

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2015
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor Pro Tem Alvin Payton, Jr. called the regular meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:31 p.m. Council members presents were Joseph "Sonny" Vickers, Tim Carroll, Ben Norton, Sandra Tooley, Robert Yost, and James Wright. The invocation was given by Pastor Curtin Jenkins, New Life Bible Church, and immediately followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Mayor Gayle was absent.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

Consideration of the May 2015, Employee of the Month Award (Robert Devlin, Utilities Department).

Robert Devlin began his employment with the City in October of 2011, as a Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, the position he currently holds. As a Wastewater Operator, Robert monitors the control panels and adjusts valves and gates manually or by remote control to regulate the flow of wastewater, collects samples from areas of the process for laboratory testing, maintains a daily log of operation and records meter readings, and works with maintenance personnel in performing routine maintenance of the plant grounds. Recently, while Robert was driving the Mud Creek tractor, he witnessed an accident at the intersection of Forrest Street and Perimeter Road. He would be notified later that one of the vehicles involved was a stolen vehicle. Quickly, Robert stopped the tractor, used his radio to contact a nearby employee and instructed them to call 911. He then proceeded to the first vehicle involved in the crash. The occupant was a young lady who had been stunned when her airbag activated. Robert assisted her out of the car to safety and quickly turned to assist the other citizen involved in the accident. Robert stayed with them until safety personnel arrived. The occupants of the stolen vehicle were apprehended shortly after the accident trying to escape on foot. Robert's quick action in providing aid and comfort to the ladies until paramedics arrived was the act of a Good Samaritan. Robert has received training as a firefighter and currently serves as a volunteer firefighter. For these reasons and many others, the Employee Relations Committee nominates Robert Devlin as Employee of the Month.

Special Recognition of 2015 District 7 TopOP Award Recipient Harold Henderson

Stanley Keith Martin, Superintendent of Mud Creek Treatment Plant, presented Harold Henderson with the 2015 District 7 TopOp Award. The goal of the TopOP Award is to recognize the Top Operator in each district annually that has been a moving force in the operations of their respective facilities, has encouraged, spread knowledge and increased operations in some way.

Harold Henderson, Operator at Mud Creek WPCP, was nominated and is the 2015 recipient of TopOp Award for Wastewater Operator. Harold represents District 7, which covers all of southwest and south-central Georgia. All the TopOp Awards winners from each District are recognized during the Awards Luncheon at the Georgia Association of Water Professionals, (GAWP) Spring conference.

Mayor Pro Tem Payton congratulated Mr. Henderson and thanked him for his excellent representation of the City.

Special Presentation of the 2015 Valdosta Preservation Awards

Mr. James Horton, Historic Preservation Planner, presented the 7th Annual Valdosta Preservation Awards. Mr. Horton stated that the awards began in 2009, as a way to recognize property owners who go above and beyond the regulations set forth by the City to protect and preserve building within our local Historic District. At the beginning of each year, the City asks the community for nominations and from these nominations, organizations, and individuals demonstrating excellence in the rehabilitation or stewardship of a

historic building, excellence in the design of compatible new construction, or lifetime achievement in historic preservations, are chosen to receive a Valdosta Preservation Award. We present the winners with an official award certificate and Preservation Banner, which can be proudly displayed on the exterior of the winner's historic building.

These awards provide positive reinforcement of the Historic District Design Review process, promote goodwill within our community, and acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our citizens in the preservation and restoration of our historic buildings. The 2015 winners represent the best in our community this year. The Ashley House is the winner for Outstanding Achievement. This award recognizes exemplary accomplishments in historic building rehabilitation or restoration. Awards in this category are given for complex or large scale projects. The next award is for Stewardship and we have two recipients – King's Grill and The Crescent. The Stewardship award is given to preservationists who have provided long-term love, care, and maintenance, stabilization, or protection of contributing historic buildings.

