

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, MAY 22, 2008
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

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: Sonny Vickers, Tim Carroll, Alvin Payton, Jr., Willie Head, Jr., Robert Yost, and John Eunice. Councilman James Wright was absent. The invocation was given by Councilman Willie Head, Jr., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the May 6, 2008 Special Called Meeting and the May 8, 2008 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (6-0) of the Council.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

George Boston Rhynes, 5004 Oak Drive, stated that he had read in the local newspaper and heard on the television approximately 45 days ago that a human being allegedly committed suicide in the local jail. Mr. Rhynes stated that he later received a telephone call from the mother and sister who reside in Miami, Florida and inquired as to whether the Mayor or Council members knew the individual's name, age, or what type of investigation was being conducted. Mr. Rhynes inquired as to how many more citizens, black or white, Jew or gentile, Protestant or Catholic, must die before we see that there may be a need for some of the elected officials to take a look at what is going on. Mr. Rhynes stated that he believed, as a human being created by a divine source, that someone cares about another human being and everyone is not asleep. He asked if anyone cared enough to research this and find out the individual's name.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

ORDINANCE NOS. 2008-21, 2008-22, AND 2008-23, ORDINANCES AMENDING THE CITY OF VALDOSTA'S RETIREMENT AND BENEFITS PROGRAM

Consideration of Ordinances to amend the City of Valdosta's retirement and benefits program. (Second Reading)

Charlie Felts, Human Resources Director, stated that the City's retirement plan is administered by the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) through the Georgia Municipal Employee Benefit Retirement Fund. Under the existing plan, elected officials are not eligible for retirement benefits. Additionally, employees retiring before age 65 are not eligible for a return of contributions which they paid into the plan. There is also no provision to allow credit for service with other local governments prior to employment with the City of Valdosta. A recent survey indicated that a majority of cities in the GMA program with a population of 25,000 or more offer retirement benefits to elected officials. Discussions with GMA suggest a recommended benefit for current and future elected officials in the Valdosta plan would be a \$50 benefit per year of service at age 62, or whenever the elected official retires if after age 62. To be eligible, an elected official must become vested by serving at least five years with the City of Valdosta. Under Georgia law, previous elected officials are not eligible. An actuarial study performed by the GMA indicates the annual cost to provide this retirement benefit to be approximately \$3,000 which is less than 1% of the annual plan cost. Currently, the City's retirement plan requires that all employee who contribute to the plan stay employed until age 65 to obtain a return of their contributions. This may cause employees to stay on the job past the point they are fully productive or physically capable of performing their duties. It would be in the best interest of the City and employees to allow a return of contributions at the age an employee takes their full, not early, retirement. Any cost would be offset by the fact the City would in most instances fill the vacated position at a much lower salary. It would also allow the employee to have a source of funding with which to purchase insurance coverage during retirement years reducing the City's health plan costs. Also, in today's highly

competitive labor market, it has become increasingly difficult to recruit and retain experienced personnel in many of the technical and professional fields. Candidates having valuable experience with other local governments are reluctant to take positions with Valdosta if they stand to lose several years invested toward retirement with their current employers. It would benefit the City to give service credit in our plan to existing and new hires in Grades 23 and above which contain key positions such as Department Heads, Directors, and higher level engineering and technical positions. Service credit would be limited to a maximum of ten years for service with another local government. It could not be applied for until the individual was vested with the City of Valdosta which requires ten years service. The vesting requirement would limit the cost impact to the City's retirement plan and allowing the service credit would significantly enhance the City's ability to recruit and retain employees in key career fields critical to its future success. Charlie Felts recommended that Council approve amendments to the City of Valdosta Retirement Plan to provide for a retirement plan for elected officials, maximum ten years service credit for future and existing employees in Grades 23 and above from other local governments after vesting with the City of Valdosta, and allow a return of contributions to eligible employees prior to age 65 upon meeting eligibility for full unreduced retirement.

