

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2007
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL**

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor John J. Fretti called the regular meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. Council members present were: David Sumner, Alvin Payton, Jr., Willie Head, Jr., John Eunice, Robert Yost, and James Wright. Councilman Sonny Vickers was absent. The invocation was given by Councilman Alvin Payton, Jr., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION OF THE FEBRUARY EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Mayor Fretti presented the February Employee of the Month Award to William Sims, Engineering Department.

A MOTION by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Head, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the February, 2007 Employee of the Month Award.

William Sims began his employment with the City of Valdosta on November 3, 1997 as a Light Equipment Operator. He was promoted to the position of Instrument Technician in August, 1998 which is the position he currently holds. As an Instrument Technician, William assists with surveying work on City construction projects, establishing right-of-ways, and maintaining survey notes used in project design. The work is highly technical, physically demanding, and requires long hours in the field to obtain the information necessary to complete time sensitive projects. Recently, William took charge of a project to record the City's drainage and water/sewer networks as mandated by the State of Georgia. This is critical information needed for the City's Stormwater Management Program. Using the City's GPS system, William worked tirelessly to complete approximately 16,000 shots in record time. Simultaneously, he also mapped all the water valve covers and sewer manholes which is valuable information needed by the Water and Sewer Department. In all, he tackled a project of enormous magnitude completing it before the required deadline and saving the City of Valdosta approximately \$150,000 which was the estimated cost of contracting out this work due to its technical nature. As Vince Lombardi once stated, "It is time for us to stand and cheer for the doer, the achiever, the one who recognizes a challenge and does something about it." William's initiative and resourcefulness were the key factors in getting this critical project completed ahead of schedule and in the most cost efficient manner. For these reasons and many others, the Employee Relations Committee nominated William Sims as Employee of the Month.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 8, 2007 Regular Meeting of the Valdosta City Council were approved by unanimous consent (6-0) of the Council.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There were no citizens to be heard.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ORDINANCE NO. 2007-9, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE VALDOSTA ZONING ORDINANCE

Consideration of an ordinance to rezone 7.17 acres from Office-Professional (O-P) to Planned Mixed

Development (PMD) as requested by Walt Gill (P. C. File No. VA-2007-01). The subject property is located at the southwest corner of Roosevelt Drive and North Patterson Street. Planning Commission reviewed this request at their January regular meeting and recommended approval and to allow up to eleven floors with the condition that if no residential units were developed then no retail/restaurant uses would be permitted (4-3-1 vote). Mayor/Council postponed the request at the February 8, 2007 regular City Council Meeting until the February 22, 2007 regular City Council Meeting.