MINUTES APPROVAL

The minutes of the May 7, 2015, Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (6-0) of the Valdosta City Council.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of a request to approve a bid to replace a Jet Sewer Vacuum Truck in Water and Sewer.

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that this request is to replace an older existing Jet Sewer Vacuum Truck in the Utilities Department. This vehicle is an approved budget item and will be used to clean storm and sewage drains throughout the city. The low bid was received on May 5, 2015, from Adams Equipment in the amount of \$323,541.00.

Councilwoman Tooley asked which budget would be used to purchase the vehicle. Mr. Brown stated that the vehicle was listed in SPLOST VII. Mark Barber, Deputy City Manager of Administration, stated that although the truck was budgeted for SPLOS VII, the City now has options when considering the purchase of this item. If the timing is right, the vehicle can be purchased through the GMA Direct Leasing Program.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Wright, seconded by Councilman Vickers was unanimously adopted to approve the request to purchase the Jet Sewer Vacuum Truck.

Consideration of a request to approve a bid to purchase oils and lubricants for maintenance on the automotive equipment fleet.

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that oils and lubricants are items of necessity that are used by various departments throughout the City. Bids were opened on May 5, 2015. Langdale, our current supplier, was the only bidder and had a 15% markup. Councilman Payton asked if the mark-up was currently at 15%. Mr. Brown stated that it was. Councilwoman Tooley asked Mr. Brown to identify two departments that would use these items. Mr. Brown answered that Police and Public Works are two of the city departments that utilize the facilities at the maintenance center where the supplies are kept.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Norton was approved unanimously (6-0) to award the bid to Langdale Fuel for the purchase of oils and lubricants for maintenance on the automotive equipment fleet.

Consideration of a request to approve a bid for plumbing services.

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the next bid was for the annual plumbing service contract.

Sealed bids were received on May 5, 2015. This contract is utilized when repairs are needed that staff cannot handle in house. Roto Rooter, our current provider, is the low bidder. This is same price the City has paid for the past two years and service has been acceptable. Councilman Vickers asked if the \$65 was per hour. Mr. Brown answered yes.

A **MOTION** by Councilman James Wright, seconded by Councilman Yost was unanimously approved (6-0) to follow the recommendation of staff.

Consideration of a request to approve a bid for general electrical services.

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that this contract is also for services that cannot be performed by staff. The low bid was received on May 5 from Cowart Electric in the amount of \$74.50 per hour, an amount that is lower than what we currently pay.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilwoman Tooley was unanimously approved (6-0) to award the contract for general electrical services to Cowart Electric.

Consideration of a request to approve a bid for the purchase of filters for use at the Maintenance Center.

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that filters are needed and will be used in conjunction with oils and lubricants at the Maintenance Center. Sealed bids were received on May 5. These items are purchased at a jobber price, which means this is the price that the companies charge and the City is given an additional percentage off. The Part's House offered the better rate of 60%.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Norton was approved (6-0) to award the contract for the purchase of filters to The Part's House.

Consideration of a request to approve a bid for pest control services.

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that Baird's is the current contractor and has been for the last few years. His bid price dropped by over \$900 from what we currently pay. When asked about the price difference, Mr. Baird simply stated that he did not want to lose the business. Councilman Payton asked about the vast price difference in the bids. Mr. Brown stated that Mr. Baird was aware that there would be more bidders and bid lower because he did not want to lose our business.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Wright, seconded by Councilman Norton was uniamously adopted (6-0) to follow the recommendation of staff.

Consideration of a request to approve a bid for the maintenance of the City's Stormwater ponds and canals.

