



REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL

5:30 PM Thursday, April 21, 2016
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

MINUTES

OPENING CEREMONIES

Call to Order

Mayor John Gayle called the regular meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:31 p.m. Council members present were: Joseph "Sonny" Vickers, Ben Norton, Robert Yost, Sandra Tooley, Vivian Miller-Cody, and Councilman Alvin Payton. Councilman Tim Carroll was absent. The invocation was given by Associate Pastor David Tart of Park Avenue Methodist, and immediately followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

Special Presentation for the Winners of the "If I Were Mayor" Essay Contest.

Mayor Gayle stated that every year the "If I Were Mayor Essay Contest: is open to sixth grade students. These students are challenged to write essays on what they would do if they were Mayor and every year we are impressed with the essays that are submitted. A year ago we implemented a suggestion from Abbi Long, a sixth grader who felt that students should have a voice so the Valdosta Youth Council was organized. In fact, they are just finishing up the year and we should see them at a Council meeting soon. Each essay winner was recognized by Mayor Gayle and asked to read their essays: 3rd Place Winner - Deeya Patel, 2nd Place Winner - Kaightlyn Jowers, and 1st Place Winner - Toni Salami. All three winners were congratulated and presented with a certificate and a Mayor's coin. Mayor Gayle also recognized Ms. Nadine Whitfield, educator at Valdosta Middle School, as all three winners were students in her class at Valdosta Middle School. Mayor Gayle complimented Principal Beth Deloach and Ms. Whitfield for the excellent representation from their school.

MINUTES APPROVAL

The minutes of the April 7, 2016 Regular Meeting were approved by acclamation.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-5 Consideration of a request from the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport to approve a Resolution authorizing acceptance of a contract with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to proceed with removing Taxiway Charlie edge markings and related asphalt at the Valdosta Regional Airport.

City Manager Larry Hanson stated that this is a request for a resolution to authorize a contract with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to proceed with improvements at the Valdosta Regional Airport. GDOT has agreed to pay 75% of the costs, up to \$138,008 with the remaining 25% being paid by the Airport Authority from SPLOST funds that are designated to them. This project will remove Taxiway Charlie edge marking and related asphalt which will make it more usable for aircrafts in the future. This facility is also utilized by Moody Air Force Base for training purposes. The City administers all grants and contracts on behalf of

the Airport Authority, so tonight is just a request for authorization for the Mayor to sign this resolution. This is one example of the new transportation tax in the state of Georgia. This project is being funded solely from the proceeds of that tax and this is a prime example of how our community is benefiting from it.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Norton was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution 2016-5, a Resolution authorizing the acceptance of a contact with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to proceed with removing Taxiway Charlie edge marking and related asphalt at the Valdosta Regional Airport.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS AND EXPENDITURES

Mayor Gayle asked Purchasing Agent, Greg Brown to present all bids together as a consent agenda. Councilwoman Tooley stated that she had questions on Agenda Items 5d - 5g. Mayor Gayle amended his request and asked that bid items 5 a, 5b, 5c, 5h, and 5i be presented as a consent agenda.

Consideration of bids for a fleet truck (Stellar Container Handler) as requested by the Public Works Department. (5a)

Purchasing Agent Greg Brown stated that Bid 131516 was a bid for the purchase of a F750 truck for the Public Works Department. This vehicle is used to move and replace dumpsters for commercial accounts throughout the City. Sealed bids were received on April 12, 2016 for this item which was approved in the budget for this fiscal year. The recommended low bid was submitted by Speedway Ford in the amount of \$90,527.12. There were no bids from local vendors on this item because our local vendors do not sell vehicles this size.

Mayor Gayle asked Mr. Brown if he was correcting in stating that \$98,000 was the amount originally budgeted for this purchase which equated to an \$8,000 savings for the City. Mr. Brown affirmed that the Mayor's statement was correct.

