

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 2014
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor John Gayle called the regular meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. Council members present were: Joseph "Sonny" Vickers, Ben Norton, Alvin Payton, Jr., Robert Yost, Sandra Tooley, and James Wright. Councilman Tim Carroll was absent. The invocation was given by Pastor David Tart, Park Avenue United Methodist Church, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

SPECIAL PRESENTATION OF THE 2014 VALDOSTA PRESERVATION AWARDS

Emily Foster, Special Projects/Historic Preservation Planner, stated that it was her honor to introduce the Sixth Annual Valdosta Preservation Awards for 2014. As part of our City's observance of National Historic Preservation Month in May, the Historic Preservation Commission began its Annual Awards Program in 2009 to recognize property owners who do outstanding work to preserve their historic buildings or promote historic preservation in the City. From nominations received each year, organizations and individuals demonstrating excellence in the rehabilitation or stewardship of a historic building, excellence in the design of compatible new construction, or lifetime achievement in historic preservation, are chosen to receive a Valdosta Preservation Award. These awards provide positive reinforcement of the Historic District design review process, promote goodwill within our community, and acknowledge the hard work and dedication of citizens in the preservation and reuse of our historic buildings. Emily Foster recognized the following Preservation Awards Judging Committee members and thanked them for their time and effort: (1) Celine Gladwin, Historic Preservation Commission, (2) Donald Davis, Lowndes County Historical Society, and (3) Rusty Wetherington, President of the Valdosta Heritage Foundation. Emily Foster stated that this year marks the first time two individuals are being recognized for the Harold M. Bennett Lifetime Achievement Award. This award was named in honor of its first recipient, Harold Bennett, Valdosta's "Father of Historic Preservation," who was responsible for much of the preservation advocacy and restoration efforts in our City. This exceptional Award recognizes a Valdostan who has dedicated many years of his or her life to historic preservation and had a long term impact on preserving the built heritage of Valdosta. This person has had significant and sustained accomplishments related to the preservation of our community's architectural and cultural heritage which may include: the restoration of historic buildings, the designation of historic properties, leadership in or significant contribution to a community-based preservation organization, a sustained record of leadership of or contributions to historic preservation, or a significant accomplishment that advances the preservation ethic within our community. Both Lifetime Achievement Award recipients have demonstrated a high level of influence in local historic preservation yet each recipient has made their mark in different ways over the past four decades. Their combined efforts have made our City a better place by protecting and promoting Valdosta's history. Emily Foster introduced Dr. Harry Hamm, Chairman of the Historic Preservation Commission, who will be presenting the Awards.

Dr. Harry Hamm stated that he was honored to present two awards that are very important to our community. The first Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to Dr. Richard Saeger has lived in historic houses throughout his life, beginning in an 1860's farmhouse in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, to his present 1928 Colonial Revival home on Park Avenue. Coming to Valdosta in 1972 from Oxford, Ohio, Dr. Saeger accepted a position in the Department of Political Science at what is now Valdosta State University. He and his wife Debi purchased a circa 1900s Queen Anne home on Adair Street, in which they rehabilitated and lived for 10 years. Dr. Saeger then moved to his present house, 224 East Park Avenue, an English Vernacular Revival Cottage with Colonial Revival elements, located in both the Valdosta Historic District and Brookwood North National Register District. Here, as with past historic homes, he undertook repairs to preserve and maintain the character of this historic home. By this time in the 1980's, Dr. Saeger had gotten the "preservation bug." He joined the National and Georgia Trusts for Historic Preservation, and educated himself on the policies and benefits of preservation, which he gladly shared with colleagues, friends, and family members. In the 1990s, he became actively involved in the Historic Brookwood North Neighborhood Association and Valdosta Heritage Foundation, organizations in which he has served multiple terms as both an Officer and as President, and in which he continues to be involved. In 1996, Dr.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION OF THE 2014 VALDOSTA
PRESERVATION AWARDS (CON'T)**

06/19/14 (CONTINUED)

