



REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY MARCH 8, 2021 @ 6:00 PM

CHERRYVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

411 E. CHURCH ST. CHERRYVILLE, N.C. 28021

The Honorable Mayor H.L. Beam called the meeting to order. Councilmember's Jill Puett, Gary Freeman, Malcolm Parker, and Jon Abernethy were present. City Manager/Fire Chief Jeff Cash, City Clerk Paige H. Green, City Attorney Palmer Huffstetler Jr., Police Chief Cam Jenks, Public Works Director Brandon Abernathy, and Water Plant Superintendent Patty Hall were also present. There was no media coverage.

INVOCATION: PASTOR BOB HOLTSCLAW, MISSIONARY METHODIST CHURCH:

Pastor Bob Holtsclaw gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Everyone stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

Councilmember Abernethy made a motion to approve the agenda as written. Councilmember Parker seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Councilmember Puett made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 8 city council meeting the February 8 closed session meeting, and the February 23 work session meeting. Councilmembers Parker and Abernethy seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS:

"My first comment this evening, will be to remind any of our citizens that would like to be heard during the "Citizens to be heard" time prearranged on our agenda to please call 704-435-1730 and you may be placed on hold by the person manning the phone, but you will be allowed to speak at the allotted time.

On February 22, the Gaston Business Association hosted the quarterly Mayor/City Manager Meeting by virtual zoom. Our City Manager Cash was attending another meeting that conflicted with this one and was unable to attend so I represented our city at this meeting. All cities or municipalities within the county were represented with the exception of Bessemer City. Each person attending was given the opportunity to speak on topics concerning their government. I was the first to speak and I spoke on many of our city projects such as: The passing of our bond referendum

The electrical upgrades to downtown

The overhaul and redesign of our skate park

The new Taco Bell under construction

The recent purchase and remodeling of the old Carolina Freight

The upgrading of our website and all social media outlets

Our City Manager's informational session "Mondays with the Manager" on our social media.

The developer who has purchased three buildings on Main Street that he is going to reinvent for office/retail space downstairs and apartments upstairs.

Also the two developers looking at property in our city to develop two separate 48-unit apartment complexes.

I concluded with the announcement of our Covid-19 vaccination clinic at our fire department through Kintegra Health.

The City of Cherryville will be holding a COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic on March 12, 2021. The clinic will be held at the Cherryville Fire Department and the vaccinations will be administered by Kintegra Health. Vaccinations are currently available for Healthcare Workers, Individuals ages 65 & older, School/Child Care Essential Workers, and Frontline Essential Workers (in person at work). To register, please visit:

<https://kintegrahealth.simpletix.com/e/65194>.

This past Wednesday, I attended a meeting hosted by the NC League of Municipalities held through zoom from 5 p.m. until 6:45 p.m. Many topics were discussed, but the major emphasis was on the access of dark fibers for Broadband distribution throughout our state. It was noted that slow and unreliable internet service threatens educational opportunities and the economic future of entire communities. Over 130 community leaders participated in this meeting.

Earlier today, I attended another virtual meeting hosted by Gaston Together. City Manager Cash and I had been selected to serve on the selection committee for the Gaston Vision 2040 Steering Committee. We are charged with selecting from 28 nominations, the future members to serve on this long-range vision for our county. This committee will have a major impact on our economic growth and community vitality. Identifying the Steering Committee to launch this process is paramount to the success of this endeavor. The City Manager and I were honored to contribute to the selection of this Committee.

Immediately at the conclusion of this steering meeting, I had to rush to our local fire department for another meeting with our County Commissioners Allen Fraley, Bob Hovis, Ronnie Worley, City Manager Jeff Cash, and County Planning and Zoning Director Brian Sciba. This meeting was rather lengthy and dealt with a power point presentation by Mr. Sciba addressing the impact of Piedmont Lithium and its operations within our county. City Manager Cash and I were given an invitation to attend the future County Commissioners Meeting when Piedmont Lithium does their presentation to the county. Results of this meeting will be discussed by City Council at a later time.”

