

**DeFuniak Springs City Council**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**Council Chambers**  
**May 10, 2021**

Mayor Campbell called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m. followed by the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Campbell called the roll. The following members were present: Mayor Bob Campbell; Mayor Pro-Tempore Todd Bierbaum (Seat 1); Councilmember Robert McKnight (Seat 2); Councilmember Kevin Crystal (Seat 3); Councilmember Henry D. Ennis (Seat 4); and Councilmember Anthony Vallee (Seat 5). Also present were City Attorney Clay Adkinson, Finance Director Debra Gibson, and City Clerk Maryanne Schrader.

**ITEM 3 - PRESENTATION –**

- A. Mayor Campbell – Laney Kelly, Teen Miss DeFuniak and Introduction of the 2021 Miss DeFuniak Springs and Miss Walton County Youth Ambassadors

Teen Miss DeFuniak Springs Laney Kelley introduced the DeFuniak Springs youth ambassadors to the Council, and Teen Miss Walton County Channing Coone introduced the Walton County Youth Ambassadors. Ms. Teresa Bogart was introduced as the spokesperson for the Youth Ambassadors.

- B. Mayor Campbell – Proclamation declaring the week of May 16 – 22, 2021 as National Public Works Week

Mayor Campbell asked Craig Drake, Public Works Director, to come forward to accept the proclamation.

**ITEM 4 - CONSENT AGENDA**

**Additions/Deletions** to the Consent Agenda  
**Approval** of the Consent Agenda

Mayor Campbell asked if there were any additions or deletions.

**Motion** by Councilmember T. Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember H. Ennis to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

**A. Clerk**

1. Minutes for approval: April 26, 2021 – Regular Minutes
2. Minutes for approval: April 19, 2021 – Special Meeting Minutes

- B. **Administration** –
- C. **Finance** – Utility Billing Supervisor Morgan Hulion - April 2021 Bill Ratification
- D. **Planning** – Motion to approve the Special Event Request from Scott Johnson to hold the Argyle Fire Department 5k run on Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 10:30 a.m. with street closures

## **5. REGULAR AGENDA**

**Additions/Deletions** to the Regular Agenda  
**Approval** of the Regular Agenda

Mayor Campbell asked if there were any additions/deletions to the Regular Agenda.

Mayor Campbell mentioned that the Parks Master Plan Grant application will be added and placed under Administration.

**Motion** by Councilmember T. Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember H. Ennis to approve the Regular Agenda, as amended.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

## **ITEM 6. DEWBERRY/ENGINEERING REPORT –**

- A. Wastewater Treatment Facility Expansion Project Update – Elissa Pettis - PowerPoint Presentation

Elissa Pettis introduced Dan Villhauer and Phillip Jones.

Elissa Pettis went over the need for a new facility. She mentioned the facility has received several citations and went over the problems with the existing facility. She hopes to obtain a USDA grant that will assist in correcting the problems.

Dan Villhauer went over the overview of the effluent in connection with Plant 1 and 2 and the Sprayfield site, as well as the expansion options. He reviewed why Option 2 was the preferred option, as it would cover the entire wastewater treatment facility, including the force main and pump station. He also mentioned the existing force main has had a history of breaks adding the new facility would be in a central site and have force main redundancy. He went over the process options, types of treatment options, and conceptual footprints, as well. He went over the cost comparisons for each option as well as operating costs. The estimated cost is \$57.5 million which includes the construction and ancillary costs.

Phillip Jones came forward to explain the Effluent Reuse options and with Option 2 that would give room for expansion. They would construct Rapid Infiltration Basins with a low operating cost with the option. He added they had to evaluate three options for the project.

K. Crystal asked about the full cost, and Dan Villhauer replied the cost was based on the current market. Discussion ensued on costs, census count, the high cost of sewer, and the need for a second WWTF to the south.

City Attorney Clay Adkinson advised that USDA Rural Development will only loan money based on current needs, as the plant to the south is a future need, it would not qualify yet. It will be a separate funding source. He mentioned the capacity fee has the ability to offset the connection rate. He added Rural Development does not typically expect a sizeable rate increase.