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that this bid was for mowing and maintenance on selected stormwater ponds and canals. Thirteen (13) areas have been divided up and bid on. The attached spreadsheet shows the bids submitted for each area and gives a comparison of the current and new bid prices. A Pre-bid meeting was held to ensure all bidders were on the same page and to answer questions. Councilman Vickers asked if any of the recommended low bidders were VSEB contractors. Mr. Brown stated that a bid was submitted by a VSEB contractor but he was not successful. We have used a VSEB contractor in prior years but he was unable to attend the Pre-Bid meeting. The information was distributed to all contractors and Ms. Flucas also forwarded the information to all VSEB contractors. Councilwoman Tooley asked if city employees might be able to perform some of this work. Mr. Brown stated that this work is just a small portion of responsibilities of the Stormwater Division and is a way for the City to offer work to small business and

help with the local economy. Mr. Barber stated that when the Stormwater Division first started employees performed all of the services, but there was such a vast amount of work that staff could not keep up with it; therefore, other options had to be explored. The process we currently use is more effective and it is actually less expensive for us to contract out the service.

Councilman Wright stated that Council has discussed this in the past and decided to support this effort because it promotes economic development opportunities within the community and gives small businesses a way to create jobs. It would be great if we could offer more services like this because it helps to put money back into our community and create jobs within our own community. Mr. Brown stated that most of the bidders for the project were small businesses who are encouraged to become a part of VSEB.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Carroll was unanimously approved (6-0) to follow the recommendation of staff.

Consideration of a request to approve a bid for heating and air service.

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated the contract for heating and air expires at the end of the fiscal year. The low bid was received on May 5, from A1 Aire, a business located in Valdosta/Lowndes County. Staff has already been in touch with A1 Aire and will closely monitor their work to ensure quality service is being provided.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Wright was unanimously approved (6-0) to award the contract to A1 Aire

Consideration of a request to approve a bid for the extension of utilities to Annexed Island 69A.

Pat Collins, City Engineer, stated that today's item is a continued effort to provide utilities to annexed islands in the city. Island 69A is located on the north side of St. Augustine Road. Standard Contractors was the low bidder with a bid of \$828,865.75. Staff recommends awarding the contract to Standard Contractors with a 10% contingency. Councilman Vickers stated that since these projects have been ongoing for a while and a track record has been created should staff now be able to estimate the cost of the projects. Mr. Collins answered yes and stated that on this particular island staff estimated a little over a million dollars and the bid came in lower than the estimation. Councilman Vickers asked if staff could look at the bids and figure out why their estimation missed the mark. Mr. Collins stated that it wasn't necessarily a miss but that the market changed which affected their estimate. Councilman Yost asked if staff could provide statistical data of how many people on the islands have actually hooked on to the services since the services have been available. Mr. Collins wanted to make sure Council understood that the citizens are not required to utilize the services right away but stated that he would work with Utilities and Customer Service to try and figure out those numbers. Councilman Yost stated that would be interesting to see how many of the residents are utilizing the services especially since the schedule was made according to each island's needs. Councilman Vickers stated that he recently attended a meeting for an annexed island. There were about 30 citizens in attendance; the majority stated that they would hook on to city utilities when their systems went out. The meeting went well and overall everyone had a positive attitude about the services that are being offered.

Councilman Carroll stated that one of the things that should be noted when looking at the projects collectively is that some have greater challenges than others based on terrain. In my district alone, the Cherry Creek project was very challenging due to the terrain and requirements for lift stations. If we're comparing equally we need to understand that each one is not equal in the since of the complexity of putting the system in.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Ben Norton was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the bid as presented plus a 10% contingency.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS**Consideration of an Extraterritorial Water and Sewer Service Request from the Lowndes County Board of Education for Lowndes Middle School.**

Henry Hicks, Director of Utilities, stated that an Extraterritorial Water and Sewer Service request has been submitted by the Lowndes County Board of Education for Lowndes Middle School. These are requests submitted from entities outside or bordering the city limits. This request for services must be approved by the Lowndes County Board of Commissioners and the Valdosta City Council before any services can be connected and utilized. Currently we serve the Lowndes County Board of Education, Lowndes High School, Moulton Branch Elementary, Dewar Elementary, and Parker Mathis Elementary schools. Plans and bid documents for the connections have been approved by the Lowndes County Board of Education. Staff has also reviewed and approved the plans. The school board will pay for the extension of a 4-inch water main from the school to the city system. They will also pay for a small lift station and 4-in force main. The cost of installation and future maintenance of the extensions up to the point of connection to the City shall be the responsibility of the Lowndes County Board of Education. Additionally, per the Extraterritorial Service Agreement, City Council needs to approve the request before it can be placed on the Lowndes County Board of Commissioners' agenda for consideration.