Charlie Felts stated the second part of the amendment concerns eligibility of elected officials to participate in the City of Valdosta's benefit plan. The City provides a self-funded benefit plan which includes health, life, and disability insurance and a 457 deferred compensation plan in which the employee may contribute their own money. Currently, elected officials are not eligible to participate in the benefit plan. A recent survey of 22 cities in Georgia indicated that 91% of those cities offer health insurance to the elected officials. The City of Valdosta currently provides health insurance to employees at no cost and employees may pay for dependent coverage if elected. Under the self-insurance program, the City may offer elected officials coverage in the benefit plan which would be optional. The cost to offer the benefit plan for elected officials would be \$7,200 per elected official or approximately \$57,600 annually for the health insurance plan. The cost for life insurance, long-term disability, and deferred compensation is nominal because it is based on salaries. Charlie Felts recommended that Council approve adding elected officials to the benefit plan. Councilman Eunice inquired as to whether family members could be included on the insurance. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that it does allow for dependent coverage but that would be paid for by the employee/Council member. Councilman Yost inquired about the life insurance. Larry Hanson stated that the City provides \$10,000 coverage for life insurance and then the employee has the option to purchasing additional coverage up to \$150,000 in \$10,000 increments. This is payroll deducted and is a pre-tax benefit.

A MOTION was made by Councilman Vickers to amend the City of Valdosta's retirement and benefits program as presented by the Human Resources Director. Councilman Head seconded the motion. The motion was adopted (5-1) with Councilman Carroll voting in opposition to enact Ordinance Nos. 2008-21, 2008-22, and 2008-23, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XI.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of bids for uniforms for the Police Department (Bid No. 32-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that uniforms are provided to Police personnel which includes pants, shirts, coats, and other items. This is an annual contract with options to renew as long as the bid is in the City's best interest. Sealed bids were received on May 13, 2008 with the only bid submitted by Harrison Uniforms in the amount of \$333.60 per set. Several other companies declined to bid. The City is currently paying the recommended vendor \$362.85 per set. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the bid of Harrison Uniforms in the amount of \$333.60 per set and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period. Councilman Vickers inquired as to the number of uniforms the City purchases. Greg Brown stated that the uniforms are added to those that have already been issued unless there is a new Patrolman and they will receive several sets. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the City spends approximately \$15,000 per year. Councilman Head inquired as to the number of uniforms an Officer is issued. Police Chief Frank Simons stated that an Officer is issued five sets of uniforms.

A MOTION by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the bid submitted by Harrison Uniforms in the amount of \$333.60 per set for uniforms for the Police Department and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

Consideration of bids for work uniforms for various City of Valdosta Departments (Bid No. 33-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that work uniforms are provided for employees of several Departments throughout the City. This bid includes pants, shirts, coats, and other items as needed and is an annual contract with options to renew as long as the bid is in the City's best interest. Sealed bids were received on May 13, 2008 with the low bid submitted by Aramark Uniforms in the amount of \$18,357. This amount represents an annual usage and is approximately \$3,300 more than what was spent two years ago. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid of Aramark Uniforms in the amount of \$18,357 and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

A MOTION by Councilman Yost, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Aramark Uniforms in the amount of \$18,357 for work uniforms for various Departments and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

Consideration of bids for office supplies for the City of Valdosta (Bid No. 34-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that office supplies are used throughout the City by all Departments. This bid contains those items that are classified as high use. Utilizing one source of supply assures the City of a better price and more reliable service. This is a one-year contract with an option to renew. Sealed bids were received on May 13, 2008 with the low bid submitted by Staples in the amount of \$26,239.48 which represents the high use list purchases. The City will receive a 45% discount off the catalog price for other items. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid of Staples in the amount of \$26,239.48 and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period. Councilman Payton inquired as to whether Staples would be able to ship these items cheaper than the local companies who submitted bids. Greg Brown stated that Staples has had this contract before and they provide 24-hour delivery service.

A MOTION by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Staples in the amount of \$26,239.48 for office supplies and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

Consideration of bids for oils and lubes for the City of Valdosta (Bid No. 35-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that oils and lubes are used throughout the City in the automotive and equipment fleet. This bid contains those items that are classified as high use and necessary for the proper maintenance. This is for a one-year contract. One source of supply assures a better price and more reliable service. Sealed bids were received on May 13, 2008 with the only bid being submitted by Akins LLC in the amount of \$34,420.46. Several other vendors declined to bid. The cost last year was \$25,324.86 and the increase is due to the rising price of oil products that everyone is experiencing. The total cost is an estimated usage for next fiscal year. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the bid of Akins LLC in the amount of \$34,420.46 and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

A MOTION by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the bid submitted by Akins LLC in the amount of \$34,420.46 for oils and lubes and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