Consideration of bids for a Multi-Conductor Closed Circuit TV (CCTV) Trailer Inspection System for the Utilities Department. (5b)

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent for the City of Valdosta stated that Bid 141516 was for a Multi-Conductor Closed Circuit TV (CCTV) Trailer Inspection System for the Utilities Department. This system is a robot car with a camera used by the Utilities Department to access storm drains and sewer pipes to stream live video, take pictures, and measure cracks. This system alerts the City of issues found so that repairs can be made before they become major problems. This item was approved in the budget in the amount of \$129,000. Sealed bids were received on April 12, 2016. The recommended low bid was submitted by Adam's Equipment in the amount of \$112,985.00

Consideration of bids for two, half-ton pickup trucks (regular cab) for the Engineering Department. (5c)

Mr. Brown stated that Bid 151516 was for two half-ton pickup trucks for the Engineering Department. These two vehicles were approved in the budget and will replace two older vehicles. Sealed bids were received on April 12, 2016. The recommended low bid was

submitted by Cass Burch in the amount of \$40,554.00, which is a \$200 decrease from last year's purchase of this type vehicle.

Mayor Gayle asked Mr. Brown if he would skip down to Agenda Item 5h, the purchase of two Chevrolet Tahoes for the Valdosta Police Department.

Consideration of bids for two, Chevrolet Tahoes for the Police Department. (5h)

Mr. Brown stated that Item 201516 will replace two older vehicles in the fleet. The low bidder was Prince Automotive in the amount of \$68,271.36. This is an increase of about \$4,100 from previous purchases. Councilwoman Tooley stated that if she remembered correctly two Tahoes were purchased for the Police Department last year. She asked if this was a yearly purchase for the department. Mr. Brown stated that the two Tahoes being purchased this year are actually for the Crime Lab and will be used by Crime Lab Technicians to hold all of their equipment. Councilwoman Tooley asked if staff assigned to these vehicles would be driving them home. Police Chief Brian Childress confirmed that staff would be taking the vehicles home because they will be on call and all of their equipment will be in their vehicles. Larry Hanson, City Manager, also stated that the vehicles up for purchase are replacement vehicles in a fleet of over 100 police vehicles. Each year the City replaces older, high maintenance vehicles for the safety of staff.

Consideration of bids to purchase four, half ton crew cab Pickup Trucks for the Utilities Department and the Public Works Department. (5i)

Mr. Brown stated that Bid 211516 will purchase four half-ton Crew Cab Pickup trucks designated to the Utilities and Public Works Departments. Three of the vehicles will go to the Utilities Department and one to the Public Works Department to transport city crews to various work locations. All fours will replace vehicles with high mileage and high maintenance. The recommended low bidder was received from Cass Burch, CDJ on April 12, 2016 in the amount of \$99,908.00, which includes a savings of \$449 from previous purchases.

Mayor Gayle asked for a motion to approve Agenda Items 5a, 5b, 5c, 5h and 5i.

A MOTION by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Payton was unanimously adopted to approve the request.

Mayor Gayle asked Mr. Brown to back up on the agenda and present item 5d.

Consideration of bids for ten rear wheel drive Pursuit Vehicles for the Police Department. (5d)

Mr. Brown stated that Bid 171516 will replace ten rear wheel pursuit vehicles for the Police Department. Funds are budgeted for the purchase of these vehicles. Again, these are vehicles with high mileage and high maintenance and are used on 12-hour shifts. The recommended low bid was received on April 12, 2016 from Cass Burch DCJ in the amount of \$228,170.00 or \$22,817 per vehicle, which is a saving of \$983 per vehicle. Councilwoman Tooley commented that she understood vehicles need to be replaced but weren't vehicles purchased through a lease the previous year. Mayor Gayle answered yes and explained that

GEFA is used to purchase vehicles up front as a lease option to buy agreement. The money is paid back over years but the vehicles have been purchased by then and in use by the City. Councilwoman Tooley asked if the money for the purchase of the vehicles comes from the Motorpool. Mr. Hanson stated that the money does come from the Motorpool, but the City gets a short-term loan through GEFA which helps with the cash flow. Instead of writing a check for \$228,000 up front, we write a check for a fifth of that amount over a five year period. It equates to financing vehicles instead of paying cash up front. In hard times this process helps to manage the cash flow, especially when you have the number of vehicles the City does. When there is a need for replacement it can be costly, but there is nothing more important than the safety of our men and women who use these vehicles on a daily basis. Councilwoman Tooley questioned as to whether the vehicles assigned to the Police Department will be taken home by the staff that uses them. Mr. Hanson answered yes, further stating that the police department has had a take home vehicle policy in place for 20 years.

Councilman Vickers commented that the City will have automobile replacements every year.

