

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL**  
**5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2007**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL**

**OPENING CEREMONIES**

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

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Special Presentation to Gail Green, Outgoing Chairman of the Central Valdosta Development Authority.

Mayor Pro Tem Willie Head stated that Gail Green, outgoing Chairman of the Central Valdosta Development Authority and ambassador of downtown Valdosta is a dynamic, energetic, and enthusiastic redhead who runs wide open all of the time and who loves downtown Valdosta. She spends a lot of her time volunteering with people and working on projects to make downtown really happen. Mayor Pro Tem Head stated that his first meeting with Gail was in a room downstairs working with the City of Valdosta Main Street Program. Gail was a bundle of joy and enthusiasm and he knew she would make a mark on the City of Valdosta. Gail arrived in Valdosta, Georgia in 1994 to begin her new job as Manager of the Ashley House, a 60-unit, seven-story complex in the heart of downtown Valdosta and she has been a downtown lover since the first day she arrived. Gail has also been very important to Valdosta Main Street and the Central Valdosta Development Authority (CVDA). Her tenure with the CVDA started in 1995 as a member of the Promotions Committee and served on that Committee until 1997 when she was elected to the CVDA Board and served as Vice-Chairman. Gail was also very active in the two-year long Streetscape project in 1998 and worked with the business owners to help them stay open even with construction going on right in front of their businesses. As Vice-Chairman of the CVDA Board, Gail accomplished one of the largest tasks to be undertaken downtown. She was the Chairman of the Committee that established a Community Improvement District (CID) downtown. CID is a special tax imposed on the district property owners for improvement of the area, and Gail worked diligently in getting the signatures of the business owners required to implement the CID. She single-handedly led the creation of this new district which was a very difficult task since this was a new tax and an extra 10 mils. Gail has served as Chairman of the Central Valdosta Development Authority Board since 2001 and has been the driving force in revitalizing the CVDA Board and Committees. Under Gail's watch, the CVDA has seen a record number of businesses locate and expand in the downtown area. She has remained very active and has helped to organize and participate in numerous downtown Main Street activities. She attends and volunteers with the First Fridays each month throughout the year, the Brown Bag Lunches in May, and the Jingle Bell Festival. The CVDA Board members and Committee members will miss her commitment to excellence. It is because of Gail Green's leadership that the CVDA is stronger than ever. Mayor Pro Tem thanked Gail for her years of service and presented her with a plaque on behalf of the Mayor and Council in appreciation of all her efforts and support.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the January 11, 2007, meeting of the Valdosta City Council were approved by unanimous consent (6-0) of the Council.

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Joseph Brown, 508 Cypress Street, stated that he was also representing Sylvester Hobbs, 510 Cypress Street, Imogene Williams, 502 Cypress Street, and Mary Daniels, all who live on the north side of the 500 block of Cypress Street. Mr. Brown stated that they are concerned about a project being constructed at 511 Cypress Street

and the City's process in handling the project. The builder is constructing a duplex directly across from Mr. Brown's property and there is a duplex located next door to the new construction. Mr. Brown stated that Cypress Street is a very narrow and busy street and they have been fortunate to have residents who do not block the street due to limited parking for the duplex; however, some houses were recently built in the 700 block of Cypress Street between Mystic and Forrest Street and those residents have to park on the street because there is not adequate parking. Mr. Brown stated that he spoke with the Engineering Department and they are investigating the traffic flow in that area. With the setbacks on the new duplex property, the first responders would have trouble getting in there if there was a crisis due to the space that it will be taking up. Mr. Brown stated that he was concerned about the traffic, where the residents would park, and how it would impede access through that particular block. If this was a business project then there would be a review process, but the residential property process is rubber-stamped. If no one actually goes on site to review the residential plan to see how it is going to be built and how it will impact the community, then it creates instability in stable neighborhoods. Larry Hanson, City Manager, inquired as to whether this was one duplex unit. Mr. Brown stated that it was one, two-story duplex approximately 2,600 square feet (1,300 square feet per unit) and was being built next to a 40-50 year old duplex. Von Shipman, City Engineer, stated that he has reviewed the project and contacted the builder who indicated that there would be two, off-street perpendicular parking spaces connected to the street so there would be no on-street parking in that area. Councilman Payton inquired as to the number of parking spaces per unit. Von Shipman stated that there was no requirement for residential but the contractor has provided two parking spaces due to the width of the property being too narrow to support additional spaces. Anne-Marie Wolff, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that there may be a requirement for two parking spaces per unit for one and two-family dwellings but she would need to confirm that requirement. Von Shipman stated that he would need to meet with the builder to see if they could place additional parking spaces. Councilman Head stated that he thought there would be two parking spaces per unit in discussions with both the builder and Mr. Brown. Von Shipman stated that with the parking spaces being 10 feet wide there could be four parking spaces all the way across the front of the building but the entire front yard would be a parking lot. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Planning and Zoning Administrator would verify the parking requirements and work with the builder to insure that the requirement is met. Mr. Brown stated that he would like to see a committee formed to review this type of project to insure that it fits into the neighborhood. Mr. Brown stated that the builder had gone through all of the processes that the City requires and the residents were not concerned with the builder; however, there is a problem with the City's zoning.

