

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2009
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: Sonny Vickers, Tim Carroll, Alvin Payton, Jr., Willie Head, Jr., John Eunice, Robert Yost, and James Wright. The invocation was given by Councilman Tim Carroll, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION OF THE FEBRUARY, 2009 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH AWARD

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion for the February, 2009 Employee of the Month Award.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Eunice, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the February, 2009 Employee of the Month Award.

Mayor Fretti presented the February, 2009 Employee of the Month Award to Lewis Graham and Roy Bradley (Water and Sewer Department).

Lewis Graham began his employment with the City of Valdosta's Water and Sewer Department in April, 1980 as a Maintenance Mechanic. He was promoted to his current position of Maintenance Supervisor in July, 1998. Roy Bradley began his employment with the City's Water and Sewer Department in August, 1995 as a Laborer. He was promoted to Wastewater Treatment Operator in February, 1997 which is the position he currently holds. After the retirement of the Plant Superintendent in 2008, Lewis and Roy took on additional leadership roles at the Treatment Plant while the vacancy was being filled. With Lewis handling the administrative aspects of the division along with his maintenance duties and Roy supervising the operation of the treatment process, the performance of the Treatment Plant never suffered. Also during this period, they both worked diligently to install a new filter system at the plant which has further reduced suspended solid levels. Their efforts during the absence of a Superintendent ensured both the smooth operation of the Plant and the continued production of a quality product. It was once said that dedication is not what others expect of you, it is what you give to others. The dedication of Lewis Graham and Roy Bradley has given much back to the City of Valdosta and the citizens they serve. For these reasons and many others, the City of Valdosta recognized Lewis Graham and Roy Bradley as Employees of the Month.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 22, 2009 Regular Meeting of the Valdosta City Council were approved by unanimous consent (7-0) of the Council.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Barthaniel Werts, 903 North Troup Street, stated that he was concerned about the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Citizen Advisory Committee. Mr. Werts was appointed to this Committee four years ago and his term will be expiring soon. He inquired as to why he would have to complete another application for the same position he is already holding. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that last year the Mayor and Council changed the appointment Policy for Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Committees and revised the application which requests different information. Those who have previously served and are asking to be reappointed had to complete the new application as stated in the new Policy. From this point on, the same application for anyone reappointed in the future would be good unless the Policy changes again in the future. Mr. Werts inquired as to when the new Policy was put in place. Larry Hanson stated that the new policy was implemented in August, 2008. Mr. Werts stated that he was told when he completed the application that he would not have to fill out another one and he was not in town when the new applications were supposed to be turned in.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE VALDOSTA LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ORDINANCE WITHDRAWN

Consideration of an ordinance to rezone 2.08 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) and Highway-Commercial (C-H) to Multi-Family Residential (R-M) as requested by Jimmy Bennett (File No. VA-2009-01). The property is located at the northwest side of Hickory Road, north of St. Augustine Road. The Planning Commission reviewed this request at their January regular meeting and recommended approval (6-0 vote).

Mayor Fretti stated that the applicant has withdrawn the request.

ORDINANCE NO. 2009-3, AN ORDINANCE FOR A TEXT AMENDMENT TO THE VALDOSTA LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ORDINANCE

Consideration of an ordinance for a Text Amendment to the Land Development Regulations (LDR), Section 242-4, Amendments, (a) Initiation of Amendments, (1) Persons Entitled to Propose Amendments as requested by the City of Valdosta (File No. VA-2009-02). The purpose of the Text Amendment is to give the Planning and Zoning Administrator authority to initiate rezonings and Text Amendments in addition to the other entities listed in the LDR. The Planning Commission reviewed this request at their January regular meeting and recommended approval (6-0 vote).

Anne-Marie Wolff, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that this Text Amendment was unanimously initiated by the Valdosta City Council on January 8, 2009. The purpose of this Text Amendment is to give the Planning and Zoning Administrator authority to initiate rezonings and Text Amendments in addition to the other entities listed in the regulations. Final approval of all Text Amendments will still occur by the City Council following a recommendation by the Planning Commission; however, the review and approval process will occur in a shorter time frame. Staff found the request consistent with the goals and policies of Comprehensive Plan and recommended approval. The Planning Commission reviewed this request at their January 26, 2009 regular meeting and recommended approval (6-0).