Consideration of bids for gasoline and diesel fuel for the automotive and equipment fleet for the City of Valdosta (Bid No. 37-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that this contract is bid annually to allow one source of supply for gas and diesel fuel for the automotive and equipment fleet. Utilizing one vendor assures the City of a better price and more reliable service. This is a one-year contract. Sealed bids were received on May 13, 2008 with the low bid submitted by Mansfield Oil in the amount of \$0.1812. The Valdosta area dealers did not respond. The new price is \$0.0105 higher than last year which will result in an increase of approximately \$10,000 in freight charges for the next fiscal year. The price also represents freight rates and profits margins of gas, ultra low sulfur diesel, and high sulfur diesel combined. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid of Mansfield Oil in the amount of \$0.1812 and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Mansfield Oil in the amount of \$0.1812 for gasoline and diesel and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

Consideration of bids for hand tools for the City of Valdosta (Bid No. 38-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that this contract is bid annually to provide hand tools for the entire City which includes shovels, rakes, Gatorade, gloves, safety vests, and other items. One source of supply assures a better price and more reliable service. Sealed bids were received on May 13, 2008 with the low bid submitted by Whitehead Hardware in the amount of \$16,155.68. Several other bidders did not respond. The price last year was \$16,239.19. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid of Whitehead Hardware in the amount of \$16,155.68 and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Head, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Whitehead Hardware in the amount of \$16,155.68 for hand tools and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

Consideration of bids for janitorial supplies for the City of Valdosta (Bid No. 39-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that janitorial supplies are used throughout the City. This bid contains high use items such as cleaning supplies, trash can liners, paper products, and other necessary items. This is a one-year contract with an option to renew. Sealed bids were received on May 13, 2008 with the low bid submitted by Catko in the amount of \$40,729.41 and a 10% discount off other items. Several other vendors did not respond. The amount represents estimated annual costs for the high use products. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid of Catko in the amount of \$40,729.41 and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period. Councilman Eunice inquired as to whether this included any of the Parks and Recreation facilities beginning July 1, 2008. Greg Brown stated that he had discussed this several months ago with Larry Hanson, City Manager, and they have now added "City-funded entities" to all of the contracts which would include the Industrial Authority, the Conference Center, and others so that they could purchase items at the City's price. Larry Hanson stated that the Parks and Recreation Authority will probably contract with the City for a period of time until they become operational.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Head, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Catko in the amount of \$40,729.41 for janitorial supplies and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

Consideration of bids for 15 and 20-yard roll offs for the City of Valdosta (Bid No. 40-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that this bid is for 15 and 20-yard roll offs for services offered by the City for residential and commercial customers. One source of supply assures the City of a better price and more reliable service. This contract contains options to renew. Sealed bids were received on May 13, 2008 with the low bid submitted by Consolidated Disposal in the amount of \$3,735 for the 15-yard roll off and \$4,439 for the 20-yard roll off. The last contract price was \$2,988 and \$3,592, respectively. The increase in price is due to the cost of steel that everyone is experiencing. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid of Consolidated Disposal in the amount of \$3,735 for the 15-yard roll off and \$4,439 for the 20-yard roll off and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Consolidated Disposal in the amount of \$3,735 for the 15-yard roll off and \$4,439 for the 20-yard roll off and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

Consideration of bids for the annual filter contract for the City of Valdosta (Bid No. 44-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that this contract is bid annually for a single source of supply for air, fuel, oil, and other filters that will be used in our automotive and equipment fleet. This contract allows a better price and more reliable service by using one vendor. Sealed bids were received on May 13, 2008 with the only bid submitted by Napa Automotive Parts stating a 50% discount off of jobber price which is the same price we are currently using. Several other vendors declined to bid. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the bid of Napa Automotive Parts and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period. Councilman Payton inquired as to what was meant by the jobber price. Greg Brown stated that meant the price was under retail and is the lingo used by the oil industry.

A MOTION by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Yost, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Napa Automotive Parts for a 50% discount off of the jobber price and allow the City to contract with them for the specified time period.

Councilman Head inquired as to whether the City posts the outcome of the bids on the City's website. Greg Brown stated that they do not currently post this information on the web site and most bidders will send a self-addressed stamped envelope so that they can receive the tab sheet or they give them a call. Councilman Head asked that this be considered for the City's web site.

Consideration of a request to approve a contract with Mauldin and Jenkins, LLC for external auditing services for the City of Valdosta.

