

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2008
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 Associate Pastor Martin Collins of Southland Church, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION OF THE MARCH, 2008 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH AWARD

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion for the March, 2008 Employee of the Month Award.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Vickers, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the March, 2008 Employee of the Month Award.

Mayor Fretti presented the March, 2008 Employee of the Month Award to Vernotis Williams, Police Department.

Vernotis Williams began his employment with the Valdosta Police Department in March, 1991 as a Patrol Officer. Officer Williams' current responsibilities include coordinating community Police sponsored events which includes handling recruitment for the Citizen's Police Academy and the Neighborhood Watch Program. He also oversees various crime prevention programs with citizens and local businesses to educate the public on law enforcement activities and raise public safety awareness. Officer Williams has always taken a special interest in helping the children of Valdosta. This past Christmas was no exception as he made it special for approximately 30 children in our community. Throughout the year, he worked tirelessly to secure funds for the "Shop with a Cop" Program and kept in touch with the parents to ensure their children would be able to participate during the Christmas season. Additionally, he recruited over 30 individuals from various agencies in the law enforcement field to shop with the children for Christmas presents. The program was a big success and it was heart warming to see the joy on the children's faces because Officer Williams went the extra mile to make sure their Christmas was special. Winston Churchill once stated, "We make a living by what we get but we make a life by what we give." Officer Williams' efforts have given back much to the community and the children of Valdosta and his work enriches all of us who strive to serve others. For these reasons and many others, the Employee Relations Committee nominated Vernotis Williams as Employee of the Month.

Councilman Head asked for a Point of Privilege. Councilman Head stated that he had seen Officer Williams this morning at Career Day at Valdosta Middle School and told him that he was looking forward to being with him later. Officer Williams had a bewildered look on his face. Councilman Head then called City Hall to confirm that Officer Williams was the Employee of the Month and realized that often employees do not know that they are going to be Employee of the Month until their name is called by the Mayor at the Council meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 21, 2008 Regular Meeting of the Valdosta City Council were approved by unanimous consent (7-0) of the Council.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There were no citizens to be heard.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE VALDOSTA ZONING ORDINANCE DENIED

Consideration of an ordinance to rezone 3.5 acres from Multi-Family Residential (R-6) with conditions to Multi-Family Residential (R-6) without conditions as requested by Jim Jamison for NGL Investments, LLC (File No. VA-2008-05). The property is located at 2125 Houston Avenue. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their February regular meeting and found the request inconsistent with the Standards for Exercise of Zoning Powers and the Comprehensive Plan and recommended denial (5-4 vote).