No one spoke in favor of the request.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2009-3, an Ordinance for a Text Amendment to the Land Development Regulations (LDR), Section 242-4, Amendments, (a) Initiation of Amendments, (1) Persons Entitled to Propose Amendments as requested by the City of Valdosta, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XI.

ORDINANCE NO. 2009-4, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE VALDOSTA LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ORDINANCE

Consideration of an ordinance to rezone properties from Single-Family Residential (R-6) and Multi-Family Residential (R-6) to the new Multi-Family Residential (R-M) zoning district as requested by the City of Valdosta (File No. VA-2009-03). The Planning Commission reviewed this request at their January regular meeting and recommended approval (6-0 vote).

Anne-Marie Wolff, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that with the adoption of the Land Development Regulations, several new zoning districts were created and the definitions of several existing districts were revised. One such new district is Multi-Family Residential (R-M). Creation of this new district resulted in the revision of the existing R-6 district, which previously allowed for both Multi-Family and Single-Family Residential development. In an effort to protect existing and future Single-Family neighborhoods, the City initiated rezoning of properties from R-6 to R-M. There may be additional R-6 properties within the City that warrant R-M zoning; however, Staff was unaware of specific plans for these properties. In these instances, Staff would review rezoning requests on a case-by-case basis. In many cases, the R-6 zoned property may no longer be appropriate for Multi-

Family development due to the existence of Single-Family development surrounding the property. The primary reason for establishing a separate Multi-Family residential zoning district was to protect Single-Family uses from inappropriate encroachment. Now that Multi-Family uses will be permitted in a different category from that permitting Single-Family uses, there will be greater control over the establishment of such uses and thus less potential for land use conflicts. Rezoning these properties to R-M will bring what are technically non-conforming uses, due to the adoption of the Land Development Regulations, into conforming status. There is no other change occurring to the properties. Staff found the request consistent with the goals and policies of Comprehensive Plan and recommended approval. The Planning Commission reviewed this request at their January 26, 2009 regular meeting and recommended approval of rezoning the listed properties from R-6 to R-M (6-0).

No one spoke in favor of the request.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Vickers, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2009-4, an Ordinance to rezone properties from Single-Family Residential (R-6) and Multi-Family Residential (R-6) to the new Multi-Family Residential (R-M) zoning district as requested by the City of Valdosta which is the first step in the process of getting the Land Use Map in line with the new zoning codes in the LDR and for Staff to use the Standards for Governing the Exercise of Zoning Powers in the recommendation phase, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XI.

ORDINANCE NO. 2009-5, AN ORDINANCE FOR A TEXT AMENDMENT TO THE VALDOSTA LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ORDINANCE

Consideration of an ordinance for Text Amendments to the Land Development Regulations (LDR) for the following sections: (i) Section 206-18, C-D Downtown Commercial District; (ii) Section 230-9, Sign Standards; (iii) Article 3, Supplemental Use Standards, Section 218-13, Standards of Use and Development; (iv) Chapter 214, Standards Applying to All Districts, Section 214-1, Dimensional Standards of Zoning Districts; (v) Chapter 222, Off-Street Parking Standards, Section 221-1, General Requirements; (vi) Chapter 328, Landscape, Buffers and Screening, Article 2, Tree Protection and Replacement and Landscaping, Section 328-14, Exemptions as requested by the City of Valdosta (File No. VA-2009-04). The Planning Commission reviewed this request at their January regular meeting and recommended approval (6-0 vote).

Anne-Marie Wolff, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that due to the sheer size of the new Land Development Regulations, it was anticipated that various Text Amendments would need to occur. This request represents the first of a series of Amendments. The proposed amendments primarily address development within the Downtown Commercial (C-D) Zoning District. Each of the proposed Text Amendments strengthens the implementation of the Land Development Regulations within the Downtown Commercial Zoning District. It will remove some provisions regarding outside sales and seating areas which will be brought before Council within the next few months as a Café Ordinance and will also remove provisions in the LDR in order to avoid any conflicting regulations in the future. The sign regulations will be amended to reflect the old standards which work very well for the Downtown District. The biggest change will be the standards applying to all Districts in Amendment #4 which regulates the density in the Downtown area. Because of the small lot sizes and multiple floors, using the traditional methods of regulating density is not appropriate. Instead of the seven floors Staff is recommending an 80-foot maximum height and if this is too conservative then Staff could re-evaluate this in the future. This change will help by regulating the minimum unit size and the maximum height which will make residential development more economical feasible in the Downtown area. Staff has also changed the off-street parking standards and will leave provisions that parking is not a requirement and applies to properties that are zoned Downtown-Commercial. If in the future a property on the boundary of the Downtown area should elect to have their property rezoned to Downtown-Commercial, Staff can evaluate the situation at that time to see if on-site parking may need to be a condition of the zoning approval. Also, there was confusion in the reference to the Central Valdosta Development Authority area which extends all the way to Gordon Street. The LDR stated that landscaping was not required for those properties and that was incorrect. Staff found the request consistent with the goals and policies of Comprehensive Plan and recommended approval. The Planning Commission reviewed this request at their January 26, 2009 regular meeting and recommended approval of the proposed Text Amendments.