Anne-Marie Wolff, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that the applicant is requesting to rezone 7.17 acres from Office-Professional (O-P) to Planned Mixed Development (PMD). The property is currently undeveloped and the applicant intends to use various areas of the building for residential, limited commercial, and professional office. This property was originally rezoned to Office-Professional in 2002 and 2005. Additionally, the height restrictions on the property were amended by Mayor-Council in 2006 to allow up to 90-feet in height. The applicants would now like to have the option of establishing a mixture of similar intensity office, retail/restaurant, and residential uses. These uses would center on those typically required by the nearby hospital, university, and other institutional uses. Staff felt that this project would set a standard for future development and redevelopment in the surrounding area. The proposed mixture of uses should not have a negative impact on the surrounding area and would support the goals of the Institutional Activity Center. At the Work Session, there was discussion as to whether the scale of this development would trigger a Development Regional Impact (DRI). This is a 422,000 square foot building but certain parts of the building, such as the parking deck, loading dock, bridge, and terraces, would be excluded by the State from the overall square footage for a DRI. With these areas excluded, the gross square footage falls to approximately 371,000 which is below the threshold for a DRI. The South Georgia Regional Development Center was contacted to insure that they concurred with this and based on the information provided to them, they were in agreement that it did not trigger a DRI. The applicants are aware that if any of this changes due to the market study, then it is possible that a DRI would be triggered. Staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommended approval of PMD zoning based on the submitted site plan and the noted office, retail/restaurant, and residential uses. The Planning Commission reviewed this request at their January regular meeting and recommended approval of rezoning to Planned Mixed Development (PMD) and allowing up to eleven floors with the condition that if no residential units were developed then no retail/restaurant uses would be permitted (4-3-1 vote). Council had previously placed a height limitation on this property of 90 feet which is shorter than what the applicants are proposing. Mayor Fretti inquired as to why the Planning Commission placed the condition on the rezoning request. Ms. Wolff stated that there was one individual who spoke at the Planning Commission Meeting who had concerns about the development and the Planning Commission was trying to come up with a compromise. At the time, they felt that if no one was living there then there would be no need for a restaurant; however, later they realized that there may be a need for a restaurant if there are nine floors of offices. Planning Commission members who voted against the motion did so because they did not like the condition that had been placed. Larry Hanson inquired as to whether Staff recommended that condition. Ms. Wolff stated that Staff did not recommend the condition and that came from discussion at the Planning Commission Meeting. Staff recommended the zoning as requested. They have worked with the developers and architect on a 30-foot exterior setback all the way around the property, and the loading dock area would be buffered from the residences by the parking garage. They are also building "up" in order to maintain as many of the trees on the property as possible. Councilman Payton inquired as to the height of the building. Ms. Wolff stated that the current height of the building would be 154 feet which is from the Roosevelt Avenue grade because of the slope of the property. Councilman Payton inquired as to whether this would be misleading to the public by saying 90 feet when it would actually be 154 feet. Ms. Wolff stated that with the zoning change the applicant is also requesting a change in the height limitations. With the Planned Mixed Development zoning, it is Site Plan specific and anything that is out of the ordinary with normal development standards should be noted which is what the applicant has done. Anything that is not different from the regulations will be adhered to during the permitting process. Councilman Payton stated that he was concerned because Council had increased the height to 90 feet. Ms. Wolff stated that the applicant wanted to have higher ceilings on some of the floors which would increase the height to 11 floors. Councilman Payton inquired as to whether they need to address the 154 feet total height of the building. Ms. Wolff stated that if Council approves the request then it should be clarified as to whether they are approving the height as requested or the 90 foot height limitation. Mayor Fretti inquired as to whether that would be 9 or 11 floors. Ms. Wolff stated that it would be whatever the applicant could get for 90 feet but would probably be closer to nine floors. Based on the information from the architects, the reason the applicant has not been decided on the number of floors is because they are waiting on the results of the market study. If the market study reflects that the project could not support this much, then they will drop it back down to nine floors. Mayor Fretti inquired as to

