

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, JULY 19, 2007
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor John J. Fretti called the regular meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. Council members present were: David Sumner, Alvin Payton, Jr., Willie Head, Jr., John Eunice, Robert Yost, and James Wright. Councilman Sonny Vickers was absent. The invocation was given by Dr. Ronnie Mathis, Crossing Jordan Missionary Baptist Church, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

Special presentation on the 2007 Southern Hospitality Group Workcamp.

Mayor Fretti thanked Council for their acceptance and endorsement of the 2007 Southern Hospitality Group Workcamp. Valdosta has become a training ground because the Community Development Department has handled the Workcamp so proficiently, and we have received national attention and awards for the leadership. It has been a true collaborative effort through all the agencies, and there may be an attempt to do this on a local basis with some of the faith-based organizations, private sponsors, and the City of Valdosta. Mayor Fretti thanked the sponsors and the community for their support.

Mara Register, Community Development Director, stated that it was an honor to provide Council with a recap of the Southern Hospitality Group Workcamp, which was the best Workcamp ever primarily because of a wonderful group of homeowners. During the week of June 24-30, 2007, the City of Valdosta hosted more than 340 youth and adults that represented ten different denominations from 12 different states. The City has now repaired 144 houses in 23 months through this initiative, and next year will be even greater as there will be a challenge camp once again with Lowe's Distribution Center and the Valdosta City School System. They will be doing not only minor repairs but also repairing roofs. Mara Register recognized the Community Development Staff, Police Chief Frank Simons, Commander Brian Childress, Fire Chief J. D. Rice, the Valdosta Fire Department, Public Works Director John Whitehead, the Public Works Staff, and Finance Director Mark Barber for their efforts and hard work in making the Group Workcamp a success.

Mara Register stated that several homeowners wanted to share with Council what this meant to them and introduced Erman and Dorothy Manning and Bessie Evans. Ms. Manning stated that this was the most wonderful thing that had ever happened to her in her life. The children were angels sent by God and Ms. Manning thanked everyone for their love and for what they did for them. Ms. Evans stated that favor came to her house. On her street, there were three homeowners and each morning they were up early to greet the children. The fellowship was more than she could explain. It was not all about rebuilding the homes but rebuilding the mind, body, and spirit. Ms. Evans stated that she would have never had an opportunity to meet them and was proud of the leadership in the area for providing that opportunity.

Mayor Fretti presented Dr. Ronnie Mathis, who has participated in the Group Workcamp every year representing his church and the Valdosta Ministerial Alliance, with an award on behalf of the City Council and the City of Valdosta for his support. Mara Register, Community Development Director, presented awards to Stuart Mullis, Executive Director for Habitat for Humanity, Larry Henderson, Warren Scoby, Helen Baker of Christian Love Ministries, Danny Orrozco of Southland Church, and Tina Powers and Joy Jennings of Park Avenue United Methodist Church. Special awards were presented to Mr. Martin Roesch, Principal of Valdosta Middle School, for hosting the youth at Valdosta Middle School, Scott Storey and Missy Boone of Lowe's Distributions Center, and Tony Gariety, Manager of Lowe's Distribution Center, for their co-sponsorship of the Group Workcamp and commitment to work with the City of Valdosta and the Group Workcamp to take it to a national perspective.

Mayor Fretti thanked Mara Register, Community Development Director, and her Staff on behalf of the City Council for their participation and leadership in the Group Workcamp. Mara Register stated that it was truly an honor for them to work with the citizens on this initiative and they are looking forward to next year.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the July 5, 2007 Regular Meeting and the July 9, 2007 Special Called Meeting of the Valdosta City Council were approved by unanimous consent (6-0) of the Council.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Percy Harris, 2611 North Forrest Street, stated that he has taught over 500 people to roller skate during the past several years and would like to establish a skating rink in Valdosta which would create jobs, provide entertainment, promote physical fitness, and occupy teenagers' time. Mr. Harris would like to create some teams and have a national tournament in Valdosta and asked for Council's help and support on this project.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2007-14, A RESOLUTION TO APPLY FOR THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS JOINT SIGNATURE COMMUNITY PROGRAM DESIGNATION

Consideration of a request to approve a resolution to apply for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Joint Signature Community Program Designation.