Saeger was appointed to the Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission, where he is serving in his 5th term and is the current Vice-Chair. Dr. Saeger has also served on the Board of Directors for the Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions, representing the south central region of Georgia, as well as the Board of Directors for the Valdosta-Lowndes Habitat for Humanity where he has helped to integrate compatible new housing in the Valdosta Historic District. Over the course of his teaching career, Dr. Saeger has had the opportunity to travel abroad, visiting numerous UNESCO Heritage sites, as well as experiencing historic places in general. This experience has been shared with his students and colleagues in order to impress upon them the importance of preserving and protecting local history. In 2004, Dr. Saeger retired as Professor Emeritus at VSU, but continues to serve by teaching American Government and Honors classes. For his dedication to the rehabilitation of historic buildings, commitment to educating the public about the importance of historic preservation, and leadership in serving state and local organizations in the promotion of preservation efforts over the course of four decades in Valdosta, Dr. Richard J. Saeger is hereby commended and presented with a 2014 Valdosta Preservation Harold M. Bennett Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. Hamm stated that the second Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to Mr. David J. Sutton. Mr. Sutton, a Lowndes County native, began his professional career in urban planning in the early 1970's, working as the primary planner for the Greater Lowndes Planning Commission in the mid-1970's and then as Planning Director for what is now known as the Southern Georgia Regional Commission. David's personal experience with historic preservation began in 1977 when he and his wife Martha purchased the "Monroe House" in the Fairview neighborhood. This historic house, an 1896 Queen Anne house designed by architect Stephen Fulghum, inspired a 30-year commitment to its restoration. The Monroe House had been converted from a single-family residence to a boarding house in the 1940's and was abandoned and badly deteriorated when the Suttons acquired it. Undaunted, David endeavored to rehabilitate it back to its original glory. With help from friends and craftsmen, he restored the primary interior staircase and much of the elaborate exterior decorative elements. He refinished woodwork, restored the original floors, added a bathroom, and put a great deal of effort into this historic home. Additionally, David's enthusiasm for rehabilitating his home spread into the Fairview neighborhood, and he assisted others in purchasing and restoring many historic houses there, as well as other historic neighborhoods in Valdosta. He helped research the history and architectural significance of these houses as well, allowing a new generation to discover the rewards of historic preservation. Aside from the work done to what is now known as the Monroe-Sutton-Haller House, David Sutton was able to change the attitudes of residents and community leaders about historic preservation. He played a key role in the formation of the Valdosta Heritage Foundation that eventually led to the adoption of Valdosta's Historic Preservation Ordinance. David also helped write the National Register of Historic Places nomination for Fairview which was placed on the National Register in 1984. Furthermore, David was instrumental in saving the octagonal schoolhouse now located at the Crescent; this building would have been destroyed if not for David's intervention and restoration work. Through his vocation as an urban planner, David accomplished projects that benefited both the community at large, as well as his neighborhood. His leadership was instrumental in turning a large nuisance property in the middle of Fairview into a passive City park. In addition, David was the person responsible for reducing speeding along Central Place, by getting the City of Valdosta to close this street's access from Central/Hill Avenues. He also worked with the City to have a four-way stop sign installed at the intersection of Floyd and Wells Streets. All of these efforts resulted in making the Fairview neighborhood a safer, more livable place. Another major accomplishment of David's was his involvement in saving the Barber-Pittman House and especially the J. T. Roberts House. He was influential in getting the latter property into public hands and saving it. Although David Sutton moved away from Valdosta approximately a decade ago, his influence on historic preservation has had and continues to have a major impact on the City of Valdosta. His working life, complete dedication to the house at 303 Wells Street, and willingness to help anyone accomplish any preservation-related project is immeasurable. For his dedication, commitment and numerous contributions to local historic preservation, Mr. David J. Sutton is hereby commended and presented with a 2014 Valdosta Preservation Harold M. Bennett Lifetime Achievement Award. Dr. Hamm stated that Mr. Sutton was unable to attend tonight and accepted the Lifetime Achievement Award on his behalf.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the June 5, 2014 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (6-0) of the Council.