whether Council should specify feet or floors. Ms. Wolff stated that Council should specify feet. Councilman Eunice inquired as to whether there was anyone in opposition to the request at the Planning Commission Meeting. Ms. Wolff stated that Mac Mackey, who lives directly south of the property, had some concerns about the proximity of the parking garage to his property line which is above 30 feet. The Planned Mixed Development regulations require 30 feet all the way around the property and in some areas they have exceeded that requirement. Councilman Payton stated that his only concern was that the Planning Staff recommendation indicates 90 feet which is what Council changed it to and it will clearly be more than 90 feet. Larry Hanson inquired as to what the Planning Commission approved relative to height. Ms. Wolff stated that the Planning Commission approved 11 floors and in Staff's recommendation they did not put a height limitation but wanted to bring it to Council's attention that the last action that had taken place in 2006 was 90 feet. Councilman Yost inquired as to whether there was no ingress/egress onto Toombs Street. Ms. Wolff stated that was correct. Councilman Yost inquired as to whether the parking deck could be moved further toward Roosevelt Drive. Ms. Wolff stated that there is an out parcel that was originally part of the agreement and when the current owner purchased the property it was agreed that the out parcel would be left for future development. Councilman Yost stated that he was concerned about that agreement because it places the parking deck closer to the property located south of it when it would make more sense to place the parking deck away from the residential home. Councilman Head stated that they would need to revisit the height requirement because there may be more development of this type in the future and this could set a precedent in providing exceptions to the regulations. Ms. Wolff stated that the 90 foot height requirement is only on this property and is not across the board. The reason it was set at 90 feet was that originally there were some concerns from the neighbors about the height of the building when the property was rezoned to O-P. A condition was set that there be no high-rise buildings but the problem with that was that a high-rise building could be considered to be two floors so they requested that the condition be changed. The reason 90 feet was selected was because they looked at the tree line and the height of the hospital from the grade of Patterson Street and 90 feet seemed to be an agreeable number at that time. When the condition was removed and the height was extended to 90 feet, there was not a lot of opposition to the change. Ms. Wolff stated that as the City moves into the next decade of growth and development, there will be more requests for building upward. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that there are currently three hotels that are under construction that are seven stories or more. As cities grow and land becomes more expensive and scarce, buildings are constructed upward rather than outward because it takes less land. The trade off in not building up is that you end up with more asphalt because parking is taking up greenspace rather than elevated in a deck. Ms. Wolff stated that the parking garage is only a five-floor parking garage. Councilman Yost inquired as to whether the fire trucks could handle an 11-story building. Ms. Wolff stated that based on a conversation with Fire Chief J. D. Rice, the fire would be fought from the stairwell as opposed to the ladder truck.

Kevin Hollis, 3750 Boring Pond Road, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Hollis stated that the parking deck evolved in trying to minimize the impact to the site. In order to justify the expense of the parking deck, which is approximately \$12,000 per parking space, the leasable space must be increased. The applicant is trying to strike a balance between how big the building will be and the impact to the site so they were left with going higher. The parking deck has also been the driving factor on how the building has increased. Mayor Fretti inquired as to whether this was equated to the out parcel or to the retail space inside the building. Mr. Hollis stated that there was no agreement that the out parcel has to remain; however, there is an agreement that a possible 3,000 square foot footprint has to remain. They are currently trying to get that problem resolved by moving them within the building itself. Councilman Yost inquired as to whether the applicant would be willing to move the parking garage more toward Roosevelt Drive and away from the residential property. Mr. Hollis stated that given the cost of the project they wanted to have the out parcel and moving the parking deck would kill the out parcel which is not something they would want to do because of the possibility of creating income from it in the future. Councilman Yost stated that if they do not move the parking deck then the entire project might be killed. Mr. Hollis stated that he is the General Project Manager with the development firm and that would be an option for the owners to consider. Councilman Yost inquired as to whether the owners would be willing to move the parking deck closer to Roosevelt Drive to accommodate the residential property. Mr. Hollis stated that this would need to come to the surface if there was opposition that says that needs to happen. They do not want to move it because with the current design they meet the height and setback requirements and the worse case scenario. There is also a very thick buffer that is to remain, and they have also spoken with the adjacent property owner and they have no problem in walling up the end of the parking deck so that he is not looking into cars or lights. Mayor Fretti inquired as to whether the motion should include height. Mr. Hollis stated that the market study is still out so they are not certain as to whether they have to have the full 11 stories; however, early indication shows that they will have 11 stories. They would not

want to be limited from a footage standpoint and would rather be limited from a story standpoint. Councilman Eunice inquired as to whether they are still planning to have residential spaces or whether they were waiting on the marketing plan before the decision is made. Mr. Hollis stated that they are fairly sure they will go with a residential component on the top four floors. The bottom floors would be Office-Professional and the basement level would be for additional parking underneath the building and mechanical needs.

