to be made. Haddix seconded the motion. Motion failed 2-3 (Fleisch, Learnard, Imker).

Imker said not censuring was condoning the actions leading up to that evening. He was not prepared to condone the fabrications against him that had been going on for a year. He was always on the defensive. He read about things and brought them to Council. He did nothing behind people's backs, and did not write negative things in the paper or lower himself by debating the negativity or fabrications point by point. Imker said the citizens read the papers, and 90% thought something was true because it was in the paper and he had not responded.

Imker said there had been so much said about him in the paper recently, and so much was untrue, that it was disheartening to him. It all began with one person, the Mayor, who had disagreed with Imker about DAPC the previous year and could not move on. Imker said he was going to start calling out the names and lies every time he heard them. He did not go on the blogs and debate people who were anonymous. If residents wanted information, he encouraged them to ask Council. He was fed up with the negativity and was not going to take it any more. He said it had better stop, and the public would not see anything written by him on this issue in the paper. He could not say that for the Mayor. He felt the Mayor would write again to give his side because he was never wrong and always had to have the last word.

Imker said he knew it sounded like a personality issue between him and the Mayor, but he did not know how else to explain the problem. He was not going to be discouraged from his mission to steer the City toward financial security. If the Mayor quoted that Imker had made a promise, he should include the time and place that Imker made it or he would suffer the consequences. Imker felt everything he had done was in the best interests of the City, and 99% of the time was in the best financial interests of the City, the citizens, and their tax dollars. Every time he turned around, he was seeing another misrepresentation of what he was doing, and it started with the Mayor. This was his vote to change direction. He did not know if it would be successful, but it would not deter him from his course.

Learnard said she was glad there were students attending the meeting that night and cautioned them that they would have to become critical thinkers and ask, "Is this true? How do I know it is true?" She urged them to take that extra minute to look for the truth.

She showed the current issue of **The Citizen**, which included the headline, "Imker moves to kill the Development Authority," saying the article read that Imker wanted to convince his fellow City Council Members that the City should get rid of the DAPC. She asked Imker if he had been interviewed for that news story. Imker said he had not been interviewed and would neither make such a motion nor second it.

Learnard said just because something was in the newspaper did not mean it was true. The students could not believe everything they heard or read, and had a responsibility to look deeper.

Learnard concluded that Council was between the proverbial rock and a hard place. Censuring a mayor was a very sad and huge event, and she did not like it or want to be having the conversation. However, censure was nothing more than a public rebuke. It did not compel him to change if he did not decide to do it himself. She said she was tired of telling citizens she did not know what else to do, but she honestly did not know what else to do.

Learnard moved to adopt the resolution to censure Mayor Haddix. Fleisch seconded. Motion carried 3-2 (Haddix, Sturbaum).

Haddix said he was not going to write a column on this issue. What had been said was in the past, and putting out anything further was meaningless.

Council/Staff Topics

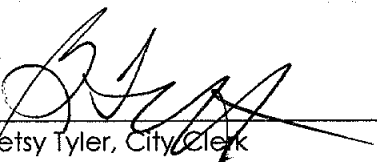
Pennington said the Lake McIntosh Project was moving along with a projected completion of late 2011 or early 2012, with about a year for the lake to fill.

The big issue currently was the problem with the brick facing on the rear stairwell of the Library. The City now had the detail needed to develop specifications for the repairs so the entrance could be reopened. Pennington thanked City Engineer Dave Borkowski, Public Services Director Mark Caspar, and the other staff members who had been working hard to get the issue resolved.

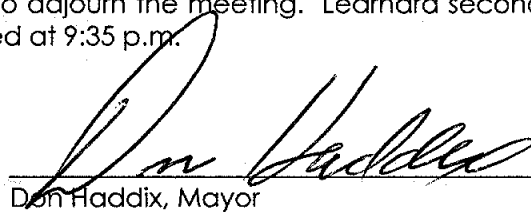
Meeker said Council had several topics for executive session. Sturbaum moved to convene in executive session for acquisition of real estate, personnel, and threatened or pending litigation. Learnard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Sturbaum moved to reconvene in regular session at 9:33 p.m. Learnard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business, Sturbaum moved to adjourn the meeting. Learnard seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.



Betsy Tyler, City Clerk



Don Haddix, Mayor