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD: CITIZENS THAT WISH TO SPEAK MAY DO SO BY COMING TO THE PODIUM AND STATING YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS BEFORE YOU SPEAK. COMMENTS WILL BE HELD TO 5 MINUTES PER PERSON. (PLEASE SIGN UP WITH THE CLERK AT THE MEETING BEFORE THE MEETING BEGINS):

No citizens spoke.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEE’S YEARS OF SERVICE, MAYOR H.L. BEAM:

Mayor Beam recognized the following employee for her years of service to the City of Cherryville:

Kim Lancaster	20 Years
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SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF FIREFIGHTER BARRY HEAVNER’S RETIREMENT, MAYOR H.L. BEAM:

Mayor Beam recognized Barry Heavner on his retirement with the City of Cherryville. Barry retired on March 1, 2021 with 27 years of service as a driver engineer with the fire department.

PRESENTATION OF AUDIT, YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2020, MR. ROBERT ADAMS, MANAGING PARTNER, BUTLER & STOWE:

Mr. Robert Adams, Managing Partner with Butler & Stowe, gave a presentation of the audit ending June 30, 2020. Mr. Adams highlighted the following:

- Increase in net position of City to \$20, 356,523, increase of \$551,433 from prior year.
- Highlighted unassigned fund balance of \$782,293, available for Council use.
- Discussed decrease in debt of City by \$295,293 during year ended 6/30/2020.
- Report was issued in December 2020 and approved by the LGC in January.

CONSIDERATION OF FLOURIDE IN CITY WATER, WATER PLANT SUPERINTENDENT PATTY HALL:

Water Plant Superintendent Patty Hall approached the podium and asked that Council consider stopping the use of fluoride in city water. Mrs. Hall explained the dangers of fluoride and shared that she has not been able to use fluoride due to a leak in the fluoride tank. Mrs. Hall shared that the State no longer requires water plants to feed fluoride. Mrs. Hall shared that the City of Cherryville spends approximately \$10,000 annually on fluoride.

Councilmember Abernethy made a motion to rescind the resolution that was provided in the formal application to add fluoride to Cherryville’s water. Councilmember Freeman seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous. The Gaston County Health Department and the NC Department of Environmental Quality will be notified of this change by the City of Cherryville.

CONSIDERATION OF CITY DOG PARK, MAYOR H.L. BEAM:

Mayor Beam shared that he would like to see a dog park in Cherryville. Currently Westgate Park is closed. The park has been closed for some time and Mayor Beam feels like it would be the perfect place for a dog park. At the February 23 work session, Will Puckett President of the Little Ironmen, asked Council to consider adding a practice field at Westgate Park. Mayor Beam and Council were given materials showing them how other municipalities around Cherryville have dog parks and how popular they are.

City Clerk Paige Green reached out to the North Carolina League of Municipality (NCLM) the City’s insurance to find out how much the coverage would cost the city and ask about the liability of having a dog park. The NCLM responded, saying a dog park would cost the City of Cherryville \$345.00 a year and the NCLM stated that a dog park does increase a municipality’s liability. They suggested several steps that the city can take to mitigate exposure and put the city in a defensible position. Some of the steps the NCLM suggested were the design such as the height of fencing, double-gate entry, and separate areas for small and large dogs, regular maintenance, and posting of rules. The NCLM also provided a list of rules that they suggest the City of Cherryville should use.

Mayor Beam and Council reviewed pictures of other dog parks shared how popular they are. Some of the dog parks reviewed were Dallas Park, City of Gastonia, and Poston Park. The City of Gastonia have plans to add three more parks and Belmont is planning to add a dog park soon.

After some discussion, Councilmember Parker made a motion to direct staff to see if there is enough room at Westgate Park for both a dog park and a practice field. Councilmember Puett seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous. Public Works Director Brandon Abernathy will start this process and get back with Mayor Beam and Council.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Councilmember Parker shared that he would like to know why the utility bills were late. City Manager Cash will check and see why and get back to Councilmember Parker.

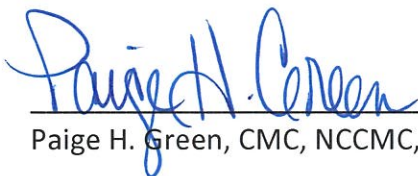
Councilmember Abernethy shared that he would like to discuss the Main Street Grant Program at the March 30 work session meeting. This will be on the work session agenda for March 30.

Mayor Beam commended the employees at public works for quickly picking up his curbside pick-up.

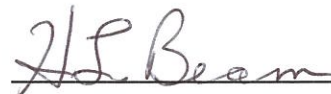
ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Puett made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmembers Freeman and Abernethy seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Adopted this 12 day of April 2021.



Paige H. Green, CMC, NCCMC, City Clerk



H.L. Beam, Mayor

