

The Gatlinburg Board of Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 16, 2021, at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Room. All members were present except for Mayor Mike Werner. Vice Mayor Mark McCown called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Finance Director Robert Holt gave the Invocation.

Vice Mayor McCown then called for a motion to approve the Minutes of the regular meeting of January 16, 2021. Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the Minutes which was seconded by Commissioner DeSear and then unanimously adopted.

There were no Petitions or Communications from the Public.

Regarding Reports of Boards and Committees the Gatlinburg Convention and Visitors Bureau Fourth Quarter Report presentation was made by President/CEO Mark Adams. Mr. Adams reviewed highlights of the 2020 Fourth Quarter along with an overview of the events and activities for the entire year. Mr. Adams explained that the main goal was to keep visitors and staff safe amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic. Mr. Adams said financially that the year was a success in 2020 and that the CVB was able to remain competitive due to a special allocation from the City as well as CARES Act funding. Mr. Adams also reviewed Human Resources and explained that the organization has 34 current employees, which is down 12 from a year ago, due to shifting of needs in the Special Events Department. Mr. Adams also reported positive developments in the Sales area of the report, noting that 58 events were held in 2020 and between May 2020 and December 2020, the Sales team booked 13 new events that were not on the schedule before the Pandemic and that he was encouraged by the Sales staff booking \$1.3 million in future business and also \$194,000 of new event Convention Center business for 2021, while noting that the Sales team keeps clients informed with quarterly emails regarding new renovations and expansions to the Convention Center, and that the Sales team is already booking the new space. Mr. Adams also said that with the Pandemic, the Events Division regrouped and came up with new type of events such as the Gatlinburger week, which received accolades on local and regional television. Mr. Adams also reported that in 2020 Gatlinburg.com set a record for 5 million visits and that the Visit Gatlinburg Facebook page reached 124 million individuals. He also noted that 2020 marked the first year that the organization assumed operations of the Convention Center. The Building Manager Scott Murphy then reported that the Convention Center hosted 35 events and was one of the first Convention Centers in the country to earn the Global BioRisk Advisory Council's STAR Accreditation.

Commissioner Ryan DeSear asked that if there were enough funds for advertising with new visitors from new markets coming to Gatlinburg in 2020. Mr. Adams responded that there is a concern as other destinations reopen in 2021 that there will be more competition and that he has been in contact with the City Manager to develop a plan to show where additional funds could be utilized. Commissioner DeSear asked if Mr. Adams will be come before City Commission with a request for additional funding to which the City Manager replied that he will be bringing a plan soon for City Commission to review.

The City Manager reported and/or requested:

- (1) that she would like to announce the reintroduction of Sparkle Days to help in the clean up of commercial and residential properties in time for the Spring and Summer season and that March 22-26 will be focused on commercial areas, with the week of April 12-16 related to residential areas. She explained that the City's Sanitation Department will pick up free of charge items not normally included in garbage collection and neighborhood residents are encouraged to form large litter pick up groups and the Recreation Department will provide large garbage bags for that purpose and also collect them from City roadsides. She also explained that this will also be an opportunity for businesses to clean exterior areas of their buildings, as well as do any needed repair or repainting to freshen up the aesthetics of the building, along with coming into compliance with sign regulations; and,
- (2) that she would like to announce that the Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts invites everyone to experience the 20th Sevier County Biennial Juried Exhibition which began on February 15 and runs through April 23. The Exhibition is available to the public by appointment only and online and that reservations for parties up to four individuals can be made on the Arrowmont website; and,
- (3) that she would like to report on the status of several Projects. These Projects include Glades Road Water & Sewer Extension, Rattlesnake Hollow Waterline Installation, Parking Garage Digital Signage, Mynatt Park ADA Accessibility, Campbell Lead and Aquarium Parking Garage Slope repairs, Highway 321 Multimodel Project and the Winterfest Lights Warehouse Construction.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING THE RENEWAL OF THE HUMANA MEDICAL INSURANCE.