Mark Barber, Deputy City Manager of Administration, stated that one of the goals of the Finance Department this year was to conduct a competitive process for the purpose of selecting the City's external independent auditor. The City last conducted this process in 2000 and it is recommended practice that governmental entities enter into multi-year agreements with external auditors with a competitive selection procedure or simply a rotation of audit firms every three to five years. In March, 2008, the City solicited bids for audit services. The Purchasing Division disseminated the information via the City's website, bid packages to those firms who had shown interest in the past, and professional organization's website such as Georgia Municipal Association and Georgia Government Finance Officers Association. Four submittals were received and reviewed by a Committee consisting of Mayor John Fretti, Councilman Tim Carroll, Larry Hanson, City Manager, Mark Barber, Deputy City Manager of Administration, and Chuck Dinkins, Accounting Manager. The Committee scored attributes such as experience, qualifications, pricing, and staffing. Pricing was the smallest component that was reviewed for grading each firm. After assessing the required attributes, the Selection Committee desired that the top two firms make a presentation to the Committee. The presentations proved to be beneficial to the Committee as brief histories and philosophies of each firm were conveyed followed by questions from the Selection Committee. Properly performed audits play a vital role in the public sector by helping to preserve the integrity of the public finance functions and by maintaining citizens' confidence in their elected leaders, and to this extent due diligence was exercised in the final selection of the City of Valdosta's external auditor. Mark Barber recommended that Council award the external audit contract to Mauldin and Jenkins, LLC for fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011. Mauldin and Jenkins is a regional firm with offices in Albany, Macon, Atlanta, and Birmingham, Alabama. The Macon office would service the City of Valdosta with some staff coming from the Albany site. Councilman Yost inquired about the other four firms that submitted bids and how close the bids were. Mark Barber stated that the firms submitting bids were Henderson and Godbee (current provider), Mauldin and Jenkins, Robinson-Grimes, and Stewart and Fowler. There was approximately \$13,000 between the lowest and the highest bid. Councilman Yost inquired as to where the current provider ranked in cost and why the City went with a three-year contract. Mark Barber stated that Henderson and Godbee was the highest. Larry Hanson stated that the first things that was looked at was for the most qualified and while price has a role, it is not the primary role. The firm of Mauldin and Jenkins was determined to be the most qualified and the lowest bidder as well. Mark Barber stated that the industry practice for the length of time providing auditing services is three years. The contract will also be structured in a way so that if at any time the City of Valdosta is not happy with this firm or vice versa the contract can be terminated. Councilman Eunice inquired as to whether there were any points added for being a Valdosta-based business. Mark Barber stated that when he graded the firms, Mauldin and Jenkins had a specialized division that does nothing but local governmental audits which was very impressive. Councilman Carroll stated that this was not an easy process but felt that Mauldin and Jenkins, LLC had synergy, experience, and depth. Councilman Payton

inquired as to whether the price would remain the same for the three-year contract. Mark Barber stated that the cost for the first two years would be \$52,500 and the third year would be \$55,200. The City of Valdosta's current provider, Henderson and Godbee, has done a wonderful job and this selection was based on the qualifications of the other firm. Larry Hanson stated that the City of Valdosta was not dissatisfied with the job that Henderson and Godbee has done over the years but it is an expected practice in government that auditing services be sent out for competitive bids at some reasonable point in time. Mayor Fretti stated that this is a Council-appointed position per the City's Charter and he would be voting on this as well because it is not only to approve a contract but also to hire an auditor. Councilman Eunice asked for a point of clarification. Generally, when a Council-appointed position is discussed it would be done in Executive Session. Larry Hanson stated that was correct but this is more of a professional services contract and Council is not hiring an employee for the City of Valdosta.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Vickers, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve a three-year contract with Mauldin and Jenkins, LLC for external auditing services for the City of Valdosta.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of an amendment to the Policy Procedures and Guidelines of the Valdosta City Council.

Mayor Fretti stated that Section II – Conduct of the Policy Procedures and Guidelines of the Valdosta City Council has been amended to reflect changes in the City's retirement and benefits program. The following change was made to Item D: As a matter of policy no elected official will be eligible for any employment benefits as granted members of Mayor and Council under the City of Valdosta Retirement Plan, and health care benefits, deferred compensation, long-term disability, and life insurance as afforded full time City employees.