ORDINANCE NO. 2014-11, AN ORDINANCE FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE FY 2015 BUDGET

Public Hearing for Adoption of the FY 2015 Budget. (Third Hearing, Only Two Required)

Mark Barber, Deputy City Manager of Administration, stated that in accordance with Georgia Code 36-81-3, each local government shall adopt and operate under an annual balanced budget for the General Fund, each Special Revenue Fund, and each Debt Service Fund in use by the City of Valdosta. The annual balanced budget shall be adopted by Ordinance or Resolution. A Budget Ordinance is balanced when the sum of estimated revenues and appropriated fund balances is equal to appropriations. Nothing contained in the above mentioned Code precludes a local government from adopting a budget for any funds used by the local government other than those specified above. These funds include Enterprise Funds, Internal Service Funds, and Fiduciary funds. The Fiscal Year 2015 Proposed City of Valdosta Budget has been reviewed and discussed at previous meetings, and two public hearings were held on June 10th and June 11th to afford citizens the opportunity to make comments on funding levels. The proposed Fiscal Year 2015 Budget does include a 5% utility rate increase based upon the water rate analysis and sufficiency study adopted by Mayor and Council. The General Fund budget is presented and balanced with an anticipated increase in property taxes of \$2.9 million dollars. The exact mill is not known at this time because the Tax Assessors Office is still working the tax digest. The additional funding will allow us to take \$500,000 and put back to increasing our reserves. We are currently under \$4 million in the Fund Balance in the General Fund and that could be wiped out in a year. The remaining additional funds will allow us to maintain the General Fund status quo. The majority of the expenses in the General Fund are the Police and Fire Departments. The proposed Budget maintains all employee benefits at the same rate, including services of the Care Here Medical Clinic, and a longevity award based on years employed at the City which are distributed in November. The Budget does not include a cost of living or merit increase for City employees. The consolidated proposed Budget increased approximately \$5 million when compared to last fiscal year. The increase is attributed to several reasons, including a reduction in one time operating transfers made last year and an increase in capital projects allocated in SPLOST VII for fiscal year 2015. Mark Barber stated that this is the first time since 1992 that we are recommending an increase in taxes. If we had not taken the appropriate financial policies and had the support from Council, and if our employees were not such good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars, we would be asking for an increase long before now.

Gail Green, 2824 Fawnwood Circle, spoke in favor of the request. Ms. Green stated that since 1996 she has requested a copy of the Budget every year; however, this year was the first time that she has sat in on the public hearings. City Staff has done a lot of work and put forth a great deal of effort in preparing the Budget and there was only a half dozen people who attended the public hearings. There was nothing like listening to the different presentations and being able to hear the questions and additional details. It is one thing to have it on paper but it is another thing to have explanations and questions answered. It was a fascinating opportunity and she enjoyed the hearings very much. Ms. Green stated that it was an incredibly good use of her time and she encouraged Council to do what they needed to do.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A **MOTION** made by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Vickers, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2014-11, an Ordinance to adopt the FY2015 Annual Budget, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIII.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-9, A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE TO FUND IMPROVEMENTS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES OF THE VALDOSTA POLICE DEPARTMENT AND THE LOWNDES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Consideration of a Resolution supporting the filing of an Application with the Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance to fund improvements for law enforcement capabilities of the Valdosta Police Department and the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office.

