

**HAVANA TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
January 26, 2021 6 pm**

Member(s) Present: Decorkus Allen, Eddie Bass, Nick Bert, Janice Hart, Warkeen Jordan, Jenny Stone and Dwight Vickers

Member(s) Absent:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Allen.

Invocation was led by Councilwoman Jordan followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion to approve the minutes from the December 15, 2020 Regular Council Meeting was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bert and seconded by Councilman Bass. Motion carried.

VISITORS:

Mrs. Terri Paul, President of Havana Main Street, inquired about updates for the proposed ordinances for the downtown business district and the completion date of the project for the paving downtown. Mr. Brad Johnson, Town Manager, advised the ordinances will go to the consultants for review. Apalachee Regional Planning Council (ARPC) was not available to meet with the council on today. A meeting/workshop will be scheduled. The paving on US 27 is a 120-day contract with Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The goal is to complete the project within three (3) months.

Mr. Tony Lombardo, Wanderings, made comments regarding the islands that were removed downtown. This was a major set back for the downtown area. The corner is the strategic intersection which is unique and attractive. He made a recommendation that the money spent be placed back into the Downtown Improvements budget. Mr. Johnson advised this is a Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) project for paving, utility upgrades/adjustments, etc. on US 27. The stormwater drains and inlets are also being replaced. The work had to be done.

Mr. Patel, Hinson Country Store, advised he is interested in starting a hotel business inside the town limits. There is property on US 27 behind Pizza Hut which is 1.3 acres of land. The hotel will accommodate approximately thirty (30) rooms. The problem is there is no sewer in the area. Mr. Johnson advised the proposed property is near Dollar General and there is a lift station that serves the shopping plaza. He advised Mr. Patel to submit a set of plans for consideration.

Ms. Andrea McGill, 105 Birch Street, addressed the council regarding the welcome sign/island south of town. She also made comments regarding Waste Pro garbage pickup.

OLD BUSINESS:

N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Johnson stated it is now time to approve the Consumer Price Index (CPI) fee for Waste Pro and advised the fee is consistent with the contract. Councilman Bass asked if it is time to renew the agreement with Waste Pro. After a brief discussion, Councilwoman Hart indicated a need for a workshop. There is a need to discuss the community's concern regarding Waste Pro services. A workshop should be scheduled with Waste Pro attending to address concerns. Mr. Johnson advised we need more dialogue and will reach out to Waste Pro and get several dates and times for a workshop.

Mrs. Karen Kent, Downtown Improvements Chairperson, stated she is before the council to get approval for the façade grant applications. There were six (6) applications submitted with two (2) being rejected. The approved applications were Weezie's Cottage along with three applications with the same owner; Wanderings, Poppy's Coffee Shop and Havana Main Street. If approved, the owners will be notified to move forward. Motion to approve the façade grant applications was made by Councilman Bass and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bert. Motion carried.

Mr. Johnson explained the town needs a contractual agreement for architectural services. This is not a retainer and the services will be used on an as need basis. Motion to approve the architectural services agreement was made by Councilman Bass and seconded by Councilwoman Hart. Motion carried.

Blessings of Hope submitted a special events application to host a food giveaway on February 26, 2021. Motion to approve the food giveaway was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bert and seconded by Councilman Bass. Motion carried.

Havana Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD) is requesting to host their annual Pilau fundraiser on March 4, 2021. The event will be pickup only at the Havana community park. Motion to approve the HVFD fundraiser was made by Councilman Bass and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bert. Motion carried.

REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER:

Mr. Johnson expressed he was proud to announce the completion of the town's wastewater treatment plant. The investment the Council and State made will be beneficial to the Havana community for the next 30 to 50 years and possibly beyond. A ribbon cutting will be scheduled soon.

A workshop will be scheduled on council decorum. This workshop will be conducted on February 23, 2020 from 5pm to 6pm.

The legislative request application was submitted for several of the Town's critical lift stations to improve the sewer operations within the service areas. The total request is for \$700,000.00. The Town is also seeking to apply for grant funds with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity within the same budget, should the legislative request fall through.

Mr. Johnson gave a brief update on the US 27 repaving project. Peavy Construction is near completion with the valve and manholes and will start preparing the road for milling. The FDOT contract is for 120 days.

The community clean up day will be on February 6, 2021 from 9am to 1pm. A flyer with the logistical details will be sent to the council and to all former participants.

The Town has been working with Gadsden County Emergency Management, Florida Department of Health with the assistance of Senator Lorrane Ausley to identify a day for COVID vaccinations in Havana. The event will be held at Old Jerusalem Church on Saturday, January 30, 2021, 9am to 5pm, for citizens 65 and over. If interested you must pre-register.

Mr. Johnson mentioned the Town, CSX Railroad and FDOT received correspondence from Mr. Wayne Gregory, Planters Exchange, regarding possible damage to his property. This is a risk management issue and the correspondence was sent to the insurance company to assess. Additional information will be shared with the Council upon receipt from the insurance company.

The Council will host a workshop to discuss the design standards for downtown. Apalachee Regional Planning (ARPC) will lead the discussion. After a brief discussion, the date for the workshop will be February 16, 2021 at 6pm.

Mr. Johnson stated the town's quarterly newsletter was sent out by way of email distribution to various town citizens that have supplied their email addresses to the town with their utility accounts. A printed version was also distributed in the customer's utility statements on January 25, 2021.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilman Vickers discussed possibly converting 7th Avenue into a one-way street. He stated the town can possibly gain more parking downtown with angled parking. The council briefly discussed this request. Councilman Bass made a suggestion for the east side of 7th to be a two-way street and the west side a one-way street. Mr. Johnson advised he will have to look into the functionality and also get an engineer's perspective.

Councilman Bass mentioned his conversation with the Town Manager in regards to the newly built police department. There has been heavy rain and the roof caved in near the dispatch area of the building. Mr. Johnson advised there are plans to move forward. The Town had an action-packed year of accomplishments with the new Wastewater Treatment Plant and the renovations at the community center.

Councilwoman Hart briefly discussed the community cleanup day. She also stated there are plans to assist the elderly with projects such as painting, cleaning yards, etc. on March 6, 2021.

Mayor Allen thanked Mr. Patel for attending the council meeting. He also recognized that Emeritus Vernell Ross was also in attendance. Mayor Allen mentioned he serves on the Northwest Florida League of Cities (NWFLC) Board and stated hopefully this is an asset for Havana. He stated he attended the Legislative Action Day and is looking forward to continuing progress in the Havana community.

Motion to pay bills was made by Councilman Bass and seconded by Councilwoman Hart. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn.

Decorkus Allen

Decorkus Allen, Mayor

ATTEST:

Shelia A. Evans

Shelia A. Evans, Town Clerk