Consideration of bids for one Ford Mustang for the Police Department. (5e)

Mr. Brown reviewed Bid 161516 for the purchase of one Ford Mustang for the Valdosta Police Department. Funds have been budgeted for this vehicle. Sealed bids were received on April 12, 2016 from Langdale Ford in the amount of \$31,332.00. Although only one bid was received, this bid is well below the retail price. Additionally, we get a benefit from Steeda who will upgrade the vehicle at no cost to the City. If you remember, a mustang was totaled in an accident last year, this is a replacement for that vehicle.

Consideration of bids for a rear wheel drive Pursuit Administrative Vehicle for the Police Department. (5f)

Mr. Brown stated that Bid 181516 was for a rear wheel drive pursuit administrative vehicle which will be used by the Detective Department. This vehicle is also in the budget to be replaced. Sealed bids were received on April 12, 2016. The low recommended bid was submitted from Cass Burch CDJ in the amount of \$21,887.00. This vehicle is a 6-cylinder vehicle which lowers the cost when compared to 8-cylinder vehicle purchases. Last year we paid \$23,346.00 for a similar vehicle which results in a savings of \$1,459.00. Councilwoman Tooley inquired about the title of Administrative Vehicle. Mr. Brown commented that the vehicle was listed as such because it is a 6-cylinder vehicle versus an 8-cylinder vehicle. Councilwoman Tooley questioned the use of the vehicle. Mr. Brown stated this vehicle is used by detectives who do not normally get in pursuits. Mr. Hanson also commented that there are about 15 vehicles in the Detective Agency that will eventually come up for replacement and as Councilman Vickers stated earlier, every year there will be vehicles in our fleet that will need to be replaced .

Consideration of bids for a rear wheel Pursuit Administrative Vehicle for the Fire Department. (5g)

Mr. Brown stated the Bid 191516 is for a rear wheel pursuit administrative vehicle for the Fire Department. This vehicle is also a budgeted item. Seal bids were received on April 12, 2016 from Cass Burch CDJ in the amount of \$22,317.00. The cost differs a little and is slightly

increased because of the color and the additional coats of paint necessary to finish the vehicle properly. Staff recommends awarding the bid to Cass Burch CDJ. Councilwoman Tooley asked about the purchase of two such vehicles last year. Mr. Brown confirmed that this vehicle purchase was identical to the two vehicles purchased last year. Councilwoman Tooley questioned whether the Police Department gave the Fire Department two such vehicles. Mr. Brown answered no, not to his knowledge. Mr. Hanson stated that perhaps Councilwoman misunderstood Mr. Brown's earlier statement when he said that the Fire Department would also be purchasing the same administrative vehicle as the Police Department. Councilwoman Tooley asked what happens to police department's pursuit vehicles. Mr. Hanson stated that the vehicles are rolled out of the fleet and are sometimes sold on Gov.Deals or sometimes used by the maintenance fleet to replace parts on other vehicles. Councilwoman Tooley asked if the administrative vehicles purchased last year for the Fire Department were painted red. Mr. Hanson confirmed that the two administrative vehicles purchased last year for the Valdosta Fire Department were painted red. Councilwoman Tooley asked who were the staff members that drive the vehicles home. Mr. Hanson stated that the vehicles were driven by the staff members assigned to them. Councilwoman Tooley replied that she was under the impression that the Battalion Chiefs just recently got new vehicles. Mr. Hanson clarified that this vehicle was for a different Battalion Chief. Councilwoman Tooley stated that a number of citizens have contacted her regarding money spent on vehicles purchased by the City. The concept of replacing the vehicles is understood but these questions have to be asked so that answers can be provided to citizens. Mayor Gayle informed Councilwoman Tooley that he would be glad to meet with her and review the budget as it relates to vehicle purchases. He stated that he had the replacement schedule and would be happy to share that information. Councilwoman inquired as to whether Wiregrass Technical College could refurbish some vehicles and save the City money. Mayor Gayle stated that when a vehicle gets to be 10 - 16 years old in some cases, it is just cheaper to replace it than to keep repairing it.

Mayor Gayle asked Council for action on Agenda Items 5d through 5g.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Vickers was unanimously approved to accept the low bids recommended by staff.

Mr. Hanson made an additional comment to make Mayor and Council aware that funding for vehicles is in the Motorpool. Vehicles are paid for and charged back to each department. In other words, if vehicles were not purchased the money would not be available for any other purposes. The Motorpool exists to serve all departments in the City with the acquisition, maintenance, and replacement of their vehicle needs.