No one spoke in favor of the request.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2009-5, an Ordinance for Text Amendments to the Land Development Regulations (LDR) for the following sections: (i) Section 206-18, C-D Downtown Commercial District; (ii) Section 230-9, Sign Standards; (iii) Article 3, Supplemental Use Standards, Section 218-13, Standards of Use and Development; (iv) Chapter 214, Standards Applying to All Districts, Section 214-1, Dimensional Standards of Zoning Districts; (v) Chapter 222, Off-Street Parking Standards, Section 221-1, General Requirements; (vi) Chapter 328, Landscape, Buffers and Screening, Article 2, Tree Protection and Replacement and Landscaping, Section 328-14, Exemptions as requested by the City of Valdosta, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XI.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of a Tower Attachment Agreement for Smalltown Broadcasting, LLC.

Anne-Marie Wolff, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that on January 12, 2009, Scott James Matheson submitted an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for construction of a 40-foot tower on the rear portion of the roof at 118 North Patterson Street in Downtown. Following review of the application, Emily Foster, Special Projects/Historic Preservation Planner, found that the installation of a 40-foot antenna as proposed would be inappropriate, as the sitting of such an antenna will adversely affect the aesthetic significance and value of the building onto which it is installed and the surrounding historic buildings of Downtown Valdosta. Therefore, Staff recommended denial of the request as submitted. In addition to the Certificate of Appropriateness approval, Mr. Matheson would also be required to receive approval through the Community Development Department. According to Chapter 218, Article 4 of the Land Development Regulations, the applicant must demonstrate that co-location is not feasible. In this case, co-location is feasible due to the City's existing tower which has available capacity. For these reasons, Staff recommended approval of the co-location rather than construction of a new tower. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the tower located on City Hall is not used for public safety and only for services such as Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Utility workers. The tower was reworked when the roof was replaced several years ago and it is in good condition. The tower met the requirements for Mr. Matheson and an agreement has been drafted. Larry Hanson stated that he confirmed with the Georgia Municipal Association that the fee of \$150 per month for the first five years and then renegotiated at that time is reasonable and asked for Council's consideration in approving the request.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the Tower Attachment Agreement for Smalltown Broadcasting, LLC.

Consideration of a Service Extension Agreement between the City of Valdosta and the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks & Recreation Authority.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Authority has requested that the City continue to provide the service that has been provided for the Authority since July 1, 2008. This would extend the Agreement that is already in place for an additional six months.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Wright, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the Service Extension Agreement between the City of Valdosta and the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks & Recreation Authority.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AUTHORITIES, AND COMMITTEES

Consideration of a joint appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Industrial Authority.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the term for the joint appointment of Jerry Jennett expired on January 1, 2009 and was advertised according to the new Policy and there are ten names for consideration. This is the only remaining joint appointment between the City and the County and it is the expectation that the City would initiate the appointment based on the historical rotation of initiating the appointment. The name would then be submitted to the Lowndes County Board of Commissioners for them to act upon. Mayor Fretti stated that there was a memorandum from the City Manager stating that there could be a possible postponement of this appointment due to one of the applicant's situation; however, there are ten people ready for the appointment and he did not see any conflicts of interest or situations that would merit a postponement. Mayor Fretti stated that he would like for Council to proceed with the appointment. The following names have been submitted for consideration: (1) Roy Copeland, Attorney with Copeland, Haugabrook & Walker, (2) Travis Cox, Owner of Cox Masonry, (3) Allan Dear, Apartment Management Company, Staten Crossing Apartments, (4) Dr. Mark Eanes, Physician/Ophthalmologist with Southern Eye Center, P.C., (5) Brian Geary, Human Resources Manager with Ace Electric, Inc., (6) John D. Holt, Attorney with John D. Holt, P.C., (7) Jerry Jennett, Chief Executive Officer with Georgia Gulf Sulphur Corporation, (8) Susan B. Johnson, College Professor with Valdosta State University, (9) Jackson Ross Langdale, Attorney with Dover, Miller, Stone & Karras, P.C., and (10) David Zammit, Controller with Greenleaf Center. The Lowndes County Board of Commissioners reappointed Jerry Jennett to serve another term and the Valdosta-Lowndes County Industrial Authority Board of Directors approved a resolution in support of his reappointment.

