MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE NEWTON CITY COUNCIL
December 4, 2018 – 7 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Newton City Council was held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, December 4, 2018 at Newton City Hall.

PRESENT: Mayor Anne P. Stedman, Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver and Council Members Anne Wepner, Jody Dixon, Tom Rowe and Ed Sain

ABSENT: Council Member Jerry Hodge

STAFF: City Manager Todd Clark, City Clerk Amy S. Falowski, City Attorney John Cilley, City Department Heads and members of the management team

ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Anne P. Stedman welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

ITEM 2: OPENING Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Council Member Jody Dixon provided the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 3: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion duly made by Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver, seconded by Council Member Jody Dixon, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Regular Minutes of the November 6, 2018 City Council meeting be – APPROVED

ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Ed Sain, seconded by Council Member Anne Wepner, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Consent Agenda be – APPROVED

A. Tax Releases
B. Consideration of Amendment to Audit Contract to extend Date from October 31, 2018
C. Consideration of Budget Amendment to Recognize Revenue and Authorize Expenditure for Capital Purchase – Police Vehicle
D. Consideration of the 2019 Regular City Meeting Schedule, Workshop Schedules

(Ordinances, Resolutions and Proclamations are hereby referenced and on file in the Office of the City Clerk)

ITEM 5: COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: PEOPLE WHO WISH TO COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS ARE ASKED TO SIGN IN WITH THE CITY CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

Mayor Anne P. Stedman asked if anyone present would like to make comment concerning non-agenda items.

Michael Waltuch stated that the trucks from Renwood Mills that are parked on the street awaiting entry to the mill pose a very dangerous problem on North Brady. He asked if there is some way to ask the trucks
to not be so close to the intersection, as they block the view. He stated that he wasn’t sure what the solution is, but would like to try to find one. He stated that there would be more problems when the streetscape phase of North College starts. Mayor Stedman stated that staff is working with the mill to find a solution.

ITEM 6: Presentation

A. Economic Development Awards

Jennifer Stiver presented the 2018 Economic Development “Bright Future” Awards to the following:
Twin City Insurance – Under 100 employees award
Corning – Over 100 employees award
Luke Walling – Individual award

ITEM 7: New Business

A. Consideration to Eliminate Traffic Signals on Ashe Ave and Brady Ave

City Manager Todd Clark stated that Council member Jerry Hodge recently asked if there is value in the elimination of traffic signals at the intersections of A Street and Ashe Avenue, 1st Street and Ashe Avenue, and A Street and Brady Avenue.

Mr. Clark stated that traffic signals are used for a variety of reasons, but they are primarily intended to regulate the flow of traffic in generally high volume areas. Based on the observed number of accidents and the traffic flow and volume, staff believes traffic can be moderated just as easily with the use of stop signs as opposed to traffic signals. Additionally, the removal of the signals represents a financial benefit to the city through cost savings related to electrical expenses. Finally, the city regularly receives complaints from motorists concerning wait times at these intersections. Mr. Clark stated that elimination of the signals will satisfy these motorists, as wait times at stop signs will be less than at traffic lights based on the current traffic flow and volume.

Mr. Clark stated that the signals under consideration are operated by the City of Newton and therefore may be eliminated without the consultation or approval of NCDOT.

Mr. Clark stated that the recommended action is for City Council to discuss the elimination of traffic signals at the intersections of A Street and Ashe Avenue, 1st Street and Ashe Avenue, and A Street and Brady Avenue. Upon motion duly made by Council Member Ed Sain, seconded by Council Member Jerry Hodge, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

Mayor Stedman opened the matter for discussion. Council Member Jody Hodge stated that he has concerns. Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver stated that he would like to receive some more information on the matter at a later meeting. Council Member Ed Sain stated that he is not a fan of 4 way stops on A Street.

Mayor Stedman stated that she would like to see this item reviewed and placed on a future agenda.

ITEM 8: City Manager’s Report

Meetings & Events

- Dec 7th – Annual Employee Appreciation Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. – Rec Center
- Feb 5-8 – City Council/Staff Workshop 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- Feb 20-22 – ElectriCities Connections Summit – Raleigh, NC
Other Projects

• Leaf Collection ends January 18th
• Streetscape Update
• Police Chief Recruitment Process
• Gateway Entry Signs
• Signage at Central Rec Center (see photos)
• Splash Pad

ITEM 9: Questions and Comments from Mayor and Council

Mayor Stedman asked if there were any questions or comments from City Council.

Council Member Anne Wepner gave a report on the Newton-Conover Auditorium.

ITEM 10: Closed Session - Per North Carolina General Statutes 143-318.11(a)(3), 143-318.11(a)(6)

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Ed Sain, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That City Council enter CLOSED SESSION per General Statutes 143-318.11(a)(3), and 143-318.11(a)(6)

Motion was then made by Council Member Jody Dixon to return to open session, seconded by Council Member Ed Sain. All Ayes.

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Ed Sain, seconded by Council Member Anne Wepner, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That Employment Contract to Hire Full Time City Attorney, and to Hire a Full Time Paralegal be – APPROVED.

Upon motion duly made by Mayor Pro Tem John Stiver, seconded by Council Member Anne Wepner, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That a Lease Agreement Between the City of Newton and Ray G. Corne, for Property Located at 217 North Main Ave., Newton be - APPROVED.

ITEM 11: Adjournment

Upon motion duly made by Council Member Jody Dixon, seconded by Council Member Ed Sain, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

That the Meeting be – ADJOURNED

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Anne P. Stedman, Mayor

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Amy S. Falowski, City Clerk