Anne-Marie Wolff, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that the property was rezoned by Council in 2005. The property is located on the west side of Jaycee Shack Road with access to the property located on Houston Avenue, which is the back of a residential neighborhood. The applicant is requesting to rezone 3.5 acres from Multi-Family Residential (R-6) with conditions to Multi-Family Residential (R-6) without conditions. The conditions are based on the previous site plan which limits the number of housing units to 28. The applicant is proposing to develop a 40-unit Multi-Family Residential development which is close to its maximum density. The property is currently undeveloped and the surrounding properties are Single-Family Residential or Multi-Family Residential and most are duplexes. The railroad is located east of the property on Jaycee Shack Road. When this property was originally rezoned, Staff worked with the property owner to develop an appropriate site plan that addressed all of the noted concerns. Since that time, the property has been sold, and the new owners were not aware of the existing conditions. Though Staff sympathized with the owners' lack of awareness regarding the conditions and the desire to have a prudent investment, Staff did not believe the need for such a development warranted the need to waive the existing conditions. The property is located far back into the residential neighborhood and the amount of traffic would be noticeable. The existing site limitations prohibit the ability for any additional access points so all traffic must come through the neighborhood. This development was approved prior to the requirement of two points of ingress/egress for developments of 25 units or more, and allowing any more than the previously approved 28 units would increase the impact of the development on the surrounding properties, heighten the potential public safety issues due to only one access point, and increase the overall traffic in the area. The City Engineer has taken some traffic counts and based on a development of 40 units with two or three people per unit, there would be a noticeable amount of traffic. Also, their ability to have a second ingress/egress point is limited due to the railroad track on the other side of the property. Additionally, wetlands are located on the northern portion of the property and that was part of the reason why Staff worked with the previous property owner in order to limit the amount of impervious surface occurring on the property. There would also be a required buffer between the duplex property and the Multi-Family development and a condition was placed on the site plan regarding a privacy fence along the driveway. The applicant has requested that this condition be removed but he would still provide the necessary landscaping along the driveway. Staff found the request inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommended denial. Planning Commission reviewed this at their February regular meeting and found the request inconsistent with the Standards for Exercise of Zoning Powers and the Comprehensive Plan and recommended denial (5-4 vote). Councilman Vickers inquired as to whether a person could find out about any conditions placed on property prior to the purchase. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that they depend on the real estate agents to discuss all of the zoning on the property and if the applicants or the real estate agent had contacted the Zoning Office to verify the zoning then they would have been told about the conditions. At times the deeds may have the zoning noted on it; however, it depends on whether they include that information when they record the deed. Councilman Wright stated that he thought it was the realtor's responsibility as opposed to the property owner. Mayor Fretti stated that after speaking with several people he discovered that it is no one's true statutory responsibility to inform them on any current zoning or zoning around the property. There is a lot of information not getting transferred to the buyer and while realtors and bankers try hard to communicate the information it is really up to the purchaser.

Danny Lewis, NGL Investments, 2404 Bemiss Road, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Lewis stated that he purchased the property directly from Mr. Cowart and knew that it was zoned for Multi-Family Residential housing but did not know about any conditions. Mr. Lewis stated that the real problem with having 40 units is the addition of possibly 24 more cars to the roadways in that area. There is a main access that goes to two major accesses out of this piece of property and he cannot do much more about the entrance except make it as wide as possible. Mr. Lewis stated that the privacy fence on the entrance was taken out for appearance sake and not for cost savings and a nice landscaped formal type entry would be better; however, the privacy fence could go back in if needed. The objective was to build a moderate to medium income apartment complex which is needed in that area. The development costs include land disturbance, engineering fees, surveying fees, and construction for each

building, and the total cost based on seven buildings would be \$2.6 million. This would provide 28 units with the price per unit being \$93,000. The units would rent for approximately \$650 per month and this would be a challenge for the investor so that there would be a cash flow based on 28 units. The estimated payment for the investor would be \$744 per month on the property so the only avenue would then be to not develop the property. The total cost for 40 units would be \$3.4 million and the cash flow would be much better. Mr. Lewis stated that permitting for 40 units would provide for a better opportunity, for the investor, increase tax revenue for the City, and create a greater economic boost for the City.

Jim Jamison, Architect, P. O. Box 392, Quitman, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Jamison stated that under normal conditions you could place 44 units on that site. The property in that area along Houston Avenue is zoned DR-10, and most of the residences are rental units. They are not really changing the neighborhood and there is another R-6 zoning on the next street. The neighborhood is moving toward a high density rental area and one of the problems with zoning in general is that things are kept in place and not allowed to change.

Steve Freelove, 7 Fulton Place, spoke in opposition to the request. Mr. Freelove stated that he sympathized with the applicant in terms of not being able to do what he wanted to with that particular site, but he was concerned about the increase of traffic on Houston Avenue. All of the residents on Fulton Place have to exit onto Houston Avenue to get out of the subdivision. Another concern is the high density of rentals in the neighborhood and the noise that is generated by those rentals. The residents have established a Neighborhood Watch Group and they are trying to improve the area. Mr. Freelove stated that Council had a purpose when the requirement was implemented to have an additional entrance and exit and asked that it be held true now and that the number of units be kept at 28. Mayor Fretti stated that Council had passed the two points of ingress/egress for subdivisions over 25 units for safety concerns.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Vickers, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to follow the recommendation of Staff and the Planning Commission and deny the request to rezone 3.5 acres from Multi-Family Residential (R-6) with conditions to Multi-Family Residential (R-6) without conditions as requested by Jim Jamison for NGL Investments, LLC.

