

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 2010
JOHN W. SAUNDERS MEMORIAL PARK

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor John Fretti called the regular meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. Council members present were: Tim Carroll, Alvin Payton, Jr., John Eunice, Deidra White, and James Wright. Councilman Robert Yost arrived at 6:05 p.m., and Councilman Joseph Sonny Vickers was absent. The invocation was given by Larry Hanson, City Manager, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Mayor Fretti stated that today is Earth Day and earlier today the City of Valdosta held its Annual Employee Appreciation Luncheon at John W. Saunders Memorial Park to thank all of the City employees for their efforts in serving the citizens of Valdosta. A Live Oak tree was also planted in honor of the City's Sesquicentennial Celebration.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION FOR GEORGIA CITIES WEEK

Mayor Fretti stated that the Georgia Municipal Association sponsors Georgia Cities Week each year and the City of Valdosta celebrated this with many events signifying the importance of the services provided to the citizens. Mayor Fretti asked Larry Hanson, City Manager, to accept a Proclamation proclaiming April 17-24, 2010 as Georgia Cities Week. Larry Hanson accepted the Proclamation on behalf of the City of Valdosta employees who deliver services every day to the citizens and do an incredible job.

PRESENTATION OF THE APRIL, 2010 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH AWARD

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion for the April, 2010 Employee of the Month Award.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to approve the April, 2010 Employee of the Month Award.

Mayor Fretti presented the April, 2010 Employee of the Month Award to Phyllis Kassum, Public Involvement Department).

Phyllis Kassum began her employment with the City of Valdosta in December, 2004 as a Secretary to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program in what is now the Public Involvement Department. As such, her responsibilities include performing secretarial duties for the Staff members of the Department as well as recordkeeping tasks for the Grants Division. This involves producing bulletins, monthly and annual reports, and all CDBG program-related correspondence for HUD and sub-grantees. Throughout her career with the City, it has often been said that Ms. Kassum is the kind of employee who always goes the extra mile not only in the performance of her job duties but in helping our citizens as well. In her position as CDBG Secretary, Ms. Kassum often works with individuals who are in need and routinely makes referrals to the appropriate agencies for assistance. Recently, rather than just making a referral, she personally assisted a homeless family. Her efforts were instrumental in arranging assistance through the Lowndes Associated Ministries to People (LAMP) to provide shelter for the family and she has continued to be personally involved in their care and development as they worked through this most difficult time. Winston Churchill once stated, "We make a living by what we get but we make a life by what we give." Ms. Kassum's efforts have given back much to many individuals and her work enriches all of us who strive to serve others. For these reasons and many others, the Employee Relations Committee nominated Phyllis Kassum as Employee of the Month.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION FOR THE WINNERS OF THE GEORGIA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION'S "IF I WERE MAYOR" ESSAY CONTEST

Special Presentation for the winners of the Georgia Municipal Association's "If I Were Mayor" Essay Contest.

Mayor Fretti stated that cities across the State celebrate Georgia Cities Week during the third week of April each year with activities that highlight the programs and services that enhance the quality of life for our citizens. In Valdosta, we participate in several activities such as the Great American Clean Up, Customer Service Day, the Employee Blood Drive, Job Shadow Day for Valdosta High School students, the Employee Appreciation Luncheon, and this outdoor City Council Meeting. One of the highlights is the "If I Were Mayor" Essay Contest. This Contest challenges sixth grade students in our community to use their writing skills and civic knowledge to express in 350 words or less what they would do if they were Mayor. Mayor Fretti stated that during his two terms as Mayor, he has seen some incredible and thought provoking work by our local students and this year's winners are no exception. Of the nearly 200 entries received from students in our area, the winners are as follows: Third Place - Mariah Newkirk of Valdosta Early College Academy, Second Place - Ceu Ling from Valdosta Middle School, and First Place - Seth Shuman from Valdosta Middle School. Seth Shuman is also the winner for the entire Congressional District 11 and will be recognized in Atlanta on April 28, 2010 for his outstanding achievement. He is also the second District 11 winner from Valdosta in the past two years. Mayor Fretti also recognized Dr. David Cole, Principal at Valdosta Middle School and Ingrid Hall, Principal at the Valdosta Early College Academy, for their commitment and support and the students' teachers Chris Bittinger and Helen Edgerton for encouraging our future community leaders.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the April 8, 2010 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (5-0) of the Council.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Roy Taylor, 2209 Bridlewood Drive, stated that his home will be on the Home and Garden Tour this weekend and invited the Mayor and Council to attend. Mr. Taylor also stated that Von Shipman, City Engineer, had done a great job in coordinating the work that had been done in providing City services to a daycare and presented him with a check for the work.

