



Minutes of the Arlington City Council Meeting

September 21, 2020

Councilmembers Present: Mike Hopson, Michele Blythe, Jan Schuette, Marilyn Oertle, Jessica Stickles, Debora Nelson, and Don Vanney.

Council Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Mayor Barb Tolbert, Paul Ellis, Sarah Lopez, Tony Orr, Kristin Garcia, Jim Kelly, Marc Hayes, City Attorney Steve Peiffle, and Wendy Van Der Meersche.

Also Known to be Present: 22 YouTube viewers, Erica Knapp, Natalie Hollifield, Nathan Chabot, and Justin McConachie.

Mayor Barb Tolbert called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call followed.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Stickles moved to approve the agenda as presented. Councilmember Marilyn Oertle seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous vote.

INTRODUCTION OF SPECIAL GUESTS AND PRESENTATIONS

None.

PROCLAMATIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Erica Knapp, 6829 Bovee Lane, spoke regarding the upcoming discussion item – The City's Display of Banner Flags. Ms. Knapp stated that, in the past, she did fly the Thin Blue Line flag, and felt a sense of unity with others. Over the last few years she felt the symbolism of the flag change. She no longer feels a sense of unity. She fully supports police and is in favor of honoring the fallen. She asked for a unifying resolution to support and be involved in supporting the police department.

Natalie Hollifield, 17713 Hillside Court, spoke regarding the upcoming discussion item – The City's Display of Banner Flags. Ms. Hollifield stated she was afraid to speak tonight for fear of retaliation. She does not support the City flying the Thin Blue Line flag, or any other banner flag. She thanked Councilmembers who have taken anti-racism classes, and implored that the American flag be the only flag flying. She is in full support of the police department and believes there are many creative ways to show them support.

Nathan Chabot, 16101 Jordan Way, spoke regarding the upcoming discussion item – The City’s Display of Banner Flags. He stated that the Thin Blue Line flag seems to have a different meaning now than previously, and when the City has flown the flags down the street, it is like the City is speaking for all of the citizens by doing so. He doesn’t have a problem with people flying flags, but feels like the City should be encouraging people to come together as a community, and fly any other flags that others want flown. There are a wide variety of flags to fly to support other communities. And also other ways to show support for police. He hopes we can fly flags that show unity for everyone.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Jesica Stickles moved and Councilmember Marilyn Oertle seconded the motion to approve the Consent Agenda that was unanimously carried:

1. Minutes of the July 30 Council Retreat, August 3 and September 14, 2020 Council meetings and August 5, 2020 Special meeting
2. Accounts Payable:
Approval of EFT Payments and Claims Checks:
#100346 through #100459 dated August 4, 2020 through August 17, 2020 for \$604,995.40;
#100460 through #100578 dated August 18, 2020 through September 8, 2020 for \$952,031.77;
#100579 through #100713 dated September 9, 2020 through September 21, 2020 for \$519,239.74; and approval of Payroll EFT Payments and Checks:
#29560 through #29567 dated July 1, 2020 through July 31, 2020 for \$1,572,912.64;
#29568 through #29573 dated August 1, 2020 through August 31, 2020 for \$1,465,848.23
3. Contract for Banking Services
4. Resolution Waiving Bidding Requirements for Wastewater Purchase

PUBLIC HEARING

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Establish Online Marketplace to Support Small Businesses using CARES Act Funds

Community Revitalization Manager Sarah Lopez Council requested Council approve granting the Stilly Valley Chamber of Commerce a maximum amount of \$22,000 to contract with supportlocal.com to establish an online marketplace for Arlington businesses, and to also fund consulting to assist businesses with setup on the supportlocal.com website. Brief discussion followed with Ms. Lopez answering Council questions.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesica Stickles moved and Councilmember Marilyn Oertle seconded the motion to approve granting the Stilly Valley Chamber of Commerce a maximum amount of \$22,000 to contract with supportlocal.com, to establish an online marketplace for Arlington businesses, and to also fund consulting to assist businesses with setup on the supportlocal.com website. The motion passed unanimously.

Bid Award for Island Crossing Span Wire

Public Works Director Jim Kelly requested Council approve the bid for the SR 530 and Smokey Point Boulevard temporary traffic signal project. Brief discussion followed with Mr. Kelly answering Council questions.

Councilmember Jan Schuette moved and Councilmember Debora Nelson seconded the motion to award the SR-530 and Smokey Point Blvd Temporary Signal Project to Service Electric, in the amount of \$257,638.56, and authorized the Mayor to sign the Construction Contract, pending final review by the City Attorney. The motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance Establishing a Franchise Agreement with Puget Sound Energy (PSE)

Public Works Director Jim Kelly requested Council approve the ordinance for the Puget Sound Energy (PSE) Franchise Agreement to provide for the transmission, distribution and sale of natural gas within Arlington city limits. Brief discussion followed with Mr. Kelly answering Council questions.