Alton Woodward, 5740 Gardenia Circle, Lake Park, stated that he is the builder of the duplex project and was going by the duplex next door as far as the parking spaces were concerned. They were going to have two cars lined up behind each other and had planned to landscape the unit; however, he had no problem with placing four spaces across the front even though that would eliminate all of the landscaping and it would be all concrete in front of the duplex. Larry Hanson stated that they would meet with Mr. Woodward to resolve the parking issue but he would have to meet the parking requirement and put in the required number of spaces.

## **ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

### **ORDINANCE NO. 2007-2, AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH QUALIFYING FEES AND DATES FOR THE 2007 CITY OF VALDOSTA MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS**

Consideration of a request to establish qualifying fees and dates for the 2007 City of Valdosta municipal elections.

Mark Barber, Finance Director, stated that according to Georgia Code 21-2-131(a)(1)(A), the governing authority of any county or municipality shall fix and publish a qualifying fee for each county or municipal office to be filled in the upcoming primary or election no later than February 1<sup>st</sup> of any year in which a general primary, non-partisan election, or general election is to be held, and at least 35 days prior to the special primary or election. The qualifying fees are determined in accordance with State Code and represent 3% of the past 12 months of compensation for each of these offices. The districts up for election and qualifying fees are as follows: (1) Mayor/Council: Mayor - John Fretti -\$750, District 1 - James Wright - \$465, District 3 - Joseph Vickers - \$465, District 5 - David Sumner - \$465, At Large - John Eunice - \$465, and (2) School Board: District 1 - Annie Fisher - \$35, District 2 - Betty Rogers -\$35, and District 3 - Warren Lee -\$35. The election will be held on November 6, 2007 and qualifying times are August 27-31, 2007 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Also, the contract with the Lowndes

County Board of Elections includes the following services: (1) Qualifying of candidates, (2) Training poll workers, (3) Placing required ads, and (4) Other duties as may be required to conduct the November 6, 2007 municipal election. Mark Barber recommended that Council approve the ordinance calling for the November 6, 2007 Municipal Non-Partisan Election and set the applicable qualifying fees in order to comply with State of Georgia Code and approve the request to enter into a contract with Lowndes County Board of Election to conduct the November 6, 2007 municipal election.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2007-2 to establish qualifying fees and dates for the 2007 City of Valdosta municipal elections and approve the request to enter into a contract with Lowndes County Board of Election to conduct the November 6, 2007 municipal election, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book X.

### **BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES**

Consideration of an agreement with Camp Dresser McKee, Inc. (CDM) for preparation of a hydraulic water system study.