Ken Ricket, Architect with Ellis Ricket & Associates, 1217 Hickory Drive, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Ricket stated that they would need at least 16 feet of height for delivery vehicles from the base of the wheel to the first floor of the building which would be more than 10 feet per floor. The second floor of the building would be the main lobby space and they elected to go 18 feet for that floor height. From then on up through the office floors, the height would be 12 feet 6 inches, and the residential floors would go back to 14 feet in order to have some high ceiling spaces. When you are constructing a multi-story unit, approximately two feet of height per floor is used for ductwork, sprinkler, plumbing, and electrical systems. There are also things on top of the building that are not counted in the height of the building so they are looking at 154 feet or 11 floors. In the original planning concept, they had a 145,000 square foot building with all the parking on grade and no parking deck. The direction from the owner was no parking deck. They then looked at the site layout and it was all pavement and a building. They then looked at saving the trees and to get a better percentage of greenspace to the total project, they made some adjustments. They looked at two buildings on site and a parking deck and then they looked at one building and a parking deck. The 11-floor building and a 5-story parking deck mathematically worked and if they dropped back to 9 floors then a floor on the parking deck would also be dropped. It is important to note that they could build more square footage on the site but that means the parking deck gets bigger and there is less greenspace. They have tried to balance all of this in the planning process to insure that they have the optimum use for that site and for Patterson Street. Mr. Ricket stated that the building would have more than 700-900 people coming and going daily and the streets could not handle the outflow of cars at lunch so food is needed in the building. There would also be a need for some other services in the building, such as a flower shop or a place to purchase a magazine, so from the perception of the owner, retail is needed to support the building. The building was purposely kept away from the residential area and faces the park to take advantage of the greenspace and activities at the park. The entire first floor is building support, the main floor through the fifth floor is office space, and the top four floors are residential. There is a scheme for 16 units on the residential floor but they could possibly have 20-24 units depending on the size. There would also be a sprinkler system for the entire building and they have done everything within Code to insure that this would be a safe multi-story building.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION was made by Councilman Sumner to follow the recommendation of the Planning Staff to enact Ordinance No. 2007-9 to rezone 7.17 acres from Office-Professional (O-P) to Planned Mixed Development (PMD) as requested by Walt Gill. Councilman Wright seconded the motion. Mayor Fretti inquired as to whether the motion included the residential-commercial condition. Councilman Sumner stated that was correct and inquired as to whether the motion should specifically state 11 floors. Mayor Fretti stated that it was in the recommendation. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that it was up to 11 floors and clarified that Councilman Sumner wanted to follow the recommendation of the Planning Staff because they did not include the condition. Councilman Sumner stated that he did say Planning Staff and Staff did not put limitations on it but he wanted to make sure the height requirement was correct. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that they did not have a recommendation for a height limitation but if they were to have one they would recommend 11 floors.

AN AMENDED MOTION was made by Councilman Sumner to follow the recommendation of the Planning Staff to approve the Planned Mixed Development (PMD) zoning based on the submitted site plan and the noted office, retail/restaurant, and residential uses and to add 11 floors for the height requirement. Councilman Wright seconded the amended motion. The amended motion was adopted (5-1) to enact Ordinance No. 2007-9, with Councilman Payton voting in opposition, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book X.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

VARIANCE TO THE MUNICIPAL UTILITIES ORDINANCE

Consideration of a variance to the Municipal Utilities Ordinance to allow groundwater discharge to the

sanitary sewer system for the Lowndes County Judicial Building as requested by The Retec Group, Inc.