George Boston Rhynes, 5004 Oak Drive, stated that he wanted to present the Mayor and Council with a copy of some suggestions he had over the years and some questions that had never been answered. Mr. Rhynes also thanked Mara Register, Assistant to the City Manager, for allowing him to participate in the Heart and Soul Tour because he learned a lot about the City that he did not know and he was very impressed.

John Robinson, Sr., 3227 San Juline Circle, Lark Park, commended the Mayor and Council for the work they have done and asked for their support of WJEM Radio Station in getting the word out about the Valdosta Small Emerging Business Program (VSEB). Mr. Robinson also thanked Mara Register, Assistant to the City Manager, and Larry Hanson, City Manager, for their efforts in supporting the VSEB Program.

Terrance Thompson, 506 South Lee Street, stated that she had recently moved to this area and inquired as to whether there was any information on what after school programs or summer jobs are offered for teenagers in order to keep them off the streets. Mayor Fretti suggested that Ms. Thompson contact City Hall for additional information. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Parks and Recreation Department has a number of summer programs. Ms. Thompson inquired as to whether there was a Big Brother/Big Sister Program. Larry Hanson stated that there was a Big Brother/Big Sister Program in Valdosta.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**RESOLUTION NO. 2010-3, A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY OF VALDOSTA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT SERVICES PROGRAM OF THE FEDERAL HOME LOAN BANK**

Consideration of a request to approve a Resolution authorizing the City of Valdosta's participation in the Community Investment Services Program of the Federal Home Loan Bank.

Mara Register, Assistant to the City Manager, stated that the City of Valdosta is requesting the adoption and approval of a Resolution authorizing participation in Community Investment Services Programs of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta, the Certificate of Incumbency, and the Access Form for Sponsor Web System Access with Related Terms and Conditions. The City of Valdosta will submit an application for funds to the Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program and request \$1 million for homeowner housing rehabilitation and reconstruction in the Pinevale, Tom Town, and Westside neighborhoods in the Designated Revitalization Area. These funds will be utilized in conjunction with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Community Home Improvement Project (CHIP) funds in these neighborhoods. The Federal Home Loan Bank requires a member bank to sponsor the application and BB&T has agreed to be the City’s financial institution sponsor. Mara Register recommended that Council approve the Resolution authorizing the City of Valdosta’s participation in the Community Investment Services Program of the Federal Home Loan Bank. Councilman Wright inquired as to how they will determine how and what work will be done with the funds. Mara Register stated that one of the things they want to see is the production of units and she would like to divide that out equally among the three neighborhoods. The Vice President of BB&T managed this program for the Federal Home Loan Bank in Atlanta five years ago and he is providing considerable guidance on how to prepare the application.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Wright, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to an enact Resolution No. 2010-3, a Resolution authorizing the City of Valdosta’s participation in the Community Investment Services Program of the Federal Home Loan Bank, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book V.

RESOLUTION NO. 2010-4, A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH AN ANNUAL SCHEDULE FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE GREATER LOWNDES 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Consideration of a Resolution to establish an annual schedule for amendments to the Greater Lowndes 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

Matt Martin, Interim Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that the City of Valdosta’s Land Development Regulations, Section 242-4, Zoning Procedures and Land Use Amendments, states that the Comprehensive Plan amendments will be scheduled before the Greater Lowndes Planning Commission and the City Council not more than twice a year in accordance with a schedule adopted annually by the City Council except under extraordinary conditions meeting certain criteria in the LDR. There is currently no schedule for review and consideration of Amendments to the Greater Lowndes 2030 Comprehensive Plan by the Greater Lowndes Planning Commission or the Valdosta City Council. An established schedule will ensure that the Comprehensive Plan is maintained and updated in a timely manner. The next proposed date for submission of Amendments is August 25, 2010 and it will be advertised and heard by the City Council on October 7, 2010. Subsequent Amendment cycle deadlines will henceforth be established in a like manner for February and August of each year.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to an enact Resolution No. 2010-4, a Resolution to establish an annual schedule for amendments to the Greater Lowndes 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book V.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of a request to approve an Agreement with the Valdosta First Church of the Nazarene for City water service.