Police Chief Brian Childress stated that the City has received funding under the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013. Since a disparate situation exists between the City of Valdosta and Lowndes County, the grants were joint projects where both law enforcement agencies teamed together to request Federal grant funds to improve law enforcement services in the City of Valdosta/Lowndes County area. In 2005 and 2006, the funding was awarded as a lump sum amount which the City and County agreed to split to help fund each entities' grant program purposes that fell into one of six areas: (1) law enforcement programs, (2) prosecution and court programs, (3) prevention and education programs, (4) corrections and community corrections programs, (5) drug treatment and enforcement programs, and (6) planning, evaluation, and technology improvement programs. In 2007 and 2009, the City and the County were each awarded allocations for use in one of seven program purpose areas with crime victim and witness programs (other than compensation) being added to the program purpose areas. The funding in 2008 was so low that the County did not request any of the funding allocation. The 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 grants are complete. The City and County has completed their portion of the 2013 award and the City is preparing the closeout package this month. For the 2014 grant program, a lump sum was again awarded and after discussion with the Department of Justice, it was recommended the split of funding be based on FBI Part 1 Crimes for the calendar year of 2013. A split was proposed as follows: \$19,857.15 for the City of Valdosta and \$4,657.85 for Lowndes County. Since a disparate situation exists with Lowndes County, an agreement must be reached on the allocation of funding between entities. Both the City and the County will use their funding for one of the seven program purpose areas. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been executed with the County stating that they agree to the division of the allocations this year. The City will file the grant application for the entire amount of \$24,515 and act as the fiscal agent for the funding. No match is required for the grant. They have chosen law enforcement programs and planning, evaluation, and technology improvement programs. The Lowndes County Sheriff's Office is asking for an in-car camera system to put in the Deputy's vehicles and the Valdosta Police Department is asking for a radar speed detection cart and replacement of in-car printers which are used for printing tickets and reports. Chief Childress recommended that Council approve the Resolution supporting the filing of an Application with the Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance to fund improvements for law enforcement capabilities of the Valdosta Police Department and the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office.

A MOTION made by Councilman Yost, seconded by Councilman Wright, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution No. 2014-9, a Resolution supporting the filing of an Application with the Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance to fund improvements for law enforcement capabilities of the Valdosta Police Department and the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book V.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Mayor Gayle stated that if there was no objection from Council, Agenda Items 4(a) through 4(e) would be considered under a Consent Agenda. There were no objections from Council.

Greg Brown stated that all of the items up for bid were approved by Council in the current year budget and asked Council's consideration in following the recommendation of the Purchasing Agent if all of the following bids were accepted at one time: (1) Item 4(a) Consideration of bids for custodial services for the Department of Labor (Bid No. 18-13-14) – the low bid was submitted by Lurk Enterprises in the amount of \$23,999.88 but the requested information was incomplete so the recommendation is to approve the next lowest bid of All Bright All Pro (current provider) in the amount of \$24,000, (2) Item 4(b) Consideration of bids for roll off containers for the Public Works Department (Bid No. 20-13-14) – approve the bid submitted by Lewis Steel in the amount of \$2,875 for 10 YD, \$3,125 for 15 YD, and \$3,375 for 20 YD roll off containers (total amount \$9,375.00), (3) Item 4(c) Consideration of bids for roll out containers for the Public Works Department (Bid No. 23-13-14) – approve the low bid submitted by Otto in the amount of \$47.69 per roll out container, (4) Item 4(d) Consideration of bids for hand tools for the City of Valdosta (Bid No. 22-13-14) – approve the bid submitted by Whitehead/Miller Hardware in the amount of \$13,263.65, and (5) Items 4(e) Consideration of bids for gas and diesel fuel for the City of Valdosta (Bid No. 21-13-14) – approve the bid of Hinton Oil in the amount of \$.06.

A MOTION by Councilman Wright, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to follow the recommendation of the Purchasing Agent and approve the bids under a Consent Agenda for Agenda Items 4(a) through 4(e).

Consideration of bids for the Georgia Department of Transportation Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant Program (LMIG).

Pat Collins, City Engineer, stated that the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) utilizes a Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) Program which allocates transportation funding from the State based on a formula that includes population and street mileage (paved or unpaved). Most communities use these funds to resurface streets. The City has received a grant in the amount of \$446,354.26. The City submitted a list of streets for resurfacing to GDOT for their review. Five streets were selected from the list for this year's LMIG program based on funding availability and conditions of the roads. Bids were received and opened publicly on June 10, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. The low bid was submitted by The Scruggs Company in the amount of \$232,308.24. The Engineering estimate was \$262,017.50. Pat Collins recommended that Council approve the low bid was submitted by The Scruggs Company in the amount of \$232,308.24 for the Georgia Department of Transportation Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant Program (LMIG). Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the LMIG money is greater than this bid and that is because the other part of this Project is paving the dirt roads in the Dogwood Circle area. That is a little more extensive and will take up the remaining funds so a separate bid has been sent out and it will be brought before Council in the near future.