Consideration of bids to repair the roof on the Public Works Maintenance Shop.

Pat Collins, City Engineer, stated the roof of the Public Works Maintenance Shop needs to be repaired. The original building was build back in 1970 and there has only been periodic maintenance on the roof. As you can see from the photograph that's being passed around, the roof type is a flat roof which is the worst type of roof that you can possibly have. The roof is severely damaged and leaks across the bay every time it rains. This project has been bid out twice and we have only received one bid. Last year, staff consulted several roofing contractors

and used their suggestions to develop a scope of work. As a result of the information compiled from our research, the current fiscal budget has \$65,000.00 earmarked for this project. On April 7, 2016, Lowndes Roofing and Sheet Metal submitted a bid in the amount of \$54,130.00 It is staff's recommendation to approve the bid from Lowndes Roofing plus a 10% contingency to handle unforeseen circumstances for a total for \$59,543.00.

Councilman Vickers asked if Staff gave any consideration to a hip roof instead of a flat roof. Mr. Collins stated that a hip roof had not been considered. The roof will still be flat but the contractor will replace the liner and put on a brand new roof on the building instead of more repairs like in previous years.

Mr. Hanson commented that flat roofs are definitely not a good thing but unfortunately in during that generation most buildings had flat roofs. It is a better long-term solution but it certainly adds cost. Mayor Gayle asked if Lowndes Roofing offered a warranty on the roof. Mr. Collins confirmed that a warranty is included but stated he did not have the details of the warranty with him. Mr. Payton commented that he found it interesting that roofing companies declined to make further repairs. That indicates that something really needs to be done. Mr. Hanson stated that the roof is in a state of deterioration and contractors were aware that it would be tough to make repairs; however, in spite of having to bid the project twice, we now have a reputable contractor to do the work. Councilman Vickers stated that he thought the building had received a new roof in the past. Mr. Hanson stated that there was an addition to the shop and the new addition had received a new roof but not the original building.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Norton was unanimously adopted to approve Lowndes Roofing & Sheet Metal to replace the roof on the Public Works Maintenance Shop.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the City had a very successful Job Fair earlier in the day thanks to Human Resource Manager Renassa Small, and Chief Brian Childress. This was a unique job fair held by the South Georgia Coalition for Employments which is made up of the City, Department of Labor, Goodwill, Sentinel, Wiregrass, the Chamber and many others. It is slotted to be one of the most successful ones that has ever been held in our community. In fact, today nearly 400 citizens attended this job fair and nearly 40 businesses participating.

Mr. Hanson reminded Council that Georgia Cities Week was still being recognized. We have had a lot of things going on to educate our community this week. We appreciate the support of Jennifer and the Valdosta Daily Times in covering these events. We had a great Job Shadow Day several days ago with almost 40 students from Valdosta High School. The Employee Appreciation luncheon held on today was very good and very well received. The

Mayor's Youth Council met this afternoon for their final meeting this afternoon. Events like the "If I Were Mayor Contest" are great ways to engage our youths and get them involved in their city. This is an excellent time and opportunity for us to encourage and inspire our youths.

Mr. Hanson thanked everyone for coming out the groundbreaking ceremony for the South Troupe Project. We are excited to get that project going and work is already taking place.

Mr. Hanson stated that the LMIG list for resurfacing of streets will be going out for bid soon and will repair streets with funds from the Department of Transportation.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Robert Yost acknowledged and thanked city staff for the excellent job they do representing the City. Councilman Yost also asked Mayor Gayle to explain his quote that was printed in the Valdosta Daily Times regarding the Hospital Authority.

Mayor Gayle replied that on several occasions an invitation had been extended to the Councilman to meet to discuss the issue of the hospital situation. This will be the best way to handle this issue.

Councilman Yost commented and asked for confirmation from the Mayor that he did not want to make a public statement at the meeting.

Councilman Miller-Cody thanked staff for the excellent representation at the Job Fair held earlier in the day. This was a great opportunity for our citizens and they are excited. Can we make this happen again soon? This was an awesome job by city staff and we are extremely proud to be a part of such a worthwhile event.

Councilwoman Tooley stated that she hated to miss the employee luncheon but personally appreciates all that the employees do.

Mr. Hanson thanked Sememtha Mathews, Public Information Officer, for her role in planning the events for Georgia Cities Week.