Councilman Yost asked what plan is in place should a resident near the middle school request to utilize our services. Would they have to pay from where the current service exists at Lowndes Middle to their homes? Mr. Hicks answered yes. Councilman Yost asked if the homeowners would be required to go through the same process. Mr. Hicks stated that it would depend on the number of units or residents requesting service. If there was a large number the 4-in line would need to be upgraded to a larger diameter pipe and if they were also requesting sewer, they would have to upgrade the lift station as the current lift station is for the school alone. They would also have to agree to be annexed into the City. Councilwoman Tooley asked for clarification regarding the request to ensure that Lowndes County Board of Education was solely responsible for maintenance of pipes on their property as well as the Lift Station. Mr. Hicks stated that the school board is responsible for all maintenance up to the point of connection. Councilman Yost asked if everything met City standards. Mr. Hicks explained that equipment on school property does not have to comply with City standards and is not a requirement since the city is not accepting ownership of the system, further stating that only the point of connection has to meet city standards. Councilman Yost asked if they will have to comply with the sewer usage like all other businesses. Mr. Hicks answered yes; it's the same as an apartment complex or other larger entities and similar to the requirements for private property owners. Anything that is on their property remains their responsibility up to the point of connection. If for some reason a lift station was located on right of way, that station would have to comply with city standards.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Yost, seconded by Councilman Wright was unanimously approved (6-0) to follow the recommendation of staff.

Consideration of a request to approve the CDBG 2015-2020 Consolidated Plan and the CDBG 2015 - 2016 Annual Action Plan.

Vanassa Flucas, Neighborhood Development Manager, stated that the City is at a point nearing the completion of the Consolidated Plan for the CDBG grant that is received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) each year and also the Annual Action Plan which is the yearly budget for allocation of the activities that will be completed in the coming year. As both documents have already been presented to you, I'd just like to review the Annual Action Plan Proposed activities for the 2015 program year and ask for your approval for submission to HUD. For the 2015 Annual Action Plan, we hope to receive \$565,826.00 for the HUD Entitlement Allotment next year. Out of those funds \$382,661.00 will be allocated to housing to include Single-Family Residential Rehab, Elimination of Slum and Blight, and Fair Housing Community Education. Each year we are allowed to allot 20% for administration purposes so \$113,165 will

fall under the program Admin. This year we are excited and fortunate to be able to include \$70,000 for funding for economic development activities. In this funding category it is our intent to implement small business seed loans and work with the Chamber of Commerce to continue small business educational and technical assistance to small businesses in our city. Totaled together these categories equal \$565,826.00 and we're asking for your approval to submit the 2015 - 2016 Annual Action Plan to HUD. Councilman Payton asked if the two documents provided to Council was prepared by staff or the company that did the research. Ms. Flucas stated that those documents were prepared by the organization contracted to complete the plan. Councilman Payton asked if they might consider including a table of contents in the future because trying to navigate through the documents without one is a little challenging. Ms. Flucas stated that one of the difficulties with that request is that the document is just a representation of what is put in the computer system; however, staff will try to ensure that a table of contents is added to future documents. Councilman Payton stated that the information in the report was very good but just a bit difficult to find some things.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Vickers was unanimously approved (6-0) to submit both reports to HUD.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mark Barber, Deputy City Manager of Administration, congratulated to the police department for their excellent representation in receiving accreditation at the Crime Lab. The ceremony earlier this week was quite impressive and well deserved.