A MOTION made by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Wright, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by The Scruggs Company in the amount of \$232,308.24 plus a 10% contingency for the Georgia Department of Transportation Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant Program (LMIG).

Consideration of a request to approve a contract for the Design Build Process for the Withlacoochee Water Pollution Control Plant.

Henry Hicks, Utilities Director, stated that the Withlacoochee WPCP has been flooded causing Plant failure in both 2009 and 2013. Following a three year delay because of FEMA, the City aggressively began to address the impacts from the floods of 2009 and 2013. As a result, the Utilities Department initiated a two-step approach to prevent this in the future. The first step was to construct a new force main from two new master sewer pump stations to a new headwork's structure with EQ Basin at an elevation over 60 feet higher than the 2009 flood level. This would eliminate huge inflow volumes of river water from entering the 54-inch gravity main to the Plant during high river levels or flood event as well as eliminate the influent pump station at the lowest point of the facility and the first location to flood. The second step was to build a new Plant at the same location of the new Headwork's and EQ Basin once a funding source was identified. Work began on drafting a One Step Design Build Request for Proposal (DB RFP) document in 2012 immediately following the FEMA denial of the City's Final Appeal to replace this facility under Hazard Mitigation Funding after the 2009 federally declared flood disaster. The One Step Design Build Process was selected because it had the shortest time frame from start to completion for a major construction project like this as well as a lower cost benefit. Following negotiation of a Consent Order from the Georgia Department of Environmental Protection Division (EPD) in December, 2013, the Utilities Department requested comments on how to improve the draft DB RFP document from firms wanting to submit proposals on this Project. Approximately 75 comments were received from 6 teams and about 25 utilized to improve the draft document. In February, 2014, the One Step Design Build Request for Proposals was advertised. A mandatory pre-proposal meeting was held on February 26, 2014. During the following six weeks, the Utilities Department responded to questions for clarification on the RFP and posted the questions and answers each week on the associated webpage for this Bid Opportunity. As a result of these questions and answers, two addendums were issued on the RFP two weeks before the final proposals would be due. On April 29, 2014, proposals were submitted from five teams, a DB RFP Selection Committee was formed, and copies were given of each team's proposal to review and prepare for ranking those teams. The Selection Committee met on May 9, 2014, for initial ranking and then again on June 11, 2014 for the final ranking. The team submitting the most responsive and responsible proposal with the lowest price in the amount of \$23,754,829 was Parsons. Based upon that final ranking, the Selection Committee recommended that Parsons be selected for contract negotiations on this Project. Henry Hicks, Utilities Director, recommended that Council approve the contract with Parsons in the amount of \$23,754,829 for the Design Build Process for the Withlacoochee Water Pollution Control Plant. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that their goal would be to negotiate that number down as they did on the Force Main Project. Henry Hicks, Utilities Director, stated that they are looking to reduce the price by approximately \$1 million.

A **MOTION** made by Councilman Yost, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the contract with Parsons in the amount of \$23,754,829 for the Design Build Process for the Withlacoochee Water Pollution Control Plant.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of a request to authorize payment for emergency sewer repairs on Summerlin Street (Phase 2 of 3 Phases).