Dan Villhauer said they plan to develop a master plan to help determine timing and cost benefit analysis to make educated decisions to give to the developer. He mentioned they are looking at the existing facility. In the future as the flow increases, the Master Plan would determine whether the city needs an additional plant. He suggested creating a system-wide master plan. He added the city would need construction easements, and since the city owns the site, that would be all that is needed.

Dewberry, E. Pettis, said as development comes in, we do not have a plan for future growth. The Master Plan will help us be pro-active.

In response to Councilmember T. Bierbaum and his question about the violations on the current plant, E. Pettis replied they were maintenance items. Dan Villhauer added the existing equipment created violations and compliance violations, so it was a combination of operations and maintenance.

Stewart Duncan, Jacobs, said most of the violations were from inspections of over a year ago, and all of the items have been repaired and violations have since been corrected. They had to replace equipment, such as the blowers. Council voiced concern they were not made aware of the violations. Councilmember K. Crystal requested a copy of the violation and response letter, as there is a deadline for our response.

Discussion ensued on what needed to be added to the Master Plan. Councilmember T. Bierbaum said he would like to continue to look at the options for the two facilities in conjunction with development of the Master Plan.

City Attorney Clay Adkinson said the current facility has reached capacity. The city will need a funding source, and the State engineer will have options for the city. He added the city must do this upgrade. He suggested the impact fees should be included on the Master Plan for next agenda.

Discussion ensued on green programs and D. Villhauer said an upgrade in facilities could conserve demand needs.

#### B. DWSRF Asbestos Cement (AC) Watermain Replacement Proposal (2 min)

Cliff Knauer came forward to go over the SRF grant which will replace a large portion of lines. He mentioned \$237,000 was awarded for the planning portion of the study adding their proposal

is for \$188,750. He explained the high use areas are covered first mentioning they are replacing the original water mains. He provided a list of the lines they will be replacing adding the lines show no trace amounts of asbestos. They do routine testing requirements annually. C. Knauer said SRF reviews the planning report, models, and they will consider the project for funding and award based on cost estimates. He thinks it will take over a year, as it is about two to three miles of watermain.

Councilmember T. Bierbaum said he does not want a repeat of the issues that occurred on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street project and requested someone on-site to monitor. C. Knauer said community meetings are helpful to communicate with the citizens and suggested sod instead of seed and mulch. He added that during the design process, they would look at vegetation, so the lines would be moved if there is room in the right-of-way. He said criteria on the size of trees could be determined. There are also issues with roots invading the lines. Mayor Campbell said the need for utilities and the love of the trees have to be weighed.

**Motion** by K. Crystal and seconded by Councilmember T. Bierbaum to approve the engineering proposal for \$188,750.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

#### **ITEM 7. ADMINISTRATION - Parks Master Plan Grant application.**

**Motion** by Councilmember K. Crystal and Councilmember T. Bierbaum to move forward with the Parks Master Plan Grant application.

Councilmember R. McKnight asked about the areas for funding, and K. Chilcutt replied that it includes all the Parks in the city. Councilmember T. Vallee stated the priorities would be set later.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

#### **ITEM 8. CITIZEN COMMENTS**

A. General Comments from the audience - No one came forward.

#### **ITEM 9. REQUEST TO BE ON THE AGENDA – Nothing brought forward.**

#### **ITEM 10. LEGISLATIVE REQUESTS –**

A. Councilmember T. Vallee – Motion to direct staff to identify routes, viability, and funding sources for a West DeFuniak Bike and Walking Trail

Councilmember T. Vallee asked for staff to identify routes, viability, and funding sources for a West DeFuniak Bike and Walking Trail essentially around Baldwin. He mentioned the recent

biking and wheelchair fatalities. He said the plan is to create a multi-modal path, create connections with Baldwin, the airport, Highway 90 to include utilizing public lands and existing infrastructure. The key is taking bike and pedestrian traffic off of Highway 331. He said a bridge is anticipated for Highway 331, as we need to improve pedestrian safety. This is one step in funding a plan.

