

Gatlinburg City Commission

August 6, 2024

Meeting Minutes

The Gatlinburg Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, August 6, 2024, at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Room. All the members were present. Mayor Mike Werner called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Finance Director Robert Holt gave the Invocation.

Mayor Werner then called for a motion to approve the Minutes of the regular meeting of July 16, 2024. Commissioner Jay Horner made a motion to approve the Minutes which was seconded by Vice Mayor Mark McCown and then unanimously adopted.

Regarding Petitions and Communications from the Public, Mayor Werner presented a Certificate of Recognition to the 2023-24 Gatlinburg-Pittman High School Boys Soccer team for winning the 2024 TSSAA Class A State Championship in May.

Regarding Reports of Boards and Committees, the Gatlinburg Convention and Visitors Bureau Second Quarter Report was presented by President/CEO Chad Netherland. Mr. Netherland reported that over the period of the quarter that he and his staff held several key meetings, including one with Sevier County and its sister cities and Dollywood about a co-operative marketing venture in the Washington, DC market, as well as attending a tourism conference. Mr. Netherland also reported that he met with the GCVB Executive Team on a marketing plan to help alleviate the soft visitation and that he will be presenting this plan to the business community on August 21 at 3 p.m. at the Convention Center. Mr. Netherland also reported that digital users on Gatlinburg.com, the Visit Gatlinburg app, and Visit Gatlinburg social media were up over the period of the second quarter. Additionally, Mr. Netherland reported that the Public Relations team made 16 appearances in television markets in the second quarter and hosted CBS News' Steve Hartman's appearance in Gatlinburg in May. In regard to the Convention Center, Mr. Netherland reported that the facility hosted 59 events in the second quarter, compared to 67 in the same quarter last year, however, building attendance was up seven percent. Commissioner Reagan asked about the Washington, DC marketing cooperative and Mr. Netherland replied that a marketing campaign on transit buses, trains, digital media and television directs users to SmokiesFun.com and that this is the third year that this campaign has been used in the market and that the GCVB has seen its highest conversion rates for vacation guide requests.

The City Manager reported and/or requested:

- (1) that he would like to advise that the status update of the ongoing Capital Projects have been placed at their seats for review; and,
- (2) that he wanted to announce that the City launched its mobile app on Friday, August 2, which is designed to enhance communications between the City and its citizens and visitors and that the app features information about the City and its Departments, while allowing for push notifications to communicate important information; and,
- (3) that he would like to announce that the Gatlinburg Community Center reopened on August 5 after being closed for its annual maintenance week and that during this closure the wooden floors were cleaned and refinished, fresh coats of paint were applied and various other jobs were completed to help ensure the facility operates safely and efficiently for all patrons; and,

(4) that he wanted to commend the Gatlinburg Police Department and Gatlinburg Fire Departments for holding successful Kids Camps the past two weeks; and,

(5) that he wanted to remind everyone that the City, the Smokies BearWise Taskforce, the TWRA, and the National Park Service will be holding a Bear Management Education Open House on August 13 at the American Legion Building from 9:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Old Business:

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2616, AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE, BEING AN ORDINANCE TO RECLASSIFY PARCELS 17.01, 18, 18.01, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 25.01, 25.02, 26 AND 27 OF TAX MAP 127I, GROUP A, LOCATED ON SILVERBELL AND WEST LOOP ROAD, FROM R1-A (LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) DISTRICT TO R-1 (LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) DISTRICT, Public Hearing and Second Reading. (Passed First Reading 7/16/24 and Planning Commission 6/20/2024)

Item A under Old Business was Ordinance Number 2616, amending the Zoning Ordinance, being an Ordinance to reclassify Parcels 17.01, 18, 18.01, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 25.01, 25.02, 26 and 27 of Tax Map 127I, Group a, located on Silverbell and West Loop Road, from R1-A (Low Density Residential) District to R-1(Low Density Residential) District, Public Hearing and Second Reading. (Passed First Reading 7/16/24 and Planning Commission 6/20/2024). Commissioner Chad Reagan made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. Mayor Werner then opened the Public Hearing and after no comments were made, the Public Hearing was closed. The motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading was unanimously approved.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2617, AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2023, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2024, Second Reading (Passed First Reading 7/16/24).

Item B under Old Business was Ordinance Number 2617, amending the Appropriation Ordinance for the First Year beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2024, Second Reading, (Passed First Reading 7/16/24). Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading was unanimously approved.

(c) Ordinance Number 2618, AN ORDINANCE MAKING AND FIXING THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION FOR THE SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE CITY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2024, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, AND TO CARRY FORWARD APPROPRIATIONS FOR PRIOR YEAR ENCUMBRANCES, Public Hearing and Second Reading (Passed First Reading 7/16/2024).

Item C under Old Business was Ordinance Number 2618, an Ordinance making and fixing the Annual Appropriation for the several Departments of the City for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025, and to carry forward appropriations for the prior year encumbrances Public Hearing and Second Reading (Passed First Reading 7/16/2024). Vice Mayor McCown made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. Mayor Werner then opened the Public Hearing and after no comments were made, the Public Hearing was closed. The motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading was unanimously approved.