Item A under New Business was Discussion and Consideration of approving the renewal of the Humana Medical Insurance. Commissioner Chad Reagan made a motion to approve the renewal, which was seconded by Commissioner Don Smith. The City Manager explained that this item was discussed at Mid-Year Fiscal Review and that Humana has offered the renewal of the plan with no rate increase. Commissioner DeSear asked if the Plan included Vision insurance and the Finance Director replied it did. After these comments, the motion to approve the renewal of the Humana Medical Insurance Plan was unanimously adopted.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING THE RENEWAL OF THE BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD DENTAL INSURANCE PLAN.

Item B under New Business was discussion and consideration of approving the renewal of the BlueCross BlueShield Dental Insurance Plan. Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the renewal, which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. The City

Manager explained that BlueCross BlueShield offered the renewal of the plan with no rate increase. After these comments, the motion to approve the renewal of the BlueCross BlueShield Dental Plan was unanimously adopted.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2565, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 15-607 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO CHANGE THE PARKING RATES FOR USAGE AT THE AQUARIUM, FRED W. MCMAHAN (PARKWAY) AND BISHOP LANE FACILITIES, FIRST READING.

Item C under New Business was Ordinance Number 2545, an Ordinance to add amend section 15-607 of the Municipal Code and further being an Ordinance to change the parking rates for the usage at the Aquarium, Fred W. McMahan (Parkway) and Bishop Lane facilities, first reading. Commissioner DeSear made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading, which was seconded by Commissioner Smith. The City Manager explained that the proposal is to have a flat \$8 per visit rate which has been recommended with the automation of the Parking Garages and the Bishop Lane facility transition to permit parking only. The Finance Director explained that this proposed change to a flat rate was part of the recommendation from a parking consultant engaged by the City to make Parking Garages operations more efficient. After these comments, the Ordinance was unanimously adopted on first reading.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2566, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 16-402 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT NEW PROVISIONS WITH REGARD TO BUSINESS DIRECTIONAL SIGNS, FIRST READING.

Item D under New Business was Ordinance 2566, an Ordinance to amend section 15-402 of the Municipal Code and further being an Ordinance to adopt new provision with regard to Business Directional Signs, first reading. Commissioner Reagan made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading, which was seconded by Commissioner Smith. The City Manager explained that the purpose of this Ordinance is to incorporate changes to the fees for the placement of business directional signs on the City's directional sign structures. The City Manager also noted that the Ordinance increases the annual maintenance fee from \$25.00 to \$50.00 and also requires the initial cost of fabrication and installation to be paid by the applicant, regardless of the sign material type, rather than the previous flat fee. After these comments, the Ordinance was unanimously adopted on first reading.

UNSCHEDULED ITEMS:

Commission Ryan DeSear

- (1) Stated that we are seeing some light at the end of the tunnel with COVID-19 and that we need to remember those who have lost loved ones to the virus. He also noted that COVID-19 vaccinations are outpacing COVID-19 deaths; and,
- (2) Stated that he wished to congratulate the Gatlinburg-Pittman Junior High girls basketball team on their third place finish in the recent State Tournament; and,
- (3) Stated that he wished to congratulate the Sevier County School System on the new Gatlinburg-Pittman High School facility which is beautiful.

Commission Chad Reagan:

- (1) Stated that he wished to offer his condolences on the recent passing of Bud and Katie Lawson.

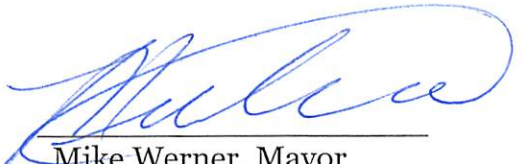
Commission Don Smith:

- (1) Stated that he was glad for City Commission to be meeting in a live setting.

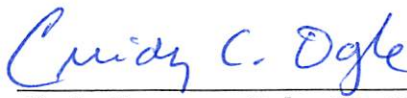
Vice Mayor McCown:

- (1) Stated that Mayor Werner had minor surgery yesterday which was the reason for him to not be here this evening and offered his well wishes for a speedy recovery; and,
- (2) Stated that Bud Lawson was a business leader and a Chamber Ambassador, and a former City Commissioner and he will be missed and offered prayers for his family.

There being no further business to come before the City Commission, Vice Mayor McCown adjourned the meeting.



Mike Werner, Mayor



Cindy Cameron Ogle, City Recorder
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