Henry Hicks, Utilities Director, stated that on February 21, 2014, sewer crews investigating a report of sewer problems in the Summerlin Street area discovered that a sewer 18-inch sewer main had collapsed in the field behind the White Bros. Auto Parts building. Due to the depths of this main, the Department was not capable to do repairs and a local underground contractor, Radney Plumbing, was contacted to make repairs. As a result of an ongoing sewer spill and the need for emergency repairs, the normal bidding process for this type of work was not viable. During this time a second manhole began surcharging at the corner of Myddleton Street and Hawkins Street as well as sewer surcharging on the edge of a field (Georgia Power) adjacent to those manholes. These repairs were included in the work for the contractor. Following the re-routing of the failed 18-inch sewer main around White Bros. Auto parts, bypass pumping was moved to begin repairs in the Myddleton and Hawkins Street area while easements and property were acquired to repair another collapsed sewer main under West Hill Avenue. The repairs to the sewer mains in the Myddleton Street and Hawkins Street area were completed by cleaning, using Closed Circuit TV, and lining approximately 1,620 linear feet of seriously deteriorated 18-inch sewer main to prevent future collapses of those mains. The Utilities Department is requesting Council authorization to pay Radney Plumbing \$280,130 for this portion of emergency repairs. A second invoice will be generated for the remaining repairs including jack and bore under Hill Avenue to extend over 300 linear feet of new sewer main and two new manholes from Hill Avenue to the Hawkins Street area repairs. Henry Hicks recommended that Council approve the invoice from Radney Plumbing in the amount of \$280,130 for payment of emergency sewer repairs on Summerlin Street (Phase 2 of 3 Phases).

A **MOTION** made by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the invoice from Radney Plumbing in the amount of \$280,130 for payment of emergency sewer repairs on Summerlin Street (Phase 2 of 3 Phases).

Consideration of a request for payment of emergency sewer repairs on West Hill Avenue (Phase 3 of 3).

Henry Hicks, Utilities Director, stated that on February 21, 2014, sewer crews investigating a report of sewer problems in the Summerlin Street area discovered that a sewer 18-inch sewer main had collapsed in the field behind the White Bros. Auto Parts building. Due to the depths of this main (over 27 feet), the Department was not capable to do repairs and a local underground contractor, Radney Plumbing, was contacted to make repairs. As a result of an ongoing sewer spill and the need for emergency repairs, the normal bidding process for this type of work was not viable. During this time a second manhole began surcharging at the corner of Myddleton Street and Hawkins Street as well as sewer surcharging on the edge of a field (Georgia Power) adjacent to those manholes. These repairs were included in the work for the contractor. Following the re-routing of the failed 18-inch sewer main around White Bros. Auto parts, bypass pumping was moved to begin repairs in Myddleton Street and Hawkins Street area while easements and property were acquired to repair another collapsed sewer main under West Hill Avenue. Following repairs to the sewer mains in the Myddleton Street and Hawkins Street area, Council authorization to acquire property necessary to complete a jack and bore under West Hill Avenue and receipt of Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) construction permit, Radney Plumbing completed a 220 linear foot jack and bore under West Hill Avenue extended over 300 linear feet of new 18-inch sewer main connecting to the Summerlin Street and Myddleton Street portions of this emergency repair project. The Utilities Department is requesting Council authorization to pay Radney Plumbing \$556,915 for this portion of those emergency repairs. This is the final invoice for these emergency repairs. Henry Hicks recommended that Council approve the invoice from Radney Plumbing in the amount of \$556,915 for payment of emergency sewer repairs on West Hill Avenue (Phase 3 of 3).

A **MOTION** made by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the invoice from Radney Plumbing in the amount of \$556,915 for payment of emergency sewer repairs on West Hill Avenue (Phase 3 of 3).

Consideration of a request to authorize payment for emergency sewer repairs on Remer Lane.