A MOTION was made by Councilman Yost to approve an amendment to the Policy Procedures and Guidelines of the Valdosta City Council. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vickers. The motion was adopted (5-1) with Councilman Carroll voting in opposition.

Consideration of a request for GEMA/Homeland Security Funding to purchase Self Contained Breathing Apparatus equipment for the Police Department.

Police Chief Frank Simons stated that in 2007, the Police Department was approved for Homeland Security funds for equipment to improve the response and ability of the Tactical Operations Unit (TOU). The original grant application included a request for Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) to be used in the event of chemical, biological, or hazardous air situations. The original grant, as approved, did not contain sufficient funds to support the Department's needs; however, the Department was recently notified by Homeland Security representatives that they had approved \$208,000 for the purchase of a tactical robot that would be used for bomb calls or other incidents where the City would not want to expose an Officer to danger. The Department then discussed the necessity for additional Self Contained Breathing Apparatus equipment and as a result Homeland Security accessed FY 2004 funds that were still remaining and they awarded the Department an additional \$8,000 to be added to the 2007 award to fund the purchase of SCBA equipment. As with all Homeland Security grants, acceptance of these funds will obligate the Valdosta Police Department to respond or make the equipment available for State declared emergencies which require the use of the purchased equipment. Chief Simons recommended that Council approve the request for an additional \$8,000 in grant funds for the purchase of SCBA equipment and to authorize the Mayor to sign the agreements to accept the grant funds.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Head, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to follow the recommendation of Chief Simons and approve the request for \$8,000 in grant funding from GEMA/Homeland Security Funding to purchase Self Contained Breathing Apparatus equipment for the Police Department authorize the Mayor to sign the agreements to accept the grant funds.

Consideration of the condemnation of property for the extension of public utilities.

Von Shipman, City Engineer, stated that Council had previously approved the concept to extend the sanitary sewer system along the west side of Norman Drive from Valhalla Drive to near St. Augustine Road on February 21, 2008 prior to the retirement of Leon Weeks. At that time almost all of the property owners supported the project and the fact the project cost would be assessed to them at a later date. They also were aware that easements would be needed across the front of their properties. Sewer easements have been obtained from all property owners with the exception of the Spells Estate which happens to be at the beginning of the extension project. The property in question has an area of approximately four acres and has been assessed a land value of \$736,507. It should be noted that approximately one-half of the property is bisected by a pond which limits the amount of development that can occur. Coupled with the fact the sewer will be installed along the front property line where it will not conflict with any future development, the \$736,507 value appears to be on the high side. Sewer easements are normally purchased at 25% of the land value. In this case the required easement measures approximately 0.21 acre which results in the easement being valued at \$9,797. The person in charge of the property believes the property should be valued at \$2,000,000 thus rendering the easement to be valued at \$26,360. The Verizon development is to be completed in early June and the contractor is ready to begin the week of May 26, 2008 but he has been advised that he may not be able to start unless a compromise is reached. George Talley, City Attorney, stated that the property owner's attorney has been out of town until today and he spoke with him this morning. George Talley advised the attorney that the City was not going to pay the outrageous price his client was asking for the property. The attorney was to contact his client but it does not look like the client will be in agreement. Von Shipman stated that the value is assigned by the Tax Assessor and is approximately \$184,000 per acre; however, over half of the property is a lake which bisects the property and makes it difficult to develop. Larry Hanson stated that if Council approves the condemnation proceedings then it lets the property owner know that this is serious and they are more inclined to negotiate in good faith. Councilman Vickers inquired as to what the next step would be. George Talley stated that the City used to file all their condemnations under a special master proceeding whereby a petition was filed with the Judge and he appointed a lawyer to serve as a special master and then it went to court. Councilman Vickers inquired as to whether they could proceed with the work. George Talley stated that the court would name five commissioners and they will determine what the value of the property is and then the City would have to pay that amount in court. They could then proceed with the work. Councilman Yost inquired as to why this would not be a public hearing and allow the property owner time to speak. Larry Hanson stated that Council is voting to authorize a legal hearing in which that would be done. George Talley stated that property can only be condemned in Superior Court and very seldom do we have to get easements for water and sewer because most property owners feel that it would be an enhancement to their property. Larry Hanson stated that the Georgia Legislature has passed stronger eminent domain laws even for public necessity projects. Councilman Head inquired as to whether there were any face-to-face discussions with the property owners. Von Shipman stated that he and Afsaneh Jabbar, Assistant Director of Utilities, had been working on this project and the property owners live in various locations so they have communicated by written correspondence. George Talley stated that the City will retain an expert who will appraise the property and give testimony in court and the property owners will normally have someone to counter that. Larry Hanson stated that under the condemnation laws there are two tests. The first test is whether it is for a valid public purpose and then the second is to determine the value of the property. Von Shipman stated that the sewer would be run in front of the property by the existing right-of-way where they would not be able to build due to setback limitations so it is not harming the property.