Henry Hicks, Utilities Director, stated that the City of Valdosta has a policy of providing water and/or sewer services to proposed customers in Lowndes County when requested and either water or sewer service is available to the property. Under this policy, the proposed customer must provide the City of Valdosta with signed agreements for both annexation and Power of Attorney regarding annexation when the property becomes adjacent to the City Limits. Under these agreements, the proposed County customer agrees to connect to both water and sewer service when only one is currently available and the other becomes available. In addition, the customer acknowledges that they will pay City water and/or sewer rates until such time as the property is annexed. Finally, connection to existing water and/or sewer infrastructure is borne entirely by the customer. Appropriate taps fees

are charged to the customer at time of connection. The Valdosta First Church of the Nazarene is currently in Lowndes County and has requested water service from the City of Valdosta. An existing water main runs past this property on North Forest Street. The Church has provided signed documents for annexation, Power of Attorney, and a letter from Lowndes County authorizing them to request water and sewer service from the City of Valdosta as there are no County services readily available in this area. The Church is also aware that they will be required to connect to City sewer when it becomes available and that they will pay City rates until such time as the annexation take place. There is no measurable impact on the Utility Department's annual or capital budget other than long term maintenance of the existing water main and future sewer lines in this area. The Department will receive revenues for these services when provided. Henry Hicks recommended that Council authorize a Special Exception to the Municipal Utilities Ordinance and allow City water service for the Valdosta First Church of the Nazarene.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to authorize a Special Exception to the Municipal Utilities Ordinance and approve an Agreement with the Valdosta First Church of the Nazarene for City water service.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of a request to allow the Valdosta Housing Authority to construct angle parking spaces on City streets in the Hudson Docket area.

Von Shipman, City Engineer, stated that the Valdosta Housing Authority is requesting permission from the City to construct angle parking spaces on Carver Street, South Fry Street, Washington Street, and Way Street within the Hudson Docket area. Von Shipman recommended that Council approve the request to allow the Valdosta Housing Authority to construct angle parking spaces on City streets in the Hudson Docket area. Councilman Payton inquired as to the number of parking spaces that would be provided. Von Shipman stated that there would be approximately 40 angle parking spaces in the first phase and angle parking on Fry Street. The next phase will include another 40 spaces.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the request to allow the Valdosta Housing Authority to construct angle parking spaces on City streets in the Hudson Docket area.

Consideration of the donation of both the property and building of the South Georgia Regional Library located on Woodrow Wilson Drive to the Library Board of Directors.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the South Georgia Regional Library is currently working with the State and the Board of Trustees to undertake a needs assessment to determine their future building and facility needs as well as to determine the location for a new library. Council has considered a donation of the current building and property that the South Georgia Regional Library occupies which is owned by the City of Valdosta to the South Georgia Regional Library Board of Directors. They have provided a Letter of Opinion stating the value of the property and the facility to be \$2,400,000. Larry Hanson asked Council's consideration in executing a Deed of Gift to the Library Board of Directors for this property and building. The City will include a condition in the Deed of Gift that the future new library will be built in the City Limits of Valdosta in order to justify the Deed of Gift. The City has also been in discussion with the South Georgia Regional Library to consider locating the new facility at the Five Points property upon future purchase and development of that property by the City of Valdosta. The property is currently being surveyed and upon completion the City Attorney will have the information he needs to execute the Deed of Gift and the Warranty Deed.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the request to donate both the property and building of the South Georgia Regional Library located on Woodrow Wilson Drive to the Library Board of Directors.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Great American Clean-up was held on Saturday, April 17, 2010 from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. Several sites within the City were targeted for cleanup and resulted in the

removal of 26,000 pounds of junk and debris which is over 13 tons, 10 appliances, and 11 tires. Larry Hanson thanked the volunteers for their participation in the event.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Heart and Soul Tour was very successful and he thanked Staff for coordinating the event. There were over 50 State leaders and visitors in attendance at the reception and dinner.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, thanked Sementha Mathews, Public Information Officer, for her efforts in coordinating events for Georgia Cities Week. It is important that citizens understand the role that cities play in the quality of life in all of our communities.

Councilman Yost left the Council Meeting at 6:25 p.m.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Payton thanked the Staff for their efforts in coordinating the events for Georgia Cities Week and for the outdoor Council meeting.

Councilman Carroll wished the Mayor a happy birthday.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion for adjournment.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to adjourn the April 22, 2010 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:27 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, May 6, 2010.

City Clerk, City of Valdosta

Mayor, City of Valdosta