ORDINANCE NO. 2008-10, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE VALDOSTA ZONING ORDINANCE

Consideration of an ordinance to rezone .645 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Residential-Professional (R-P) as requested by Evan Miller (File No. VA-2008-06). The property is located at 8 University Place. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their February regular meeting and found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommended approval with the following conditions (7-1 vote): (1) Only the triangular parking area be rezoned to R-P, (2) Any lighting must be directed downward and away from the adjacent residences, (3) Within one month, the applicant submits an exempt plat depicting the revised property lines, (4) The parking area is constructed out of porous materials, and (5) No access occurs from University Place.

Anne-Marie Wolff, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that the applicant is requesting to rezone .645 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Residential-Professional (R-P). The property is a Single-Family house located at the end of a cul-de-sac and adjacent homes are Single-Family. The back of the property is the Pleats and Creases Dry Cleaners that fronts on Northside Drive. The applicant is requesting the rezoning to allow for commercial parking for the Pleats and Creases Dry Cleaners located directly behind the property. In this case, the applicant is able to reach the proposed parking area via the existing commercial lot on Northside Drive. The property is large enough that the applicant could shift the property line so that the proposed parking area is combined with the existing commercial lot. This shifting of the property line and rezoning of only the parking area to R-P should not have a negative impact on the surrounding properties. The applicant has made some recent modifications since the Planning Commission meeting. There is an existing privacy fence and the applicant would like to rezone a portion of the property to R-P. If the rezoning is approved, Staff has recommended that this portion of the property actually be combined with the existing Pleats and Creases property which means the property line would shift to the privacy fence. This would still leave the Single-Family Residential home with the minimum amount of square footage and would meet the rear yard setback of 30 feet. Staff found the request compatible with the surrounding development and consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommended approval of the proposed parking area only with the following conditions: (1) Within one month, the applicant submits an exempt

plat depicting the revised property lines, (2) The parking area is constructed out of porous materials, (3) No access occurs from University Place. Because the property line could be shifted without a negative impact to either property, Staff felt that the rezoning was appropriate. The applicant would be required to put in some buffering and he has recently planted eight Leland Cypress trees on the residential property which would grow to approximately 15 feet in height and would get wider to fill in the gaps. At the Planning Commission Meeting there were some concerns about noise from the air compressors that are located at the business so in order to minimize some of the noise the applicant has installed a privacy fence. The air compressors are located on the Pleats and Creases property and not in the parking area. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their February regular meeting, found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and recommended approval with the following conditions (7-1 vote): (1) Within one month, the applicant submits an exempt plat depicting the revised property lines, (2) The parking area is constructed out of porous materials, (3) No access occurs from University Place, (4) Only the triangular parking area be rezoned to R-P, and (5) Any lighting must be directed downward and away from the adjacent residences. Councilman Payton inquired as to whether the parking area would remain dirt. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that it would remain the way it is now or the applicant could put something in like gravel that the water could run through. Councilman Head inquired about access to the property by a fire truck. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that she spoke with Fire Chief J. D. Rice and he stated that their requirements are to have access to the buildings on three sides and they would be able to have access to both sides and the front of the building. Councilman Carroll inquired as to when the business was first located on that site and whether the tax business located down from the property was still there. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that she was not sure how long Pleats and Creases had been there and the tax office has been there for quite some time.