Leon Weeks, Director of Utilities, stated that the process of cleaning up the groundwater where the soil and water have been contaminated by leaking gasoline or other materials is strictly controlled by State and Federal requirements for leaking underground storage tanks. The water must be removed and treated to clean the site, and the most cost effective method of disposing of the water after it has been pre-treated is to discharge the water to the public sanitary sewer system when service is available. Due to the nature of the contaminants, the water must be treated and tested to certain standards before it can be discharged to the sewer. Several years ago, the City of Valdosta prepared and adopted guidelines for remediated groundwater that must be met concerning the design of the treatment system, the levels of treatment required, and the frequency of tests required. Also, since the Municipal Utilities Ordinance prohibits the discharge of groundwater not sold by the City into the sewer system, a variance to the ordinance is required before discharge can be allowed. The Lowndes County Board of Commissioners, owner of property located at 401 North Ashley Street which was formerly the Wisenbaker/Amoco service station, have hired The Retec Group, Inc., an environmental consultant, to clean up the property. Retec has made application on behalf of the Lowndes County Commissioners for a permit for the Groundwater Remediation System to discharge up to 36,000 gallons per day from the treatment system to the City sewer system. The application along with supporting plans, testing schedules, and other supporting documents are in order according to the requirements of the guidelines. The Sewer Use Ordinance of the Municipal Utilities Ordinance states that no person shall discharge or cause to be discharged any stormwater, surface water, groundwater, roof runoff, subsurface drainage, uncontaminated cooling water, or unpolluted industrial process waters to any sanitary sewer. In order for the Director of Utilities to issue the required permit, a variance to this section will need to be granted. Leon Weeks asked Council's consideration in approving the request for a variance to the Municipal Utilities Ordinance and allow groundwater to be discharged to the sanitary sewer. Councilman Yost inquired as to what the County's option would be if Council denied the request. Leon Weeks stated that the County could haul the water away which would cost them a large amount of money. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the County is required to pre-treat the water on site in order to get it to a standard that is acceptable within the City's permits with the Environmental Protection Division and then it would be discharged into the City's system at such strength that it would not compromise the system. The County will also have to pay the City on a per gallon basis. Larry Hanson stated that 36,000 gallons per day is quite a bit to have to haul and it would be in everyone's best interest not to have that traffic on the road.

A MOTION by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Eunice, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to follow the recommendation of the Director of Utilities and approve a variance to the Municipal Utilities Ordinance to allow groundwater discharge to the sanitary sewer system for the Lowndes County Judicial Building as requested by The Retec Group, Inc.

RESOLUTION NO. 2007-3, A RESOLUTION AND LETTER OF SUPPORT TO THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS FOR THE AZALEA WOODS APARTMENTS PROJECT

Consideration of a request from Ambling Development Partners to adopt a resolution and letter of support to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for the Azalea Woods Apartments Project.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that Council previously approved a policy regarding Tax Credit Projects and this is the first project to go through the process. Ambling Development Partners was required to hold a public comment meeting and work with the City of Valdosta to determine the boundaries of the area and which properties would be notified. Ambling has notified the property owners, mailed out invitations, placed an advertisement in the newspaper, held a public meeting which was published in the newspaper at least two weeks prior to the meeting, and provided Council with a copy of the sign-in sheet as well as a transcript of the public comments they received at the meeting. Based upon meeting the requirements, Ambling now has to come before Council and request a resolution of support for the project.

Darien Lee, Ambling Development Partners, stated that an affiliate of Ambling Development Partners is under contract to purchase the Azalea Woods Apartments located at 811 West Mary Street in Valdosta. These apartments serve low-income citizens of Valdosta and it is their intent to perform an extensive renovation in excess of \$3 million in order to improve the quality of life for the residents currently living at Azalea Woods Apartments. To finance this renovation, Ambling will need to use the low-income housing tax credit program which is

administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The funding for the tax credits is on a competitive basis and the more points Ambling can gain for this development then the better their chances are for winning an allocation of credits. If the City of Valdosta adopts a resolution and signs a Georgia Department of Community Affairs form letter supporting the project, then Ambling will gain valuable points. Mr. Lee asked Council's consideration in supporting the project.

A MOTION by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution No. 2007-3 and to approve a letter of support to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for the Azalea Woods Apartments Project, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book IV.

Councilman Head left the Council meeting at 6:27 p.m.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of a Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement between the Georgia Emergency Management Agency and the City of Valdosta for a rapid response vehicle and equipment.