Anne-Marie Wolff, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Signature Community Program which recognizes cities that go above and beyond the call in implementing their Comprehensive Plan and have committed to further implementation of the Comprehensive Plan through the completion of a project or a series of complex initiatives. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs looks favorably on joint applications so Staff contacted the City of Remerton regarding their participation. The following three initiatives have been identified that would benefit the City of Valdosta and the City of Remerton: (1) Brownfield and Greyfield Inventory, Assessment, and Redevelopment, (2) Withlacoochee Greenway Master Plan Development and Implementation, and (3) Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Planning and Development. Selected cities would receive benefits which include: (1) Stateside recognition, (2) \$50,000 in grant funds, (3) Assistance in identifying other financial resources for implementing the identified initiative, (4) Access to Department of Transportation matching funds for the Local Assistance Road Program, (5) Access to reduced rate Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA) loans, (6) Preference in the allocation of development funding for new homeless facilities, and (7) Down-payment assistance funds for homeownership for local government employees. Anne-Marie Wolff recommended that Council approve the resolution to apply for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Joint Signature Community Program Designation. Mayor Fretti inquired as to whether the City of Remerton would be approving this by resolution also. Anne-Marie Wolff stated that the City of Remerton approved the resolution at their Council meeting last week.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Sumner, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution No. 2007-14, a resolution to apply for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Joint Signature Community Program Designation, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book IV.

BID, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of bids for new fire equipment for the Fire Department (Bid No. 01-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the Fire Department is in need of some new fire equipment. The majority of the cost, which would be for upgrading air packs, is \$23,000 while the balance is for miscellaneous equipment used every day. Council has already approved a 10% match for this grant in a previous Council meeting. Sealed bids were received on July 10, 2007 with the low bid submitted by Thermo Fischer Scientific in the amount of \$24,348.98. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid submitted by Thermo Fischer Scientific in the amount of \$24,348.98 and allow the Fire Department to proceed with the purchase.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Sumner, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Thermo Fischer Scientific in the amount of \$24,348.98 and allow the Fire Department to proceed with the purchase of new fire equipment.

Consideration of bids for Phase 1 of the Baytree Road/Gornto Road intersection improvements.

Von Shipman, City Engineer, stated that the western leg of the Baytree Road/Gornto Road intersection is in need of improvement to accommodate additional traffic. A left turn lane is proposed for later this year; however, before it can be constructed, drainage infrastructure improvements are needed on the north side of the Baytree Road between Ellis Drive and Gornto Road. The actual turn lane construction will occur when the Flash Foods Store on the south side of Baytree Road is reconstructed. Included with that project will be the installation of six feet of additional pavement with curb and gutter by the developer. The City will then coordinate the construction of six feet of additional pavement with curb and gutter on north side adjacent to the Bank of America branch office to complete the turn lane project. While the drainage aspect of the intersection improvement project is needed, it will also serve another important purpose. Storm water from the intersection of Gornto Road and Springhill Drive currently drains into the Bank of America detention facility and then across private property. Bank of America officials would like to install a drainage pipe from the detention pond to the Baytree Road right-of-way to avoid litigation by the adjacent property owner. The new drainage system that is proposed on Baytree Road is designed to accept this storm water diversion. Bids were received on July 10, 2007 with the low bid submitted by Standard Contractors in the amount of \$47,990. The City Engineering estimate was \$51,000.00. Von Shipman recommended that Council approve the low bid submitted by Standard Contractors in the amount of \$47,990 with a 10% contingency. Councilman Eunice inquired as to when the work would begin. Von Shipman stated that Standard Contractors is ready to begin the work within the next few weeks and the Flash Foods Store will start reconstruction around the first part of September with the estimated completion date set for November.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Yost, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to follow the recommendation of the City Engineer and approve the low bid submitted by Standard Contractors in the amount of \$47,990 with a 10% contingency for Phase 1 of the Baytree Road/Gornto Road intersection improvements.

