

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL**  
**5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2007**  
**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: Willie Head, Jr., Sonny Vickers, David Sumner, Alvin Payton, Jr., John Eunice, Robert Yost, and James Wright. The invocation was given by Reverend George Bennett, President of the Valdosta Area Ministerial Association, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**PRESENTATION OF THE MARCH EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

Mayor Fretti presented the March Employee of the Month Award to Andre Newson, Parks and Recreation Department.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Eunice, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the March, 2007 Employee of the Month Award.

Andre Newson began his employment with the City of Valdosta on August 28, 2002 as the Mildred Hunter Community Center Supervisor which is the position he currently holds. Andre is responsible for planning and supervising youth and adult social, recreational, and cultural programs, and soliciting donations to support these activities. He also supervises the youth and adult athletic events, obtains team sponsors, and certifies youth league coaches. On the administrative side, Andre writes and publishes a monthly newsletter about the Center's events and produces calendars and flyers to publicize these activities. While the day-to-day routine of running the Center always gets done, it is Andre's dedication to the children of Valdosta that stands out. Rarely has an individual come along who has made such a positive impact on the youth of Valdosta. His innovative programs such as the Marching Pride Drill Team and the Remote Control Car Club bring parents and children together while boosting the confidence level of the participants. His quiet demeanor and patient guidance have made an impact in the lives of many children. When asked about what affect his celebrity status would have on the sport of golf, Tiger Woods once said, "being a role model....that's what it's all about." Such is the case with Andre Newson who is not only an asset to the Parks and Recreation Department, but to the youth and adults of the City of Valdosta as well. For these reasons and many others the Employee Relations Committee nominated Andre Newson as Employee of the Month.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION OF THE CERTIFIED AZALEA CITY AWARD**

Mayor Fretti stated that several months ago, he and Kathy Brunot, Grants Administrator, had discussed an opportunity to apply for the Certified Azalea City Award which is sponsored by the Azalea Society of Merit. The program was initiated in 2004 and to date, there are only six cities nationwide with this designation. Mayor Fretti stated that he was proud to announce that Valdosta had been awarded the Certified Azalea City Award and is the only city in Georgia with this designation. Mayor Fretti presented a plaque to Council and to the City and stated that he would also highlight the award at the Azalea Festival which will be held March 11-12, 2007.

**RECOGNITION OF 2007 LEADERSHIP LOWNDES CLASS MEMBERS**

Mayor Fretti welcomed the Leadership Lowndes class members who were attendance at the Council meeting and stated that he and Larry Hanson, City Manager, would be attending the Leadership Lowndes Legislative Day at the State Capitol in Atlanta next week.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the February 22, 2007 Regular Meeting of the Valdosta City Council were approved by unanimous consent (7-0) of the Council.

Bill Love, 22 Azalea Drive, thanked Council for the City's donation of four trucks to be used by the Valdosta City School System. Mr. Love also stated that the Valdosta Middle School track has become part of McKey Park and the Valdosta City School System wants it to be used as a public facility; however, the track's surface was not designed to handle that much foot traffic and will need to be resurfaced in the near future. Mr. Love asked Council's consideration in helping to resurface the track.

Roy Taylor, 1909 Bridlewood Drive, stated that he had read in the newspaper about the Honor Flight for WWII Veterans which is one of the most worthy causes to come before Council. Mr. Taylor stated that he has found no one against it and hoped that Council would remember the Veterans of WWII by donating what they have asked for or possibly more. Mr. Taylor encouraged Council to support this cause and donated \$5,000 on behalf of the Taylor family in hopes that all of the citizens of the community would be a part of this and give freely.

Ken Klanicki, 2208 Jerry Jones Drive, stated that he was opposed to converting Patterson Street and Ashley Street to one-way streets north and south. There was an argument made during one of the Public Hearings last fall by Michael Dover that if Patterson Street was made south bound it would go from four lanes to two lanes at the Federal Building and there would be traffic backed up to Ann Street. Having Patterson Street and Ashley Street run 30 blocks one way would be very counter productive for all the millions of dollars that have been spent in trying to revitalize downtown Valdosta. Mr. Klanicki stated that this would also move traffic off of Patterson Street onto Toombs Street, Oak Street, and Slater Street, and he urged Council to vote against making those streets one-way.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE VALDOSTA ZONING ORDINANCE POSTPONED**

Consideration of an ordinance to rezone 0.38 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Multi-Family Residential (R-6) as requested by Conrad Williams (P. C. File No. VA-2007-09). The subject property is located at 1309 Iola Drive. Planning Commission reviewed this request at their February regular meeting and recommended denial of Multi-Family Residential (R-6) zoning (6-2 vote).