Mayor Fretti asked for nominations. Councilman Vickers placed in consideration the name of Roy Copeland. Councilman Carroll placed in consideration the name of Jerry Jennett. There being no other nominations, Mayor Fretti closed nominations. Roy Copeland received four votes. Jerry Jennett received three votes. Roy Copeland was appointed by the City of Valdosta to serve a term of five years on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Industrial Authority and the City will await an affirming vote from the Lowndes County Board of Commissioners.

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that due to the resignation of Robert Jefferson, the Chairman of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority contacted Mayor Fretti and asked that this appointment be accelerated because they are at a critical time and because they are dealing with some important decisions, they wanted a full Authority. Since the resignation happened within the first six months and the Policy does not state what the procedures would be for this type of situation, it was decided to place this on the Agenda and then contact the previous nominees to see if they were still interested. However, in checking with the previous nominees, several were not interested in serving, some did not respond, and only two were still interested. At the Work Session, it was recommended that the City conduct an accelerated advertising process to open this up to the community. This process will be done within 30 days and an advertisement will run in the newspaper Sunday, February 8 and February 15. The deadline for applications will be February 27 and Council will make an appointment at the first Council meeting in March. The Authority will only have one meeting during that time so they will not be inconvenienced or harmed. Larry Hanson recommended that Council approve the recommendation. Mayor Fretti inquired as to whether Council received a copy of the letter from the Chairman of the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority. Councilman Head stated that he had received the letter but thought it was odd that the one man that possessed the qualities they were seeking was run off and the Authority itself allowed some of that. It is odd that the Chairman would ask for specific qualifications and Councilman Head inquired as to whether the Chairman felt that there was no one remaining on the Authority that possesses those qualities because it appears that he is trying to dictate the person that the City appoints. The person Council appoints may not have all of those qualifications. Councilman Head stated that he takes exception to the fact that the Chairman is trying to dictate to Council what qualities the person must have. Also, in speaking with Robert Jefferson, he resigned on January 2, 2009 so he actually served six months plus a couple of days. Mayor Fretti stated that sentence in the letter states that the Authority is in need of individual with the experience in development of policies and procedures, finance, and organizational structure. Councilman Head stated that there are five or six other people on the Authority and inquired as to whether the Chairman was saying that the remaining people on the Authority do not have any of those qualities. Mayor Fretti stated that he did not think so.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman Head to postpone the appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority for 30 days until the first Council meeting in March and undertake all of the advertising efforts as recommended by the City Manager. Councilman Vickers seconded the motion. The motion was adopted (6-1) with Councilman Yost voting in opposition.

Consideration of appointments to the Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission had three members, Roy E. Taylor, III, Robert Jenkins, and Dr. Richard Saeger, whose terms will expire on February 13, 2009. Two of those members have chosen not to reapply. The following names have been submitted for consideration: (1) Celine Gladwin, Architect with Barnett Fronczak Barlowe Architects, (2) John D. Holt, and Attorney with John D. Holt, P.C., and (3) Dr. Richard T. Saeger, Retired Professor with Valdosta State University.

Mayor Fretti asked for nominations. Councilman Carroll placed in consideration the names of Celine Gladwin, John D. Holt, and Dr. Richard T. Saeger as a slate of candidates for the three slots. There being no other nominations, Mayor Fretti closed nominations and Celine Gladwin, John D. Holt, and Dr. Richard T. Saeger were appointed by acclamation to serve a term of three years on the Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission.