Councilmember K. Crystal asked which part of staff would handle it, and Councilmember T. Vallee suggested the grants department would research funding sources. Dewberry is also actively looking into the project, as well as the TPO as another funding source.

**Motion** by Councilmember T. Vallee and seconded by Councilmember T. Bierbaum to direct staff to identify routes, viability, and funding sources for a pedestrian Bike and Walking Trail.

Mayor Campbell suggested that staff reach out to other communities to ask how they have handled it.

Cliff Knauer said the Sidewalk Transportation Program helps with routes, a recreational trail program is available, and a Rails to Trails program are options to consider. He suggested adding it to the Master Plan. He mentioned the FRDAP program that offers \$50,000 with no match. This grant comes out in October. He will provide the dates to all of the programs.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

- B. Councilmember T. Vallee – Motion to direct staff to identify sites, viability, and funding sources for Reconstructed Wetland projects and a commitment from the City to consider reconstructed Wetlands as an alternative to facilities-based Wastewater Treatment Plant on all future wastewater expansion projects

Councilmember T. Vallee asked for consideration to direct staff to identify sites, viability, and funding sources for Reconstructed Wetland projects and a commitment from the City to consider reconstructed Wetlands as an alternative to facilities-based Wastewater Treatment Plant on all future wastewater expansion projects. He added it is tied in with the presentation we heard earlier. This helps raise property values, as it raises the quality of life.

**Motion** by Councilmember T. Vallee and seconded by Councilmember T. Bierbaum to consider reconstructed Wetlands as an alternative to facilities-based Wastewater Treatment Plant on all future wastewater expansion projects.

Councilmember R. McKnight said additional parks are a good environmental and socially responsible idea.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Motion** by Councilmember T. Bierbaum and seconded Councilmember K. Crystal to direct staff to provide information on staffing for future Wastewater Treatment plants.

Discussion ensued on staffing and whether contractors would research the information.

Dewberry, C. Knauer, said he could put together the staffing needs for the new facilities. He mentioned the newer facilities may be run from a remote location.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

#### **ITEM 11. AIRPORT – Reserved**

#### **ITEM 12. FINANCE – Finance Director D. Gibson – Overview of Fiscal Period ending April 30, 2021**

Finance Director D. Gibson went over the highlights and some issues with financing. She included investments, bonds, revolving funds, payables, capital leases, revenue bonds, operating revenues, operating expenses, grant revenues and voiced concern on reimbursement delays. She mentioned it is wonderful to have the grants, but we need to be careful because of the delays in reimbursements. She also went over expenses. She added the customer base is 4,935.

Finance Director D. Gibson added she met with the financial advisor from PFM, Jeremey. She thanked Council for meeting with PFM. Jeremey said given the current low interest rate, the fees would be paid with the loan fees.

**Motion** by Councilmember K. Crystal and Councilmember T. Bierbaum to direct staff and PFM to proceed with the process to refinance the bonds and go out for a Request for Proposals.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

Finance Director D. Gibson stated May 28<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for the Chelco building. She explained the Enterprise Fund supports our General Fund, and after looking it over, she does not think our General Fund can support the note. We would have to show that we are building up a reserve with no transfer to our General Fund. For the next agenda, she would like to discuss how to proceed with the Chelco purchase. She added there is no guarantee a bank would finance this purchase, stating our General Fund could not support this without a referendum.

Councilmember H. Ennis said he was against the purchase to begin with, as there are too many unknowns.

City Attorney Clay Adkinson said if Council asked for an extension, the city would have to show the Council was supportive. Bruce Naylor, Broker, said there is an interested party for the purchase of City Hall. They are indicating they are a serious buyer, as they are doing due diligence. The City Hall is listed as a contingency, so Chelco could be given that information to show the city is interested in purchasing the building.