Councilmember Jan Schuette moved and Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Stickles seconded the motion to approve the ordinance granting Puget Sound Energy a franchise for the transmission, distribution and sale of natural gas within Arlington city limits and authorized the Mayor to sign the agreement, pending final review by the City Attorney. The motion passed unanimously.

2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DOCKET ITEMS**1) Arlington Municipal Code Title 20 Zoning Revisions**

Community and Economic Development Director Marc Hayes requested Council approve the proposed changes to AMC Title 20, Chapter 20.36 Zoning Districts and Zoning Map (PLN#672).

Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Stickles moved and Councilmember Debora Nelson seconded the motion to approve the ordinance approving the proposed changes to AMC Title 20, Chapter 20.36 Zoning Districts and Zoning Map, and authorized the Mayor to sign the ordinance. The motion passed unanimously.

2) Airport Business Park Rezone

Community and Economic Development Director Marc Hayes requested Council approve the Airport Business Park Rezone (PLN#666).

Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Stickles moved and Councilmember Don Vanney seconded the motion to approve the ordinance approving the Airport Business Park Rezone, and authorized the Mayor to sign the ordinance. The motion passed unanimously.

3) Lot 19 Rezone

Community and Economic Development Director Marc Hayes requested Council approve the Lot 19 Rezone (PLN#663). Brief discussion followed with Mr. Hayes answering Council questions.

Mayor Pro Tem Jessica Stickles moved and Councilmember Debora Nelson seconded the motion to approve the ordinance approving the Lot 19 Rezone, and authorized the Mayor to sign the ordinance. The motion passed 6-1, with Councilmember Mike Hopson voting no.

4) Corner 9 Rezone

Community and Economic Development Director Marc Hayes requested Council approve the Corner 9 Properties, LLC Rezone (PLN#667).

Mayor Pro Tem Jesica Stickles moved and Councilmember Marilyn Oertle seconded the motion to approve the ordinance approving the Corner 9 Properties, LLC Rezone, and authorized the Mayor to sign the ordinance. The motion passed unanimously.

5) 31st Ave Rezone

Community and Economic Development Director Marc Hayes requested Council approve the 31st Avenue Rezone (PLN#662).

Mayor Pro Tem Jesica Stickles moved and Councilmember Debora Nelson seconded the motion to approve the ordinance approving the 31st Avenue Rezone, and authorized the Mayor to sign the ordinance. The motion passed 6-1, with Councilmember Mike Hopson voting no.

6) City of Arlington York Park Rezone

Community and Economic Development Director Marc Hayes requested Council approve the York Rezone (PLN#665). A lengthy discussion followed with Mr. Hayes answering Council questions.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesica Stickles moved to deny the ordinance approving the York Rezone. Councilmember Michele Blythe seconded the motion. The motion passed to deny the rezone, with Councilmembers Don Vanney, Michele Blythe, and Mike Hopson voting yes, and Councilmembers Debora Nelson, Marilyn Oertle, and Jan Schuette voting no. The motion passed 4-3.

7) Arlington Municipal Code Chapter 20.40-1 (permissible use table) (Land Use Code Amendment) (non-docket)

Community and Economic Development Director Marc Hayes requested Council approve the Land Use Code Amendment to AMC 20.40-1(PLN#729) non-docket item.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesica Stickles moved and Councilmember Michele Blythe seconded the motion to approve the ordinance approving the Land Use Code Amendment to AMC Chapter 20.40-1 (permissible use table), and authorized the Mayor to sign the ordinance. The motion passed unanimously.

8) National Foods Rezone (emergency non-docket)

Community and Economic Development Director Marc Hayes requested Council approve the National Foods Property Emergency Rezone Request (PLN #721) non-docket item.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesica Stickles moved and Councilmember Debora Nelson seconded the motion to approve the ordinance approving the emergency rezone for National Foods property, and authorized the Mayor to sign the ordinance. The motion passed unanimously.

9) NorthPoint Development Rezone (emergency non-docket)

Community and Economic Development Director Marc Hayes requested Council approve the NorthPoint Development Emergency Rezone Request (PLN#729) non-docket item.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesica Stickles moved and Councilmember Marilyn Oertle seconded the motion to approve the ordinance approving the emergency rezone for the NorthPoint Development property rezone, and authorized the Mayor to sign the ordinance. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Debora encouraged Councilmembers who voted against the York rezone, to take it as a challenge to make a change and come up with other options. A brief discussion followed.