Evan Miller, 2507 Pebblewood Drive, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Miller stated that his business has grown and he currently employs over 30 people at various locations with 75% of them working 30 hours per week. The building on Northside Drive was bought in 2000 and he thought that the building was built in 1988. Mr. Miller combined two businesses when he moved to Northside Drive and also combined employees. There are 12 parking spaces along the west side of the building with four spaces in the front for customers. As a result, cars are parked all over the parking lot. Mr. Miller then inquired about the property located behind the cleaners and purchased it with the intention of using it for parking. He did not park any cars there until he put up a fence and you could not see any cars from the subdivision. Mr. Miller owns and rents the house and when he attended the Planning Commission meeting, he discovered that some of the neighbors had concerns. The privacy fence that was put up does block some noise and the trees planted should create a nice barrier in four to five years. Mr. Miller stated that there are five or six cars parked on the property each day along with some company vehicles. He has also replaced a dilapidated metal building with a newer building to be used for storage. The hours of operation may vary from day to day and he occasionally works at night. Councilman Vickers inquired about lighting the parking area. Mr. Miller stated that they have some security lights on the building and he did not think they would ever light the back parking area. Councilman Eunice inquired as to whether Mr. Miller was in agreement with the five conditions the Planning Commission had recommended. Mr. Miller stated that he was in agreement with the conditions because they do not need the area for anything other than parking. Councilman Carroll inquired as to whether Mr. Miller had inquired about purchasing the wooded lot next to his business. Mr. Miller stated that he did inquire about purchasing the lot prior to purchasing the lot in back of his business but could not afford it.

Mary Freelove, 403 University Drive, spoke in opposition to the request. Ms. Freelove stated that she lives across from her mother's residence which is located at 16 University Place. They can hear noise from the business inside her mother's house. The business has large bays on either side which are open during business hours when the machinery is running so the noise comes not only from the compressors but also from the machinery inside. This adversely affects the existing conditions of the neighborhood and the community at large. Ms. Freelove stated that she thought the parking lot was being used by some people who play loud music because she has called the Police on four occasions to complain about loud music coming from 8 University Place. When the Police checked out the complaint, they found no one at home so it could not be coming from 8 University Place. There is a very low fence on Mr. Slocumb's side of the property which could easily be jumped by young people going back and forth between Northside Drive and University Drive. Ms. Freelove stated that she was concerned about safety, noise from the business and other people, and drainage. She was also concerned that the current owner or someone else who may purchase the property in the future placing a road on the property connecting it with University Place and they would have no recourse. Also, the fact that the house is rental property devalues the neighborhood because all of the homes on University Place are owner homes and this house changes the character of the neighborhood. Mayor Fretti thanked Ms. Freelove and stated that condition (5) states that no access would

occur from University Place and this could not change without it coming back before Council. Ms. Freelove stated that the parking lot was put in without anyone knowing about it. Mayor Fretti stated that the applicant may have been given a citation for that but he is here tonight requesting the rezoning. If it is denied by Council, then the parking lot would have to go away. Councilman Carroll inquired as to whether Ms. Freelove knew when the tax business was located there. Ms. Freelove stated the business was previously owned by the Hayes family who lived there and had a variance to have a business in their home. They moved out years later but the tax business remains and it is not a home occupation business anymore.