Leon Weeks, Utilities Director, stated that the Water and Sewer Master Plan adopted by the Mayor and Council in 1999 provided for a number of major design and construction activities to meet the needs for continuance of service to existing customers and to provide service for growth of the City. The needed improvements include water supply, water treatment, water storage, water transmission, and water distribution projects for drinking water and fire protection service. Water storage was to include an additional tank at the water treatment plant and an additional elevated storage tank in the City. Water transmission included additional pumps at the plant to pump water to the City and a large main to connect to the existing water distribution system in the City. Water distribution improvements included over 30 miles of small diameter mains that have now been replaced in all Council Districts. Wastewater improvements included the upgrade and expansion of both existing treatment plants, construction of outfalls and lift stations to new growth areas, and rehabilitation or replacement of existing outfalls and collector lines in all districts of the City. The City selected Camp, Dresser and McKee (CDM) to assist with the water supply, water treatment, water storage, and transmission alternatives. CDM conducted a well field study and water treatment analysis, and will made improvements to the treatment process to eliminate red water and treatment problems. The contract with CDM also included the design and construction management of the treatment plant and pumps and the ground storage tank at the plant as well as providing for additional tasks to be completed as needed. A second procurement process was completed and Robert Bates and Associates was contracted to design small diameter water main replacements. A GEFA loan was obtained and 30 miles of mains were replaced. A third consultant procurement process was completed and CDM and Metcalf and Eddy were selected to perform wastewater activities. CDM was contracted to perform initial studies for wastewater needs and to prepare engineering documents associated with obtaining loans for the needed work. A GEFA loan was approved in December, 2006 for the elevated storage tank, the first phase of water transmission mains, and several other water and wastewater improvements. The next water improvement project to complete the Master Plan will be updating of the computer model of the City's system to determine the proper size of the water tank and the size of the second transmission main to connect from the plant to the City. A contract can then be awarded to design and construct the facilities. The model update will include entry of data on the new plant pumping capacity, the new transmission mains that have been installed since 1999, and the replaced small diameter mains. The CDM Water Contract states that the modeling work as a special service can be added to the contract. Staff felt that additional contracts for design of the facilities is within the scope of the Master Plan activities allowed after the initial consultant selection process for selection of CDM to perform drinking water engineering services. CDM proposes to update the water system model for a fee not to exceed \$26,000. Leon Weeks recommended that Council approve the proposal of CDM, authorize the City Manager to execute a contract amendment, accept proposals from CDM for water tank design and for Phase I water transmission projects as outlined in the GEFA loan, and negotiate fees to be approved by the Mayor and Council at a later date. Councilman Wright inquired about the water tank installation at Scott Park. Larry Hanson stated that this has been in the Master Plan for many years and has been incorporated into the overall design that is currently underway for Scott Park. Councilman Wright inquired as to the timeframe for installation of the water tank. Leon Weeks stated that the study will take approximately 60 days and it would be sent out for bid during the summer of 2007. Councilman Wright stated that he served on the Planning Committee for Scott Park and did not remember a water tank. Larry Hanson stated that

there was an area on the plat that was reserved for the water tank. Leon Weeks stated that it was the southern most street in the Woodgate Subdivision that runs between Continental and Clay Road.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Sumner, seconded by Councilman Vickers, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to follow the recommendation of the Utilities Director and approve the proposal of CDM, authorize the City Manager to execute a contract amendment, accept proposals from CDM for water tank design and for Phase I water transmission projects as outlined in the GEFA loan, and negotiate fees to be approved by the Mayor and Council at a later date.

### **LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS**

Consideration of a request by Lowndes County to support the rezoning of property located at and surrounding the Pecan Row Landfill to Intensive Services (I-S) and Conservation (CON) including the City's closed landfill property.

Anne-Marie Wolff, Planning & Zoning Administrator, stated that this case represents a joint attempt to bring the current and future uses on Wetherington Lane, including the Pecan Row Landfill, property owned by the Langdale Company, and the existing Veolia Landfill, into conformance. When the County adopted the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC), they adopted a new zoning district, Intensive Services (I-S), for wastewater treatment, energy generation, landfill, effluent treatment systems, and anything that requires an environmental permit. These particular properties were overlooked when the County was identifying properties to be rezoned to I-S. The City's wastewater treatment plant is already zoned I-S but the former and existing landfills are not. The County would like to bring these properties into compliance with their current use. There are a few differences in the development standards but since no new construction is anticipated in the near future for the City's property, there should be no impact. The rezoning of this property will bring it into compliance with the Future Development Map which depicts the entire area as industrial service type use. Larry Hanson stated that the property includes the Pecan Row Landfill, the City's closed Wetherington Lane Landfill, property for the future Evergreen Landfill, and the Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment Plant located at the end of the road. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that there is a separate issue concerning the Langdale property and the Veolia property which does not have impact on the City's former landfill. Councilman Sumner inquired as to the recommendation of Ms. Wolff. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that it was her recommendation that Council approve the request. The Planning Commission would hear the request Monday night. Councilman Sumner inquired as to why Council was voting on this prior to the Planning Commission. Larry Hanson stated that the City is the owner of the property and they are asking for the City's concurrence to rezone a piece of property that the City owns so it would not come back before Council but go to the Planning Commission and then the Lowndes Co. Board of Commissioners. Larry Hanson stated that Council should make the determination whether they want a City-owned piece of property in unincorporated Lowndes County rezoned. Councilman Sumner inquired as to the recommendation of the City Manager. Larry Hanson asked Jason Davenport, County Planner, to address Council.