Authorization to Commence Litigation

City Attorney Steve Peiffle requested Council authorize him to proceed with litigation for code enforcement purposes, relating to the property located at 3505 183rd Place NE.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesica Stickles moved and Councilmember Michele Blythe seconded the motion to authorize the City Attorney to commence a code enforcement lawsuit against the owners and occupants of the property at 3505 183rd Place NE. The motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

The City's display of banner flags

Mayor Barb Tolbert spoke regarding recent events concerning the City's display of the Thin Blue Line flag. She said she received emails, phone calls, and posts on social media, and will turn the item over to Council for discussion. She then asked City Administrator Paul Ellis to facilitate the discussion with Councilmembers. Mr. Ellis stated that he and City Attorney Steve Peiffle would listen to Councilmembers' direction for staff, and prepare information for them for review. Mr. Ellis then stated that Police Chief Jonathan Ventura was present to make a public statement.

Chief Ventura stated that he, the Mayor and Councilmembers had received many calls, emails, and social media posts debating the efficacy of flying the Thin Blue Line flag on Olympic Avenue during Police Week in May. He addressed statements posted on social media that he believed to be inaccurate. He stated that the City Council does support the police department, and he named several instances of Council's support over the years. He spoke of the symbolism of the Thin Blue Line, and he stated that he rejects any correlation between the symbol of the Thin Blue Line and the group that promotes racism, hate or bigotry. He spoke of the importance of removing barriers between the police department and community. He stated that managing everything during the last week regarding the Thin Blue Line flags has taken a lot of staff time and has caused a distraction. Most communication has been supportive, but time is better spent on other priorities. He expressed his thanks to the community members who have been supportive, and stated many different ways to support the police department. He recommended the City remove itself from the debate, and leave it up to the community to support the police in their own way, whether flying the flag on their own or in other ways. Because the flags hold great

significance to him and the officers in the department, he recommended transferring the donated Thin Blue Line flags to Arlington Police Officers Association (APOA) to distribute to members to share with supporters. Support has meant the world to him and to officers, especially during this challenging time. He stated that he wants to continue to work to remain worthy of the support, and that it was his pleasure to attend tonight and to answer any questions.

Mr. Ellis thanked Chief Ventura, and opened the matter up for discussion among the Councilmembers. Discussion followed.

Councilmember Don Vanney stated that because proclamations were made by both the Governor and the President of the United States to honor our law enforcement officials through the flying of the Thin Blue Line flag annually on May 15, as well as the week that that date proceeds in, he would like to see Arlington fly the Thin Blue Line flag on the streets of Arlington, as well as the following week, the Thin Red Line flag for firefighters, as well. On May 18, 2017, Congress designated October 28 as the National First Responders Day. This resolution honors all the police officers, firefighters, EMTs, and all those first on the scene in stressful situations.

Councilmember Don Vanney moved that these flags also be flown annually. Councilmember Michele Blythe seconded the motion.

Mayor Tolbert made Council aware that during this discussion item, Councilmember Vanney had made a motion. A brief discussion followed regarding a motion made during a discussion item.

City Attorney Steve Peiffle stated that Council has the right to take action on any agenda item, as well as amend the agenda to change a discussion item to an action item. He further stated that a motion should first be made to amend the agenda to change this discussion item to an action item, because Council approved the agenda, as presented. A brief discussion followed.

Mayor Tolbert asked Councilmember Vanney if he wanted to change, amend, or remove his motion, or make a motion to amend the agenda as presented. Councilmember Vanney stated he wanted to make a motion to change the agenda. Mr. Peiffle asked Councilmember Vanney if he wanted to make a motion to amend the agenda for the discussion item to become an action item.

Councilmember Vanney agreed. Councilmember Michele Blythe seconded the motion. The Mayor called for a vote to amend the agenda. Councilmembers Don Vanney and Michele Blythe voted yes. The motion failed 2-5. The agenda item remained a discussion item. Discussion followed. It was agreed that Mr. Ellis and Mr. Peiffle would prepare information taken from tonight's discussion, and bring it forward at a workshop for further discussion.

COMMENTS FROM COUNCILMEMBERS

Councilmember Jan Schuette asked how to submit comments regarding the City's display of Banner Flags. The Mayor asked that any comments be emailed to Mr. Ellis and Mr. Peiffle for review. They will gather all comments from Councilmembers.

ADMINISTRATOR & STAFF REPORTS

None.

MAYOR'S REPORT

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.


Barbara Tolbert, Mayor