Fire Chief J. D. Rice stated that after the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, Governor Sonny Perdue created the Office of Homeland Security for the State of Georgia through the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA). The goal was to provide the State of Georgia with rapid response vehicles designed to handle weapons of mass destruction, terrorist incidents, and other State declared disasters. The State purchased three of these vehicles and placed one each in Metro Atlanta, Savannah, and Macon/Warner-Robins. This concept left Southwest Georgia unprotected and having to rely on vehicles and Fire Departments more than two hours away. The Fire Chiefs from Southwest Georgia, with the help of our local legislators, convinced GEMA to provide one of these vehicles for our area of the State. Last year, the Georgia Office of Homeland Security announced that, if accepted by the Mayor and Council of the City of Valdosta, a rapid response vehicle would be housed at the Valdosta Fire Department for use in Southwest Georgia. In the fall of 2006, Mayor and Council agreed to accept this vehicle and accompanying equipment. Chief Rice asked Council's consideration in approving the request and authorizing the Mayor to sign the Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement between the City of Valdosta and the State of Georgia (GEMA) for the vehicle and equipment.

A MOTION by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Yost, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to approve the request and authorize the Mayor to sign the Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement between the City of Valdosta and the State of Georgia (GEMA) for a rapid response vehicle and equipment.

Consideration of an agreement with Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. to develop a Watershed Management Plan in accordance with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division Section 319(h) Grant for Two Mile Branch.

Leon Weeks, Director of Utilities, stated that Two-Mile Branch is a drainage basin located on the north side of the City and is approximately 3.27 miles long with pre-dominantly residential development and some commercial development. The stream is a tributary of Sugar Creek and the Withlacoochee River. The stream was listed as impaired stream due to elevated levels of fecal coliform based off limited data available to Environmental Protection Division (EPD) and was placed on the State of Georgia's 305(b)/303(d) list in February, 1998. In 1999, the City of Valdosta, through a joint venture contract with Carter and Sloope, Engineers, the University of Georgia, and the United States Geological Survey, performed a bio-assessment of all City streams and found Two Mile Branch to be only slightly impaired. It was recommended that the City of Valdosta implement a monitoring and management plan for improvement of this stream segment. In June, 2005, the City applied for a Georgia EPD Section 319(h) Grant to develop a Watershed Management Plan for the Two Mile Branch watershed. The grant proposal was approved and a contract was signed between the Georgia EPD and the City on May 15, 2006 for performance of the work in the amount of \$100,000. Since the Section 319(h) Grant program is a 60/40 cost share, the Georgia EPD will provide \$60,000 in Federal funds and the City must provide \$40,000 of Non-Federal/local matching funds. Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. was selected to perform the work and complete it within the time limit of the Grant for a total price of \$92,822. Leon Weeks thanked the Selection Committee members, Councilman Robert Yost, Von Shipman, City Engineer, and Emily Davenport, Environmental Planner with South Georgia Regional Development Center, for their work in the selection process. The Selection Committee is also

reviewing the possibility of having some of the map work completed by VALOR GIS to lower the price and receive credit for some of the local match. Leon Weeks recommended that Council approve the agreement with Stantec Consulting Services, Inc., not to exceed \$92,822, to develop a Watershed Management Plan in accordance with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division Section 319(h) Grant for Two Mile Branch.

A MOTION by Councilman Yost, seconded by Councilman Wright, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to approve the agreement with Stantec Consulting Services, Inc., not to exceed \$92,822, to develop a Watershed Management Plan in accordance with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division Section 319(h) Grant for Two Mile Branch and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract with provisions for credit for local work preformed by the VALOR GIS Group.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of a request to apply for the Georgia Firefighters Burn Foundation, Inc. Brant Chesney Memorial Fire and Burn Prevention Grant.