Jason Davenport, County Planner, stated that this was a County-initiated request. In December, 2006, the County realized that the zoning did not cover everything and at that time they were not certain as to whether they were going to rezone it combined with Onyx or rezone it separately and address it just with the City of Valdosta. The determination was made to keep it as one case so they contacted the City. Larry Hanson stated that this includes not only the Onyx Pecan Row Landfill but also the 300 acres they own for a future landfill and the 500 acres that Langdale Company bought from Deep South Solid Waste Authority. Councilman Sumner inquired as to whether this would have any effect on future development of that land. Larry Hanson stated that if the future landfill was zoned the same then it should not have an effect. Zoning is not much of an issue for governmental property because they are not legally bound by zoning. Councilman Sumner inquired as to why they were doing this. Larry Hanson stated that this was for clarification and consistency on the maps. Councilman Yost inquired as to whether the Planning Commission could act on this if Council did not agree to the zoning. Larry Hanson stated that if you are rezoning one piece of property then the owner has vested interest. George Talley, City Attorney, stated the City owns the property and is not subject to their zoning laws. Mayor Pro Tem inquired as to the urgency of the request. Larry Hanson stated that the County already had the zoning case for the other properties surrounding the City's property. Jason Davenport stated that they wanted to approach the City prior to proceeding with the advertising and the rezoning. Larry Hanson stated that the City has no anticipated use of the closed landfill site and it will have to be monitored for approximately 30 years. Larry Hanson recommended that Council approve

The request to support rezoning of property located at and surrounding the Pecan Row Landfill to Intensive Services (I-S) and Conservation (CON) including the City of Valdosta's closed landfill property.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Yost, seconded by Councilman Vickers, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve request to support the rezoning of property located at and surrounding the Pecan Row Landfill to Intensive Services (I-S) and Conservation (CON) including the City of Valdosta's closed landfill property.

### **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that several Council members attended the Georgia Municipal Association Mayor's Day Conference in Atlanta and had an opportunity to hear about State issues. They also had an opportunity to meet with the local Legislative delegation to discuss issues that could have a critical effect on cities.

Larry Hanson thanked all of those in attendance to accept the Trendsetter Award at the Mayor's Day Conference. He also thanked John Whitehead, III, Public Works Director, who was unable to attend but was responsible for helping the City to be eligible to win the award.

The Mayor/Council Retreat will be held February 16-18, 2007 and items for discussion are due within the next few days.

Larry Hanson stated that Mayor Fretti and Mara Register, Community Director, were in Washington, D.C. to accept the Audrey Nelson Community Development Achievement Award from the National Community Development Association for the 2006 Group Workcamp Project. This is the first National Award of that significance that the City has won and many of the Congressional delegation, including U. S. Representative Jack Kingston, U. S. Senator Johnny Isakson, and U. S. Senator Saxby Chambliss, were in attendance. Senator Isakson commended the City for their accomplishments and read into the official record of the U. S. States Senate that the City of Valdosta was the recipient of the award. Mayor Pro Tem Head stated that the City of Valdosta was one of eleven communities competing for the award and this was a significant accomplishment.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilman Vickers thanked Larry Hanson, City Manager, Mara Register, Community Development Director, Chief J. D. Rice and the Fire Department, Council members, and the City for the support given during the Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration.

Councilman Eunice stated that Professor Charles Bulloch will be at Valdosta State University, Bailey Hall, at 7:00 p.m. tonight to discuss the future of the political landscape of Georgia and south Georgia in particular.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Pro Tem Head adjourned the Valdosta City Council meeting at 6:20 p.m. to enter into an Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation.

Mayor Pro Tem Head reconvened the regular City Council meeting at 6:45 p.m. and stated that there was no action necessary in relation to the discussion about litigation in Executive Session.

Mayor Pro Tem Head entertained a motion for adjournment.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Eunice was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the January 11, 2007 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:45 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, February 8, 2007.