New Business:

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING AN AMBULANCE BILLING CONTRACT WITH AMERICAN MEDICAL BILLING (AMB).

Item A under New Business was discussion and consideration of an Ambulance Billing Contract with American Medical Billing (AMB). Vice Mayor McCown made a motion to approve the Contract which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The City Manager explained that AMB has provided ambulance billing services for the City for the last several years and that the proposed Contract would be effective September 1, 2024, and would be for a three-year period, with a three-year renewal period. The City Manager also explained that the Fire Chief has reviewed this proposed Contract and recommends its approval. Following these comments, the motion to approve the Contract was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 1017, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE JUDY HOUSLEY "SAFETY PARTNERS" LOSS CONTROL MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM.

Item B under New Business was Resolution Number 1017, a Resolution authorizing the City to participated in the Judy Housley "Safety Partners" Loss Control Matching Grant Program. Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Resolution which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. The City Manager explained that this is a Public Entity Partners program and that the City anticipates receiving \$3,000, which would be used to offset the cost of Fire/Shelter Blankets for the Fire Department to use when fighting fires, as well as bullet proof vests for the Police Department. The City Manager further explained that once the grant has been awarded, Public Entity Partners will inform the City of the amount that can be submitted for reimbursement for FY 2024-25 expenditures and will be refunded at a 50 percent match. Commissioner Reagan asked if the City would have to spend \$3,000 up front and the Finance Director explained that the City would spend \$6,000 and get \$3,000 reimbursed and that the City has participated in this program for several years. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Resolution was unanimously approved.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2619, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND TITLE 5, CHAPTER 9 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE REVISIONS FOR THE APPROVAL OF CONTRACTS, CHANGE ORDERS TO CONTRACTS AND SINGLE BIDS, First Reading.

Item C under New Business was Ordinance Number 2619, an Ordinance to amend Title 5, Chapter 9 of the Municipal Code and further being an Ordinance to make revisions for the approval of Contracts, Change Orders to Contracts and Single Bids, First Reading. Commissioner Reagan made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by Vice Mayor McCown. The motion to adopt the Ordinance was unanimously approved on first reading.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2620, A PROPERTY TAX LEVYING ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2024, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, First Reading.

Item D under New Business was Ordinance Number 2620, a Property Tax Levying Ordinance for the City for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025, First Reading. Vice Mayor McCown made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. Vice Mayor McCown asked to affirm that there was no increase in the property tax rate and the City Manager stated that there was no increase. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2621, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 3-202 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE ADDRESSING COURT ADMINISTRATION AND SECTION 3-303 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE ADDRESSING ISSUANCE OF SUMMONSES AND FAILURE TO APPEAR, FIRST READING.

Item E under New Business was Ordinance 2621, an Ordinance to amend Section 3-202 of the Municipal Code addressing court administration and sections 3-303 of the Municipal Code addressing issuance of summonses and failure to appear, First Reading. Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by Vice Mayor McCown. The City Manager explained that these increases in court-related fees and charges were discussed at the Budget Presentation on July 11 and that when compared to Sevier County and its other municipalities, it was apparent that the City needed an increase in these charges. The City Manager also explained that these increases are also recommended by the Police Chief. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF MAKING AN APPOINTMENT TO THE MUNICIPAL BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS.

Item F under New Business was discussion and consideration of making an appointment to the Municipal Board of Zoning Appeals. Vice Mayor McCown made a motion to appoint Jerry McCarter to the Municipal Board of Zoning Appeals and was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The motion to appoint Jerry McCarter to the Municipal Board of Zoning Appeals was unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF DECLARING CERTAIN CITY ITEMS AS SURPLUS.

Item G under New Business was discussion and consideration of declaring certain City Items as surplus. Commissioner Horner made a motion to declare the items as surplus which was seconded by Vice Mayor McCown. Mayor Werner stated that Commissioners had a list of items in their agenda package. The Finance Director explained that most of the items were vehicles, along with various items from different City departments. Commissioner Reagan asked if the items would be auctioned off and the Finance Director replied that these items would be sold online. Following these comments, the motion to declare the items as surplus was unanimously adopted.

UNSCHEDULED ITEMS:

Commissioner Jay Horner

- (1) Stated that he wanted to congratulate the Gatlinburg-Pittman High School soccer team and thanked them for coming to the meeting tonight.

Commissioner Kirby Smith

(1) Stated that he also wanted to offer his congratulations to the Gatlinburg-Pittman High School soccer team.

Commissioner Chad Reagan

(1) Stated that he also wanted to congratulate the Gatlinburg-Pittman High School soccer team for their State Championship; and,

(2) Asked that everyone keep school staff and administration in their prayers as the school year starts on August 8.

Mayor Mike Werner

(1) Stated that he wanted to extend his sympathy to Commissioner Horner on the recent passing of his mother; and,

(2) Stated that he wanted to extend his congratulations to the Gatlinburg-Pittman High School Soccer team for their State Championship.

There being no further business to come before the City Commission, Commissioner Horner made a motion to adjourn. Vice Mayor McCown seconded the motion which was unanimously adopted.


Mike Werner, Mayor

Greg Patterson, City Recorder
/sb