Discussion ensued on the sale of City Hall, the condition of the current city Hall, the Chelco building and the length of time it would take to build a new building.

City Attorney Clay Adkinson said the item should be on the agenda for next meeting as no action should be taken tonight, as it was not on the agenda.

Finance Director D. Gibson said a special budget meeting will be held on Monday May 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss capital expenditures. Some of the topics will be a request for Council to provide their projects, vehicle purchases, non-profit financing, staffing, financing for sanitation and charging for debris pick up.

Mayor Campbell called for a recess for five minutes at 7:22 p.m. and resumed the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

#### **ITEM 13. PUBLIC WORKS – Reserved**

City Attorney Clay Adkinson mentioned the Planning items are for first reading, so no public hearing is required.

#### **ITEM 14. PLANNING –**

- A. Planning Director Chris Wallace – Request motion to approve on 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, schedule a Public Hearing and hold 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading for An Ordinance adopting a Small-Scale Land Use Map Amendment of the City of DeFuniak Springs Comprehensive Plan; Changing the Land Use Classifications; Repealing all Ordinances in Conflict herewith; Providing for Severability and Conflicts; Providing for Codification; and Providing for an effective date (Property located at 1667 Highway 83N)

Planning Director Chris Wallace went over the project that consists of about fifteen acres. He added that Code Enforcement had issued a citation for violation of clearing the site, as the owner did not have a permit. He has since stopped all work on the site. The Planning Board has reviewed the application and approved it to come forward to Council.

Councilmember R. McKnight voiced concern that we are taking residentially zoned land and changing the zoning to Industrial. He added the other areas are zoned residential. He said we do not have room for housing, but acknowledged the owner wants to expand his business.

Craig Thomas, owner, came forward, stating there are hundreds of developed lots in the city. However, the cost to build is so high, that the sale price cannot cover the cost of building. He said he wants to expand his operations that he has owned for over twenty-two years.

**Motion** by Councilmember T. Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember T. Vallee to approve on 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, schedule a Public Hearing, and hold second reading on June 14th for An Ordinance adopting a Small-Scale Land Use Map Amendment of the City of DeFuniak Springs Comprehensive Plan.

Planning Director C. Wallace responded to Councilmember T. Vallee that the property to the south is heavily vegetated, and the property to the west has park facilities.

In response to Councilmember K. Crystal and his question regarding adjacent landowners, Planning Director C. Wallace responded they did not receive any complaints except for one person asking what the project was going to be.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

City Attorney Clay Adkinson read the Ordinance by title with a number to be known at a later date.

- B. Planning Director Chris Wallace – Request motion approve on 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, schedule a Public Hearing, and hold 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading on June 14, 2021, An Ordinance adopting Zoning Map Amendment of the City of DeFuniak Springs Land Development Code; Changing the Zoning Designation; repealing all Ordinances in Conflict herewith; Providing for Severability and Conflicts; Providing for Codification; and Providing for an effective date (Property located at 1667 Highway 83 N)

**Motion** by Councilmember T. Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember T. Vallee to approve on 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, schedule a Public Hearing and hold second reading on June 14<sup>th</sup>, An Ordinance adopting Zoning Map Amendment of the City of DeFuniak Springs Land Development Code.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

City Attorney Clay Adkinson read the Ordinance by title with a number to be known at a later date.

- C. Planning Director Chris Wallace – Request motion to approve on 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, Schedule a Public Hearing and place on 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading for June 14th, An Ordinance adopting a Small-Scale Land Use Map Amendment of the City of DeFuniak Springs Comprehensive Plan; Changing the Land Use Classifications; Repealing all Ordinances in Conflict herewith; Providing for Severability and Conflicts; Providing for Codification; and Providing for an



effective date – (Property located on the east side of Highway 331 South, just south of Orange Avenue)

Planning Director Chris Wallace mentioned the property is heavily vegetated. Due to the amount of traffic, it is not desirable for a single-family home. He stated the Planning Board has reviewed the application and recommended approval.