Anne-Marie Wolff, Current Planner, stated that the applicant has submitted a letter asking that the rezoning request be postponed for 30 days so that the applicant and the attorney he recently retained could work together to insure that they have a thorough presentation for Council. Councilman Head inquired about the boundaries surrounding the rear of the property and if the property extended beyond the fence. Ms. Wolff stated that she was not certain about the boundaries but the applicant was in attendance at the Council meeting and could answer that question.

**A MOTION** was made by Councilman Vickers to postpone the request to rezone 0.38 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Multi-Family Residential (R-6) as requested by Conrad Williams for 30 days. Councilman Sumner seconded the motion. Councilman Eunice inquired as to whether the applicant was asking for the request to be postponed for 30 days or until the next Council meeting. Ms. Wolff stated that the applicant was asking for it to be postponed for 30 days. Mayor Fretti stated that the applicant was asking that the request be postponed for 30 days until the first Council meeting in April. The motion was unanimously adopted (7-0).

## **LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS**

Consideration of a request to approve travel for Councilman John Eunice to attend the 45<sup>th</sup> International Making Cities Livable Conference.

Councilman Eunice stated that he would like to attend the 45<sup>th</sup> International Making Cities Livable Conference on True Urbanism which will be held on June 10-14, 2007, in Portland, Oregon. He will present a list of the topics discussed upon his return from the Conference at the second Council meeting in June.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Head, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve travel for Councilman John Eunice to attend the 45<sup>th</sup> International Making Cities Livable Conference.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2007-4, A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE RELEASE OF TAX INFORMATION FROM THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE**

Consideration of a resolution requesting the release of tax information from the Georgia Department of Revenue.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that we are requesting the release of information from the Georgia Department of Revenue which will give us a better understanding of the economics of our community and help with economic development efforts. The Georgia Department of Revenue requires that a resolution be adopted and a Confidentiality Agreement signed so that none of the information will be used in any way that is inconsistent with the State law. Larry Hanson asked Council's consideration in adopting the resolution.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Eunice, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Resolution No. 2007-4, to request the release of tax information from the Georgia Department of Revenue, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book IV.

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that he would speak to Sam Allen, Superintendent of the Valdosta City School System, about the Valdosta Middle School track. For many years there has been a joint use agreement with the Valdosta City School System which has served not only the schools but also the taxpayers very well because it helps to avoid duplication of facilities. For example, the agreement states that there will be no charge for the use of facilities. The City has many facilities that the schools benefit from such as the use of Mathis Auditorium, the tennis courts at McKey Park, and Freedom Park. Likewise the City benefits by using facilities that they have for the community such as the Valdosta Middle School track and gym. Larry Hanson stated that he would discuss this with Mr. Allen to see if they want to change the agreement.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the new Council office and conference room has been completed and is ready for use. The office and conference room can be reserved by Council members through an on-line calendar.

Larry Hanson stated that bids for the Municipal Court parking lot have gone out and the contractors have been notified. Also, bids for dredging the Mill Pond have been advertised and there were nine contractors in attendance at the mandatory pre-bid conference. Larry Hanson also noted that the Lee Street culvert project will be completed in approximately two weeks.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

There were no Council comments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

**A MOTION** by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Head, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the March 8, 2007 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:02 p.m. and enter into Executive Session.

Mayor Fretti reconvened the regular City Council meeting at 6:29 p.m. and stated that there was no action necessary in relation to the discussion about litigation and real estate in Executive Session.

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion for adjournment.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Head was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the March 8, 2007 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:30 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, March 22, 2007.

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City Clerk, City of Valdosta

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Mayor, City of Valdosta