Fire Chief J. D. Rice stated that the Georgia Firefighters Burn Foundation (GFBF) has established a special grant program in memory of a Gwinnett County career Firefighter, Brant Chesney, who lost his life on December 27, 1996, battling a fire during his off-duty hours as a volunteer with the Forsyth County Fire Department. Grant funds awarded under the auspices of this program are to be used by Georgia Fire Departments to develop a new program or to enhance an existing public life safety program dedicated primarily to fire safety and burn prevention education. The Valdosta Fire Department is seeking grant funding to bring the Buzzly Fire Safety Program to all 30 daycare centers in the City and to house the program at all 7 fire stations which will allow the Fire Department to reach an audience that has not been reached through other programs. The Grant will fund up to \$3,000 and the Fire Department's request is for \$2,960. There are no required matching funds. Chief Rice recommended that Council approve the request to apply for the Georgia Firefighters Burn Foundation, Inc. Brant Chesney Memorial Fire and Burn Prevention Grant.

A MOTION by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to approve the request to apply for the Georgia Firefighters Burn Foundation, Inc. Brant Chesney Memorial Fire and Burn Prevention Grant.

Consideration of a request to modify the Speed Hump Policy.

Von Shipman, City Engineer, stated that the current Speed Hump Policy was adopted in 1994 and outlines the required steps that would result in the installation of speed humps to slow traffic on residential streets. The policy requires a petition to be submitted to the City requesting a traffic study be performed and it is deemed viable if it contains signatures of at least 60% of the property owners on a particular street. Once the petition is validated, the Engineering Department would conduct a speed study to determine the 85th percentile speed. The policy indicates that speed humps are warranted if the 85th percentile speed is at least 10 mph over the posted speed limit. If the requirements were met, the matter would then go before the City Council for approval. The policy was revised in 1998 to address the need for property owners to pay for the removal of speed humps at such time they are petitioned to be removed. Recently there was a roadblock for speed hump installation on Bay Meadows. The property owner, who was insistent on the installation of speed humps to help calm the traffic, was unable to secure a petition because most of the property is rental and a lot of the property owners were not interested in signing the petition. In order to improve the policy, two changes are needed. The first change is that a speed study should be conducted first at the request of a property owner or resident prior to the submittal of a valid petition. This is due to the fact that the vast majority of speed studies do not meet the policy requirement for speed humps to be installed. The second change for consideration is to allow property owners and legal occupants of the residence to sign the petition since the current policy indicates that only property owners are able to sign the petition. Von Shipman recommended that Council approve the request to modify the Speed Hump Policy.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Sumner, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to approve the request to modify the Speed Hump Policy.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Georgia Department of Transportation Commissioner has informed us of the streets selected for the Local Assistance Road Program (LARP) resurfacing this year. Those streets include Brookwood Drive from Oak Street to Patterson Street, Brookwood Place from Forrest Street to Ponderosa Drive, Cherokee Avenue and Miramar Street from Jerry Jones Road to Baytree Road, Cypress Street from Blanchard Street to Hollywood Street, Ramble Wood Circle off of Country Club Drive, and Terrace Boulevard from Gornto Road to Oak Street.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Troup Street re-widening project is almost completed and all of the sidewalk and driveway work will be finished this week. The paving crew will start on Tuesday and finish by the end of next week and all that will remain will be the final dressing work and sod installation. The completion date for the project is March 9, 2007. The residents have been very pleased with the project and it has transformed the way the street and area looks.

Also, work on the Lee Street box culvert is progressing and the contractor will be completing the wing wall and aprons by the end of next week. They will then begin to backfill the structure and begin repair work to the street. The estimated completion date is the end of March, 2007.

The Brown's Canal project has been awarded to Rountree Construction and they will begin work March 12, 2007 for much needed drainage improvements.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the advertisement for the Mill Pond dredging will run this weekend. The water level has been lowered and once the bids have been received the contract will be brought before Council.

The Bird Supper which was held on February 21, 2007 in Atlanta was very successful as well as meetings held at the State Capitol.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Fretti stated that he presented a Guinness World Book of Records plaque on behalf of the Mayor and Council and the City of Valdosta to Brent Dixon for collecting 41,418 unduplicated key chains which almost doubled the previous record.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion for adjournment.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Yost, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to adjourn the February 22, 2007 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:45 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, March 8, 2007.

City Clerk, City of Valdosta

Mayor, City of Valdosta