Councilmember R. McKnight voiced concern about residential land on Orange Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street voicing concern about encroachment. Except for the car wash, the area is zoned single family. He added we need an update to the C-2 definition, as it contains language such as a prohibition on fortune tellers and clairvoyants.

Councilmember K. Crystal voiced concern about the speed limits. He added it is more valuable as commercial since it fronts a major highway. There is no ability for a turning lane, as there is no access. However, he voiced concern about a setting a dangerous precedent. We need to figure out how we are going to safely get people out of there.

In response to Councilmember T. Vallee and his question on lot width, Bruce Naylor passed around a survey.

Councilmember K. Crystal said we need something in place to mitigate accidents. Planning Director C. Wallace said one advantage is a left-hand turn would be eliminated, as there is a median.

Discussion ensued about the desirability of residential on Hwy 331. Councilmember T. Vallee added that multi-use may be an option adding a tree-lined turn lane is vital to our image and for pedestrian safety.

Bruce Naylor, Naylor Realty, he said regarding traffic, there is plenty of precedence for building on Highway 331 with access to one side. There is no debate of the highest and best use of the property for the property as commercial.

**Motion** by Councilmember T. Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember K. Crystal to approve on 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, Schedule a Public Hearing and place on 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading for June 14th, An Ordinance adopting a Small-Scale Land Use Map Amendment of the City of DeFuniak Springs Comprehensive Plan.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, nay; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 4, Nays 1. Motion carried.

City Attorney Clay Adkinson read the Ordinance by title with a number to be known at a later date.

D. Planning Director Chris Wallace – Request motion to approve on 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, schedule a Public Hearing and conduct 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading for June 14th,

An Ordinance adopting Zoning Map Amendment of the City of DeFuniak Springs Land Development Code; Changing the Zoning Designation; repealing all Ordinances in Conflict herewith; Providing for Severability and Conflicts; Providing for Codification; and Providing for an effective date – (Property located on the east side of Highway 331 South, just south of Orange Avenue)

**Motion** by Councilmember T. Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember K. Crystal to approve on 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, schedule a Public Hearing, and conduct 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading on June 14<sup>th</sup>, An Ordinance adopting Zoning Map Amendment of the City of DeFuniak Springs Land Development Code.

Planning Director C. Wallace said he sent out 204 letters to property owners within 1,000 feet of the property, in response to Councilmember T. Vallee. He added he received no phone calls.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.

City Attorney Clay Adkinson read the Ordinance by title with a number to be known at a later date.

**ITEM 15. POLICE** – Reserved

**ITEM 16. CITY ATTORNEY** – Reserved

**ITEM 17. STAFF REPORTS** – Pending Items

**ITEM 18. COUNCIL COMMENTS** – Councilmember T. Vallee mentioned he is excited about the work that Forward DeFuniak has done, as well as the LakeFest event.

**ITEM 19. EXECUTIVE COMMENTS** – Mayor Campbell announced the city manager is coming to visit on Friday and will participate in LakeFest. He plans to meet with staff on Monday and will depart on Tuesday.

Mayor Campbell mentioned the County requested a joint meeting to go over the proposed Mobility Plan.

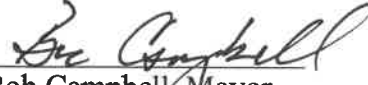
**Motion** by Councilmember T. Bierbaum and seconded by Councilmember K. Crystal to hold a Special Joint Meeting with Walton County Board of Commissioners on June 14<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. on the proposed Mobility Plan.

**Vote:** Councilmember R. McKnight, Aye; Councilmember T. Bierbaum, Aye; Councilmember K. Crystal, Aye; Councilmember H. Ennis, Aye; Councilmember A. Vallee, Aye. Ayes 5, Nays 0. All ayes. Motion carried.


**ITEM 20. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Campbell adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Approved:

  
Bob Campbell, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Minutes taken by Maryanne Schrader, City Clerk  
*Proper notice having been duly given*