Mary Ann Griffiths, 14 University Place, spoke in opposition to the request. Ms. Griffiths stated that they have a nice, quiet cul-de-sac and asked Council's consideration in not allowing their neighborhood to be destroyed. There is a drainage problem in their area and she was told to call the Engineering Department but no one has ever called her back. Councilman Payton inquired as to whether the drainage problem was created by the parking lot or whether it was pre-existing. Von Shipman, City Engineer, stated that the parking lot did not contribute to any additional drainage problems. Councilman Carroll inquired as to whether the problem was with the culvert that goes underneath the neighborhood. Von Shipman stated that since the channel has been opened from University Drive to Ashley Street it has made a great difference in that area and he has not been called by anyone in quite a while. There are some maintenance issues with another concrete ditch section that runs behind the apartments on Northside Drive near Mink's Chiropractic Center but that is not a flooding issue. Councilman Wright inquired about the privacy fence that was put into place by the applicant. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that some of the machinery is located outside and they do have roll up doors where other machinery is located and the applicant has just put the privacy fence up within the last week. Councilman Wright stated that the fence is new and the noise and compressors were already in existence. The applicant is not requesting to add any more equipment but wants to add more parking. Councilman Yost stated that this is a problem that Council has had to deal with in the past where people build or create something on a piece of property that they cannot do without coming before Zoning and going through the proper process. This business was cited which brought it to the applicant's attention that he was doing something that he was not allowed to do. Mayor Fretti inquired as to whether there was a pending case on the citation. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that a complaint was made and the City Marshals went out and discovered that the applicant was in violation. The applicant was given two options which were to bring the property into compliance by requesting a change in the zoning and if not, then the applicant would have to cease parking in the area. If they did not cease parking in the area then a citation would be issued. The Zoning Office tries to work with the property owners as much as possible and if the applicant brings the property into compliance then the case will be closed. Councilman Yost stated that we are then assuming that the person did not know that he or she was not in compliance and he had a problem with individual cases that have come before Council where people knowingly do this and get away with it and then come to Council begging for mercy. There is a problem with the process and there should be a fine system in place where the person is fined daily until the problem is fixed. Councilman Yost stated that the noise issue is not one that they could address as far as the current business goes unless the business is violating the noise ordinance and the Police are called; however, this not what he has heard. The neighbors are now saying that the noise is too loud when actually nothing has changed on the property except the parking in the back. They have not stated that the cars are too loud and Council cannot do anything as far as the noise goes except to implement the conditions that are placed on the rezoning. Councilman Eunice stated that the drainage issue needs to be dealt with as soon as possible and perhaps some of the Stormwater money that has been allocated can be used to alleviate the problem.

A MOTION was made by Councilman Eunice to approve the request to rezone .645 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Residential-Professional (R-P) with the following conditions as recommended by Staff and the Planning Commission: (1) Within one month, the applicant submits an exempt plat depicting the revised property lines, (2) The parking area is constructed out of porous materials, (3) No access occurs from University Place, (4) Only the triangular parking area be rezoned to R-P, and (5) Any lighting must be directed downward and away from the adjacent residences. Councilman Payton seconded the motion. Councilman Vickers stated that he would like to see another condition on the rezoning that no building could be built in the back area of the property. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the applicant would not be able to have a building other than an accessory building which he already has on the property. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that was correct. Mayor Fretti inquired as to whether Councilman Vickers wanted to amend the motion to include that condition. Councilman Vickers stated that if the applicant could not expand in the back area then he did not want to amend the motion. Larry Hanson stated that the Zoning Ordinance states that unless it is a threat to public health and safety then citizens are given a 15-day warning to bring the property into compliance or cease the inappropriate use. The

City does not have the authority to levy fines and all that the City employees can do is to make a case and go before the Judge. It is the Judge who determines what the penalty will be. Councilman Payton inquired as to whether the parking lot would have a gate that could be used to secure the area. Mr. Miller stated that a gate could not be used to secure the area. There is some noise from people staying at the nearby hotel where they are outside playing music and if someone is going back there he was not aware of it. Councilman Wright stated that most of the problems when dealing with property come from rental units and Council should look at an ordinance for that those people who continue to violate it over and over again. Councilman Carroll inquired as to whether Councilman Eunice would consider adding the following two conditions to the motion: (1) While the Leland Cypress trees have been planted for further protecting this encroachment into the R-10 area of residences, the vegetative buffer must be maintained, and (2) If there are young children going back into the parking area, a deterrent would be to have security lighting. Mayor Fretti asked Councilman Eunice if he was in agreement with amending the motion to include the two conditions. Councilman Eunice stated that he was in agreement with the first condition but did not agree with the second condition. Additional lighting may create more lighting in the neighborhood. Councilman Carroll stated that if the lighting was done right it would not create more lighting. There could be lighting added off of the storage building in the back area in order to discourage children from going back there. Mayor Fretti stated that a gate might also be another option. Councilman Vickers stated that they would have to go around the building to access the back area and the best thing would be to block the driveway after the close of business. Councilman Carroll withdrew the second condition from his request to amend the motion. Mayor Fretti stated that he agreed with Councilman Yost and we try to get people into compliance but this is more specific in that forgiveness is asked later and eventually has to come before Council for approval. Council may then feel compelled to give them approval because they have already spent money on something. Mayor Fretti asked that Council consider, when it is a Zoning Special Exception or a Zoning Board of Appeals case, that there should be a regular fine in addition to the corrective procedures and going in front of a Judge. Councilman Yost stated that in this case and many others, the Staff would not have been dealing with this situation if something illegal had not been happening. It is Staff time that is being spent on dealing with a situation that should not have been created to begin with and maybe the fine could be paying for the Staff time taken to resolve the problem. Councilman Eunice and Councilman Payton agreed with the amendment.