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta Tree Commission.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Valdosta Tree Commission had one member, Duane Cunningham, whose term expired September 6, 2008. The following names have been submitted for consideration: (1) Amy Hall, Accountant with the City of Valdosta, and (2) Thomas W. Smoot, Retired Chief Executive Officer with Kor-Chem, Inc. Mayor Fretti asked for nominations. Councilman Head placed in consideration the name of Amy Hall. Councilman Payton placed in consideration the name of Thomas Smoot. There being no other nominations, Mayor Fretti closed nominations. Amy Hall received six votes and Thomas Smoot received one vote. Amy Hall was appointed to serve a term four years on the Valdosta Tree Commission.

Consideration of appointments to the Community Develop Block Grant (CDBG) Advisory Committee.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Community Develop Block Grant (CDBG) Advisory Committee has four members, Joseph Brown, Lisa Hannan, Barthaniel Werts, Jr. and Dr. Richard Saeger, whose terms will expire on February 24, 2009. The following names have been submitted for consideration: (1) John D. Holt, Attorney with John D. Holt, P.C., (2) Susan B. Johnson, College Professor with Valdosta State University, and (3) Rebecca Taylor, Assistant Director with Valdosta State University. Mayor Fretti inquired as to whether the fourth slot would be held over for re-advertisement. Larry Hanson stated that was the consensus at the Work Session.

Mayor Fretti asked for nominations. Councilman Eunice placed in consideration the names of John D. Holt, Susan B. Johnson, and Rebecca Taylor for the first three positions and asked that the fourth slot be re-advertised. Larry Hanson stated that he spoke with Mr. Holt this morning and because his name was on four different Boards, Commissions, Authorities, or Committees for consideration. Mr. Holt was advised that he could not serve on more than two at a time. Mr. Holt did not have any preference as to which Board he served on but due to his time constraints he did not feel he could serve on more than one Board, Commission, Authority, or Committee. Mr. Holt's preference was the Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission. Larry Hanson asked Council's consideration in removing Mr. Holt's name for consideration because that would put him on two Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Committees and if the City is going to have to re-advertise anyway we could do that for two slots. Mayor Fretti stated that Mr. Holt's name was also on another Committee to be voted on tonight and Council may not want to have someone scatter their name out for an appointment. Larry Hanson stated that since we will be amending the Policy for the other situation it may need to be amended to state that an applicant cannot apply for more than two Boards, Commissions, Authorities, or Committees at any given time so that Council will not be in this position again. Councilman Eunice stated that he would like to know if an applicant would not want to be appointed rather than appoint that person and then they resign two weeks later. Councilman Head stated that when the slate of nominees are being prepared then we need to determine prior to it being presented to Council

what Boards, Commissions, Authorities, or Committees they are interested in. Mayor Fretti stated that if it was acceptable to Councilman Eunice, Council would now accept nominations for the slate of Susan B. Johnson and Rebecca Taylor and re-advertise for two slots for the CDBG Advisory Committee. Councilman Eunice was agreeable to the changes. There being no other nominations, Mayor Fretti closed nominations. Susan B. Johnson and Rebecca Taylor were appointed by acclamation to serve on the CDBG Advisory Committee for a term of four years.

Councilman Head inquired as to whether Mr. Werts served an unexpired term of someone or if he served a full term. Mara Register, Assistant to the City Manager, stated that he served an unexpired term. Councilman Wright inquired as to whether he would have to go through the entire process again since he has an application in. Larry Hanson stated that if he has filed a new application he would not. Councilman Wright inquired as to whether applicants will have to fill out an application each time they come up for appointment. Larry Hanson stated that they would not but only since Council changed the Policy from that date forward. Once we have an application one time we will keep them on file for two years and as long as it is an appointment you would see again within two years the application will be on file. Councilman Wright inquired as to whether a person who is already on a Board and would like to continue to serve would have to complete a new application. Larry Hanson stated that just them saying that they would like to continue to serve was good and then we would contact them to confirm that they wanted their name resubmitted. Councilman Yost asked for clarification in that every time there is a change to the Policy we are not starting over again. Larry Hanson stated that a change to the Policy would not constitute starting over but Council changed the application form. Councilman Head asked for clarification in that the application would be discarded after two years and in the case of Mr. Werts, he would complete a new application for a four-year term and two years from now his application will be canned. He would then have to complete a new one sometime before his term ends if he wants to serve another term. Larry Hanson stated that the original draft of the Policy did not include that provision and Council added that provision after it was suggested that they put two years in there in the event that someone resigns so that everyone would not have to reapply. Councilman Payton stated that he thought that requirement was only for those not appointed. Larry Hanson stated that it was for any application in the file but the application for anyone serving on a Board, Commission, Authority, or Committee would be kept for the duration of the term.