A MOTION by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Vickers, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve condemnation of property for the extension of public utilities as recommended by the City Engineer.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND AUTHORITIES

Consideration of appointments to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments and Appeals.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments and Appeals has two members, Charles Smith and Steve Quinn, whose terms will expire June 30, 2008. Both Mr. Smith and Mr. Quinn have indicated an interest in serving on the Board again. The first slot is for a General Contractor and the following names have been submitted in order of preference: (1) Charles Smith (Cauthen Construction), David Hiers (RST Construction), and Justin Slone (Slone Associates, Inc.). The second slot is for a Home Builder and the following names have been submitted in order of preference: (1) Steve Quinn (Quinn Construction Group Inc.), (2) Bill Gaskins (Chrismill Homes), and (3) Scott Orenstein (M & M Construction).

Mayor Fretti asked for nominations for Position #1. Councilman Carroll placed in consideration the name of Charles Smith. There being no other nominations, Mayor Fretti closed nominations for Position #1. Charles Smith was re-appointed by acclamation to serve a term of three years on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments and Appeals.

Mayor Fretti asked for nominations for Position #2. Councilman Eunice placed in consideration the name of Steve Quinn. There being no other nominations, Mayor Fretti closed nominations for Position #2. Steve Quinn was re-appointed by acclamation to serve a term of three years on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments and Appeals.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the electronic recycling event held on May 10, 2008 was a tremendous success and there were over 34,300 pounds of metal, plastic, computers, and other equipment received by Atlanta Recycling Solutions.

There will be a Transportation Plan update on Tuesday, June 3, 2008, which is the date of the next Council Work Session. The meeting will need to start a little earlier due to the length of the presentation. Larry Hanson suggested that the presentation begin at 3:00 p.m. with a dinner break at 5:00 p.m. and then the Work Session would begin at 5:30 p.m. Another option would be to begin the presentation at 4:00 p.m. and the Work Session would run a little longer than normal. Councilman Payton stated that his preference was to start the Work Session at 4:00 p.m. due to a travel commitment. The consultant will also hold a public comment meeting on Wednesday, June 4, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. in the Annex Building's Multi-Purpose Room.

There will be a joint dinner meeting with Mayor and Council and the Valdosta City School Board members on Thursday, May 29, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at Jaycee Shack. An agenda will be forwarded to Council within the next few days.

Also, Budget Hearings will be held on June 10-11, 2008 and a lot of changes have been made in order to get it to a point for presenting it to the Mayor and Council.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Fretti stated that Larry Hanson sent out a quarterly update on the FY 2008 Mayor and Council goals, and George Talley, City Attorney, has sent out an update on the status of lawsuits against the City. There will also be a Transit Committee Meeting tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. Larry Hanson stated that tomorrow is the last day for consulting firms to submit their proposals so the Committee will be working to determine the criteria to be used for selection of the consultant who will design and implement the system. Mayor Fretti stated that Larry Gregory with the Georgia Department of Labor's Division of Rehabilitative Services has been selected to assist with the disabilities component of the Transit system.

Councilman Vickers inquired about the evaluation for the Municipal Court. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that Charlie Felts has forwarded information about the Municipal Court system to the consultant for review. He will then schedule a visit within the next few weeks.

Councilman Head thanked the Parks and Recreation Department for cleaning up the area around the holding pond; however, more shrubbery needs to be added. The gates also need to be locked.

Councilman Yost thanked the City Manager for arranging the joint meeting with the Valdosta City School Board of Education and it will be great to build a relationship with them and continue meeting on a quarterly or yearly basis.

Councilman Payton inquired about the status of the new laptops. Larry Hanson stated that he would check with Steve Carter, Information Technology, to find out what the status is on the new laptops.

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion for adjournment.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the May 22, 2008 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:59 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, June 5, 2008.

City Clerk, City of Valdosta

Mayor, City of Valdosta