AN AMENDED MOTION made by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2008-10 and approve the amended motion as presented with the five original conditions and the addition of a sixth condition to maintain the planted vegetative buffer, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XI.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE VALDOSTA ZONING ORDINANCE WITHDRAWN

Consideration of an ordinance to rezone .36 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Residential-Professional (R-P) as requested by Wellness Concepts, LLC (File No. VA-2008-07). The property is located at 428 University Drive. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their February regular meeting and found the request inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommended denial (8-0 vote). The applicant has withdrawn the request.

Mayor Fretti stated that the applicant has withdrawn the request.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2008-5, A RESOLUTION FOR THE GEORGIA LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION

Consideration of a resolution for the Georgia Land Conservation Program Grant Application.

Eric Hahn, Interim Parks and Recreation Director, stated that the Georgia Land Conservation Program awards grant funds and loans to cities, counties, and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources for the conservation of green space. The program utilizes a weighted decision-making model on funding decisions and is designed to meet one or more of their ten goals. The program places weight on projects that protects wetlands and prime forestry lands, and provides for passive recreation uses. The request to approve a resolution for the Georgia

Land Conservation Program Grant Application Program would add 75.75 acres to the J. N. Bray property that has already been purchased by the City, and the previous purchase would be used as leverage for grant funds. The Director of the Georgia Land Conservation Program has indicated that no application currently on file would be jeopardized by this application and that the applications are taken on their own merit. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that this is a competitive grant and they all compete with the projects that are before the Georgia Land Conservation Program at any given time. If the total property is taken together as one project, the grant funds will represent \$833,000 of a \$2.83 million purchase. That would put the request for funding in the range of 29% of the total property costs, which is around the amount that is often funded by the program. It would be necessary, though, to back out any active or developed uses that are proposed for the property such as wells or a fire station since that will not be considered for funding by the Georgia Land Conservation Program. Appraisals on the property currently under contract and the 75.75 acres have been completed. The City would agree to set aside as green space an equivalent amount of property value, which is approximately 128 acres, in the portion the City is purchasing as match and leverage for the \$833,000 in grant funds being requested. Eric Hahn recommended that Council approve the request to adopt a resolution for the Georgia Land Conservation Program Grant application. Councilman Vickers inquired as to how long the land would be available as the City tries to seek the grant funds. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that as a courtesy, the representative of the Bray family is allowing the City the first opportunity on the property because they knew the City was bidding on this tract during the auction. They know we are going through this process and will grant us a 30 to 60-day period. If we are successful in the grant application, the State would be paying 100% of the cost to acquire the 75.75 acres. This tract also has some Long Leaf Pines and attention has been raised in order to preserve this tract.