Consideration of an appointment to the Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizen Advisory Committee.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizen Advisory Committee has one position available and the following names were submitted for consideration: (1) Brian Geary, Human Resources Manager with Ace Electric, and (2) John D. Holt, Attorney with John D. Holt, P.C.

Mayor Fretti asked for nominations. Councilman Carroll placed in consideration the name of Brian Geary. There being no other nominations, Mayor Fretti closed nominations. Brian Geary was appointed by acclamation to serve on the Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizen Advisory Committee at the pleasure of the Metropolitan Planning Organization.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that there will be an advertisement in the newspaper on Sunday, February 8, 2009 notifying citizens of redefining the City Limits and boundaries. The last time the City Limits was redefined by the act of the Georgia Legislature was in 2002. There have been a lot of changes to the City Limits since that time so in order to get a clean City Limits map, Staff has worked hard to provide the new boundaries. This will be on the next Agenda and will go to the General Assembly to be introduced as local legislation.

The Retail Pull Factor went out this week and Valdosta and Lowndes County is still leading the State which means that we still have people coming into our community to shop and purchase goods and services.

Larry Hanson thanked the Valdosta Police Department for their efforts in solving the recent home invasions and other crimes that have taken place in our community.

Councilman Vickers inquired about obtaining new City maps with the new City Limits. Larry Hanson stated that the Chamber of Commerce prints every couple of years. They have a company that prints the maps and sells advertising on them. The City of Valdosta has also done that but it has been several years.

Councilman Yost thanked the Police Department for the job they have done in protecting the citizens of this City. They have gone above and beyond the call of duty in their efforts to keep our City and the citizens safe. There have been some things that happened recently that have been very disturbing. Councilman Yost stated that he was disappointed in the process where individuals who break the law in this City are able to go through and not serve any time or pay for the crime that they have committed. For example, there are several individuals on the streets of Valdosta today because of the Court system, the District Attorney system, or the Attorneys who represent these clients, and it even goes to the elected officials on the State and Federal levels. More and more of the criminals in this City have been arrested more than three times and they are let back out of the streets. The individual who shot one of our finest Police Officers three times has been released and is back on the streets. This is a ridiculous situation. Even though the Judges and District Attorneys are doing their jobs, when an individual can shoot you or a Police Officer three times and be released because he shot himself in the leg and needs quality care that cannot be provided at the jail, then there is a problem. Part of the problem is the process as a whole and also the fact that our Federal and State governments legislate and sends down bills and laws that are not funded. Therefore, we find a Sheriff's Department who cannot afford to continue to house someone who shot someone three times because he should be in a hospital. Councilman Yost stated that he should be changed to a bed in the hospital and not allowed back out on the streets of this City. Because of the policies and procedures, our Judges', District Attorneys', and Police Department's hands are tied. Councilman Yost stated that he has asked the City Manager to place this on the agenda for the Mayor and Council Retreat to discuss what is going on in our City with repeat offenders being allowed on the streets to do this again. These repeat offenders are not getting any jail time because the jail is full or the Court system is so packed they only have a certain amount of time and they only go with the violent offenders. Councilman Yost stated that we have to do our part to protect the Police Officers in carrying out their jobs and this needs to be discussed as a Council as to who they need to talk to on a State and Federal level to get some help in keeping these offenders in jail. There needs to be some action in protecting the citizens of this City. Council needs to look at this serious situation and how these criminals can be kept off the streets and placed where they belong.

Councilman Head inquired as to when there would be another Council tour of the districts. Larry Hanson stated that they would look at an available date for the tour.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion to adjourn the Council meeting and enter into an Executive Session for the purpose of discussing real estate.

A MOTION by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Yost, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the February 5, 2009 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:35 p.m. and enter into Executive Session.

Mayor Fretti reconvened the regular City Council meeting at 7:07 p.m. and stated that there was discussion of real estate only in the Executive Session and no action was taken.

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion for adjournment.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Head, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the February 5, 2009 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 7:08 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, February 19, 2009.