Henry Hicks, Utilities Director, stated that on As a result of significant Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) into the sanitary sewer collection system during major rain events, the City has experienced sewer system overflows at several locations within the City. The majority of those overflows occur in the portion of the sewer system that discharges into the 54-inch gravity main going to the Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment Plant. The main cause for the overflows was that the 54-inch main becomes inundated with stormwater associated with the I&I and cannot handle the excess flows causing backups of sewer in the areas discharging into it. Regional rain events are a contributing factor. The Force Main Project, which is expected to begin construction this month, will eliminate these overflows once completed within the next 18-months. In addition, the City is performing smoke testing of the entire sanitary sewer system over the next four years to identify and eliminate sources of I&I. Phase 1 of the smoke testing has been completed and Phase 2 will begin in July. In March, 2014, the City experienced repeated heavy rain events which led to several sewer overflows in the portion of the sewer system discharging into the 54-inch gravity main serving the Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment Plant. During these events, two sewer manholes off of Remer Lane began to surcharge sewer into the adjacent Sugar Creek. In addition to these overflows, a small section of 24-inch sewer main between these manholes collapsed causing another spill at the same location. Due to the size of this sewer infrastructure, the Utilities Department was not capable of initiating repairs and a local contractor, Radney Plumbing, was contacted to begin emergency repairs of this location. Due to the nature of the emergency and ongoing sewer overflows, the normal bidding procedure was not an option nor feasible. As a result of repeated heavy rain events throughout April, 2014, only bypass pumping was completed to stop the overflows and discharge of combined stormwater and sewage into Sugar Creek. Final repairs were eventually completed in late May, 2014 once the area dried out sufficiently to complete those repairs. The cost of these emergency repairs was \$62,335 and it is the Utilities Department is recommending that Council authorize payment to Radney Plumbing for that amount. A breakdown of the materials and equipment is summarized with the invoice for this work. Henry Hicks recommended that Council approve the invoice from Radney Plumbing in the amount of \$62,335 for emergency sewer repairs on Remer Lane.

A **MOTION** made by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the invoice from Radney Plumbing in the amount of \$62,335 for emergency sewer repairs on Remer Lane.

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-10, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION WITH THE U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES (COPS) UNDER THE COPS HIRING PROGRAM (CHP)

Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the U. S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) under the COPS Hiring Program (CHP) to fund four (4) additional Officers of the Valdosta Police Department to serve as Patrol Officers.

Police Chief Brian Childress stated that the City has already completed a three-year grant with the COPS program where seven Officers were provided by the grant. This was a very successful project that resulted in many new initiatives within the community. Under Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, CHP awardees may receive up to 75% of the approved entry-level Officer salary and fringe benefits costs with a minimum 25% local cash match requirement and a maximum Federal share of \$125,000 per Officer position over a three-year grant period. Grant funds may be used to hire new, full-time sworn Officer positions, to rehire Officers who have been laid off, or to rehire Officers who are scheduled to be laid off on a specific future date as a result of budget cuts. As in the past, CHP requires that each position awarded be retained with local funds for a minimum of 12 months at the conclusion of 36 months of Federal funding for each position. Applicants must also use awarded CHP funding to supplement (increase) State, local, and or Bureau of Indian Affairs funds that otherwise would have been dedicated to sworn Officer positions in the absence of the grant. If approved, four (4) new entry level Officers will be hired as Patrol Officers to help the Police Department to continue to respond to gun violence and homicides inside the City Limits. These costs will include all salary and eligible fringe benefits covered by the award. The City will supply the Officers

with a vehicle and all equipment necessary to fulfill their role as a Patrol Officer. Chief Childress recommended that Council approve the request and Resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the U. S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) under the COPS Hiring Program (CHP) to fund four (4) additional Officers of the Valdosta Police Department to serve as Patrol Officers.

A **MOTION** made by Councilman Wright, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution No. 2014-10, a Resolution authorizing the filing of an application with the U. S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) under the COPS Hiring Program (CHP) to fund four (4) additional Officers of the Valdosta Police Department to serve as Patrol Officers, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book V.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**05/08/14 CONTINUED**