Councilman Vickers asked Mr. Hanson about the cleanup event scheduled for the weekend. Mr. Hanson stated that a cleanup is scheduled for this Saturday. There are various locations in the city where citizens can participate and bring their materials. We encourage citizens to participate. It's a great opportunity to clean and get rid of garbage and things that have been laying around. The program is for residents of the City and they will need to show a water bill to verify their residency.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Ms. Judy Haverkamp of 3922 Island Creek Road, Valdosta, Georgia, stated that she was a volunteer with the Humane Society and worked with various rescue groups in town. Ms.

Haverkamp inquired about the new ordinance recently passed by the County regarding people selling pets in parking lots and on the side of the road. She asked that Council take this ordinance into consideration and adopt a similar ordinance to not only protect citizens who unknowingly purchase sick and unhealthy animals but to protect other animals who might come into contact with a sick animal. An ordinance such as this will also protect citizens from salesmen who misrepresent the pedigree of the pet. People who sale animals should be licensed and governed by the Department of Agriculture just like our agency. Furthermore, businesses such as TJMaxx do not want these people selling on their property and something really has to be done soon.

Councilman Vickers stated that the City could not enforce an ordinance ensuring that an animal is pure breed. Ms. Haverkamp stated that she understood but mention that an actual breeder will have papers and documentation for the animal.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, reminded Council that this item was brought to their attention at the April 7, Council meeting. We now have a copy of the document adopted by the County and we had several conversations with Dr. Amanda Hall who worked with the County for two years to get the ordinance adopted. Staff hopes to bring you a document within the next 30 - 60 days that will very similar to the ordinance adopted by the County and revise our entire ordinance. Staff has reviewed the document but it is not cost effective to present one section at a time, but we do hope to make a presentation in the next 30 - 60 days. In addition, Ms. Haverkamp, it might benefit you to note that private businesses have a right to regulate what happens on their property. Any private or commercial business that does not want someone selling something on their property has a right to do ask them to leave or say no. An ordinance is not required to enforce this.

Reverend Willie C. Simons, 303 Hamilton Lane in Valdosta Georgia, stated that he had placed a call to Mayor earlier in the day and previously talked with the Director of Public Works, Mr. Hardy, concerning drainage issues. He stated that he was aware of the projects the City is working on but the maintenance of existing drains must also be a priority. The ditches and drains are currently clogged with debris. City has Marshals ride through the city and check the various areas for grass and abandoned cars in the city but is there anyone who rides around and check for clogged drains? There are drains that are improperly placed, insufficient, and have no effect on the water that is running through our neighborhood. Director Hardy came out and took pictures. Reverend Simons stated that he would like to know if city staff can be assigned to inspect the drains on a regular basis. It is his opinion that flooding in some areas is a direct result of clogged ditches. It is an easy problem to solve. A City without limits means you address the concerns on the south, west, north, and east end but my concern is that we are being left behind. This is an issue that needs immediate attention. Mr. Hanson questioned the location of the ditches. Reverend Simons stated the affected area included Hamilton Lane and the whole area on the south end, which encompasses property in Districts 1 and 2. Pictures were forwarded to the Mayor which he will hopefully share. This is not just an issue in my neck of the woods; it is a problem throughout Districts 1 and 2. My other concern is that all there are some businesses that are not cutting their grass. Are those enterprises being cited by the City? Specifically the McDonald's and Family Dollar property should be addressed; it's about to get hot and the time of the year when snakes and rodents make their appearance.

Mayor Gayle stated that he did receive the pictures late in the day and would definitely address the issue on tomorrow.

Mr. Ken Klanicky, 2300 North Patterson Street, Valdosta, Georgia, addressed Council regarding a letter recently written by former Fire Chief J.D. Rice that was published in the Valdosta Daily Times. Mr. Klanicky stated that several good points were raised as to the efficiency of hiring fire fighters a distance away. Several roads are currently under construction which would hinder progress of a fire fighters' response to an emergency call. Distances such as Homerville, Jasper Florida, and even Tifton might be good areas to recruit personnel but remember that fires break out at odd times. We have an excellent fire department in every respect; however, this Council should revisit the recent ordinance and give some thought to improving it. Mr. Klanicky stated that he wanted Valdosta to have a great fire department, not a pretty good one, not an excellent one.

ADJOURNMENT

A Motion by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the April 21, 2016 meeting of the Valdosta city Council at 6:36 pm to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, May 5, 2016.