Mr. Barber once again congratulated Harold Henderson, the TopOP recipient and Robert Devlin, May Employee of the Month, stating that both are excellent employees and great examples of the caliber of employees that work for the City.

Mr. Barber discussed budget hearing dates stating that the dates of June 1, 2, and 3, 2015, may not be viable dates. Staff is exploring the dates of June 9 and 10. We have discussed starting the budget hearing on Tuesday, June 9 before the Work Session and completing it on Wednesday, June 10. I should have a better feel on tomorrow and will be sure to keep you informed of any changes.

Mr. Barber stated that Ms. Flucas is trying to arrange a tour of the Fellwood Housing Development to coincide with the GMA Annual Convention. Please check your schedules to see what dates work best for you. Ms. Flucas will not be in attendance but Mark Stalvey with the Valdosta Housing Authority will be on site to help answer any questions.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Wright stated he wanted to make Council aware that he is working with the Valdosta Metro Veterans Group. I've submitted information to the City Attorney as it relates to a Conflict Interest statement because I will be working with this organization in the future. I am not asking for funding for the group but I wanted to let Council know that I will be involved and using things that I've learned from the past in terms of working with the community as wells as mistakes that I've learned and bringing it to this organization to try and make it one of the premier organizations in Valdosta. We look to our veterans as proven leadership; many of these guys have served our country and are now serving their community in various capacities. We will explore some of the things that have been done in the past like building homes, the Adopt a Spot Program and other programs such as truancy in the schools. I just wanted to give you all a heads up and hopefully we will be making a positive impact in the City of Valdosta.

Councilwoman Tooley thanked Richard Hardy, Public Works Director, for his excellent response to her request for assistance for citizens. Your staff came out the same day the call was made. In fact, I contacted some citizens who were able to come out and see that you do what you can when you can. Thank you very much for helping me out. I'd also like to thank Ms. Emily Davenport for thinking outside the box and creating a spreadsheet that is so easy to read and understand.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

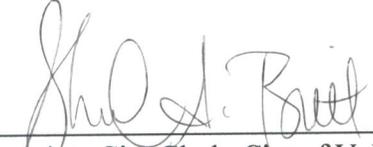
Calvin Graham Sr., 1701 Dedo Street – Valdosta, Georgia addressed Council. I am the president of the Valdosta Metro Veteran's Group. Up until March 1966, Vietnam was a long way away from Valdosta; then Horace Hampton, one of our own, a classmate, and an individual from our neighborhood lost his life. Then Valdosta became close to Vietnam! We lost 21 Valdostans during the Vietnam conflict. On Saturday, June 6, 2015, we will hold our first annual Valdosta Metro Veterans Banquet to honor those who fought in this war and those who lost their lives fighting for their country. We want to bring recognition to some of those individuals and hopefully it will help provide funding to build a Veterans Memorial. Mr. Graham asked for Council's consideration in purchasing at least two tables for the event. Councilman Vickers asked the cost of the tables. Mr. Graham stated that tables were \$300 each and the event would be held at the Senior Citizen Community Center on Park Avenue. George Talley, City Attorney asked what the City would get in return for purchasing a \$300 table. Mr. Graham stated that a meal would be served at the event. Mr. Graham also make Council aware that Veterans have already been instrumental in helping their community listing the Veterans Clinic as just one of the things that Veterans fought for and helped bring to the Valdosta community.

Councilwoman Tooley asked how many people would be able to sit at a table. Mr. Graham stated that each table seats eight guests.

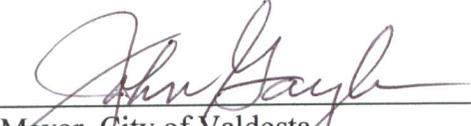
ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Payton entertained a motion for adjournment.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Vickers and seconded by Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the May 21, 2015 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:36 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, June 11, 2015.



Associate City Clerk, City of Valdosta



Mayor, City of Valdosta