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that we have been informally notified by the Georgia Department of Transportation that we will be receiving the Gateway Grant that we applied for which is approximately \$19,500. This will allow us to begin improvements to our gateways into the City. Larry Hanson thanked Emily Foster, Special Projects/Historic Preservation Planner, and Matt Martin, Planning and Zoning Administrator, for their hard work in preparing the Gateway Grant. It is a very competitive Grant and there were over 80 applications with only 20 being funded.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that with the adoption of the FY 2015 Budget we will begin not only the projects that were funded such as the Force Main Project and the Design Build of the Withlacoochee Water Pollution Control Plant, but we will also begin Phase 2 of the Sewer System Smoke Testing Project in July. Henry Hicks, Utilities Director, will be sending out information to citizens in certain areas of the community to notify them of the Project.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the nomination for appointments to several Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees is ongoing and Council is encouraged to ask their constituents to apply. The deadline to apply is June 25, 2014. There is one opening on the Central Valdosta Development Authority (CVDA), one opening on the Valdosta-Lowndes Co. Construction Board of Adjustments & Appeals, one opening on the Valdosta Housing Board of Appeals, and one on the Valdosta-Lowndes Co. Parks & Recreation Authority.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that Farm Days is underway and doing very well. It began in May and will continue until October 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. It is also scheduled for each Saturday in June with the exception of June 22nd due to the Juneteenth Celebration being held on the Courthouse square. This is the fourth year we have had the Farm Days event and they have filled all 37 slots that are available. There is a waiting list of interested vendors. Council members are encouraged to attend.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, thanked everyone who attended the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the new Withlacoochee Water Pollution Control Plant. We have been looking forward to getting this Project underway in order to meet the needs of our community.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, thanked the Council for adoption of the FY 2015 Budget. He also thanked Amy Hall, Budget Manager, and Carolyn Sampson-Burgess, Budget Analyst, for all their hard work in preparing the Budget.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) Annual Convention will be held on June 20-14, 2014 in Savannah. The Mayor and Council should have information about their accommodations and class registrations. There will be a record setting attendance this year and it should be a great Convention.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Yost thanked Staff for working long hours on the Budget and though he was not able to attend the Public Hearings, he did review every page of the Budget. All of his questions and concerns were answered by the City Manager and while no one is excited about raising taxes, he commended this Council and Staff for keeping

the Budget where is it for the past 20 years. We are now at a point where this had to happen and it was not an easy decision to make. Councilman Yost stated that he had also received an E-mail from one of his constituents about a chicken problem in Wood Valley. Apparently, a resident has approximately 30 chickens in their yard and the odor is really bad. The City Marshals went to check it out and they told the resident that it was legal to have the chickens. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that approximately two years ago the Georgia Legislature passed a new law that allows chickens within the City Limits.

Councilman Vickers thanked Staff for the fine job they did in preparing the FY 2015 Budget.

Councilman Norton stated that he concurred with Councilman Yost and Councilman Vickers regarding the Budget preparation and he thanked the citizens who came out and sat through six hours of presentations. If citizens heard from start to finish what Council heard they would probably ask how the City could do it with a tax increase of approximately two mills. No one wants a tax increase but he has seen Staff cut and cut and sometimes it is just time. Councilman Norton stated that he appreciated all the presentations that were made, the questions that were answered, and the countless hours that were spent in getting all of this information together.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that Councilman Vickers had requested some information about the value of a mill in certain communities and how much some of those cities generate in property taxes. In Athens, the value of a mill is \$3.3 million and they collect \$46 million in property taxes. In Savannah, the value of a mill is \$4.8 million and they collect \$60 million a year in property taxes. In Albany, the value of a mill is \$1.5 million and they collect \$15.4 million because their millage rate is 9.9%. Even in Rome, the value of a mill is \$1.1 million but their millage rate is 8.7% so they are collecting almost \$10 million a year in property taxes where we are currently collecting \$5.9 million in total property taxes.

Councilman Vickers stated that at the last Council Meeting there was a citizen who came before Council about an issue he had with a ditch and asked that Staff let the Council members know what decisions are made when citizens come before them. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that they would start informing the Council. He spoke with the gentleman after the Council Meeting and got his phone number. Staff visited the site and it was only a small section of the ditch that was holding water and there was a little erosion. It is a large open ditch and that is the purpose that it serves. Staff was going to do some minimal grading to address that concern.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There were no citizens to be heard.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion for adjournment.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Yost, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the June 19, 2014 Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:37 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, July 10, 2014.

City Clerk, City of Valdosta

Mayor, City of Valdosta