A MOTION by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Head, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Resolution No. 2008-5, a Resolution for the Georgia Land Conservation Program Grant Application and to authorize the Mayor to sign the application seeking Georgia Land Conservation Program funding, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book IV.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of bids for three Lodal Refuse Trucks for the Public Works Department (Bid No. 42-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the Public Works Department is in need of three new refuse trucks to assist with their duties and will be added to an aging fleet. The Public Works Department has funds available in SPLOST VI for this purchase. Container Systems is the manufacturer of the Lodal brand trucks in our area. The City currently uses this brand and this would be a sole source due to the actual way the trucks are made. The price offered per truck is \$189,350 or a total of \$568,050 for the three trucks. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the sole source purchase from Container Systems in the amount of \$568,050.

A MOTION by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Yost, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the sole source bid submitted by Container Systems in the amount of \$568,050 and allow the Public Works Department to proceed with the purchase of three Lodal Refuse Trucks.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of a request to approve sponsorship of a table at the 100 Black Men Annual Black Tie Gala.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the 100 Black Men Annual Black Tie Gala will be held on March 25, 2008 at the Valdosta Middle School. The City has been involved in this event and sponsored a table for many years. The keynote speaker will be the Honorable Louis Sands, U. S. District Court Judge. The cost for a table of 9 is \$800 and individual tickets are \$50 per person. Larry Hanson recommended that Council approve the request to sponsor a table and any additional seats that may be needed at the 100 Black Men Annual Black Tie Gala.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Eunice, was unanimously adopted (6-0-1) to sponsorship of a table and any additional seats at the 100 Black Men Annual Black Tie Gala with Councilman Head abstaining.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Parks and Recreation Authority Legislation passed the Senate and the House and is now awaiting the Governor's signature. The Authority will be created effective July 1, 2008.

There will be several downtown meetings with property owners which was discussed at the Mayor and Council Retreat. The City has an opportunity to help the downtown property owners reduce the financial burden with the business improvement district bonding. The downtown property owners will be given an opportunity to provide feedback before it goes before the Central Valdosta Development Authority and depending on which option they choose, it may come before Council at a later meeting.

An Elected Officials tour has been scheduled for March 15, 2008 at 8:30 a.m. for the sites that Council previously submitted. There will be a light breakfast at the City Hall Annex building with the tour to follow at 9:00 a.m. and concluding at 11:45 a.m. with lunch at the new recreation facility on Gornto Road. Council will be looking at projects in the districts for Councilman Vickers, Councilman Payton, Councilman Carroll, and Councilman Yost.

The Signature Community Signing Ceremony will be held on April 10, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room at the City Hall Annex Building. Commissioner Mike Beatty of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs will also be in attendance. This is quite a prestigious designation which helps our community and the downtown area and Council is encouraged to attend.

There will be approximately 30 properties that will be annexed into the City in the next cycle. These annexations are due to the fact that several years ago when the Water Treatment Plant was built, it was natural to serve some of the development surrounding that area even though they could not annex into the City at that time because the property was not contiguous. Over time the City has grown north towards Moody Air Force Base and south back to town from the Water Treatment Plant so the gap is being closed.

The Homeland Security released information this week about a grant program and the application is due on Monday, March 10, 2008. The regulations and forms were just provided via the Internet this week so Chief Simons did not have a chance to get this on the Agenda. The application will have to be prepared and presented to the All Hazards Council for this area during a Special Called Meeting on March 10, 2008. Chief Simons will propose two projects to the All Hazards Council which include a crime scene vehicle and some additional tactical equipment. This does not require a match by the City but a resolution will need to be adopted by Council in support of the grant.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, thanked the Mayor and Council for their involvement and participation in the planning efforts of the City. We are also very fortunate to have three high quality firms, Grice & Associates, Jordan, Jones, & Goulding, and Camp Dresser McKee, Inc., helping us plan for some of the most important things we are going to do in the future.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Vickers stated that the Mayor and Council Retreat was very productive and he thoroughly enjoyed it.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion for adjournment.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Eunice, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the March 6, 2008 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 7:00 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, March 20, 2008.