Consideration of a request to extend the Service Delivery Agreement and for funding related to services under arbitration to remain as currently agreed to until June 30, 2008. Mayor/Council postponed the request at the July 5, 2007 regular City Council meeting until the July 19, 2007 regular City Council meeting.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that Council previously postponed the County's request to amend the Service Delivery Agreement at the July 5, 2007 Council meeting. The County's primary change in Agreement was to change the funding for the Industrial Authority, which is currently funded out of the hotel/motel tax, to a Countywide millage and to add the Turner Center for the Arts to be funded with the hotel/motel tax. Council had requested to leave everything the same until June 30, 2008. Council then chose to postpone the request in order to wait on a response from the County on the City's proposal to address all the four remaining service issues under arbitration rather than addressing one portion of one issue. The City initially made a presentation to the County on June 28, 2007 and followed that with a written proposal dated July 9, 2007 asking for a response to that proposal before the City acted upon the County's request. Larry Hanson stated that the response was delivered at 5:15 p.m. today and he did not have time to review it in detail. The City's request was to create a Parks and Recreation Authority and fund it with a Countywide dedicated millage like the County is proposing for the Industrial Authority, and to authorize the City to implement a hotel/motel tax like the County has so it would not be a duplicate tax and the City would agree to fund the same agencies at the same rates proportional to total collections. For example, if 70% of the tax is collected in the City we would be funding 70% of the Airport Authority, 70% of the Conference Center, and 70% of any other agency that is agreed. The third request in the City's proposal was to incorporate this into an Intergovernmental Agreement that would include the Industrial Authority, Parks and Recreation Authority, the Conference Center Authority, and the Turner Center for the Arts and that the City and County would agree that these agencies are funded jointly and equally. The fourth request was to look again at the water/sewer service area based upon events that have happened since mediation because of recent decisions that have now been made which includes annexation of Martin's Pastry in the southern portion of the County and an area located on the west side of James Road. These two areas are no longer under dispute and if all of that was

completed then they agreed to leave road maintenance the same. The County's response was that they have reviewed the City's proposal for a change in the mechanics for funding the Airport Authority, Conference Center, and Arts Center and could agree to some form of the City's request as a means of resolution. Larry Hanson stated that he spoke with Joe Pritchard, County Manager, prior to the meeting and the County does not believe that this creates any efficiency which it does not. The purpose of it was to create a perception that the City and County are equal partners in funding these agencies and the County felt like they could agree to the hotel/motel tax arrangement in some form. As to Parks and Recreation, the County Commission in its entirety is not inclined to support an Authority. The Commission favors a Countywide program that is funded Countywide and so do we. Larry Hanson stated that this leads him to believe that not all of the Board of Commissioners are in favor of it and they have not voted on anything. On the road maintenance issue, the City knew the County would accept the City's proposal if all this was accepted to leave it as it is. The water/sewer map is still not quite like the City prefers. Larry Hanson stated that Council has the following options: (1) Agree to the County's original request to allow the Industrial Authority to be funded out of Countywide millage, allow the County to continue to have the hotel/motel tax and add the Turner Center for the Arts to it, and take the action that the County has requested, (2) Council could postpone a decision for two weeks to allow more time to work out the details, or (3) Council could take action and approve the County's request with some conditions. Larry Hanson stated that the danger in postponing the decision is that the City and County will need to set the millage rates within the next several weeks and the County has a meeting on Tuesday, July 31, 2007 at which time they are planning to set their millage rate. It would be important to the County to clear this up or at least have some framework for an agreement in place which would allow them to set their millage rate because if they are going to change the way the Industrial Authority is funded then they will need to do it at the July 31 meeting or have a Special Called Meeting. Mayor Fretti stated that he felt that the County does not think this is important to the Council because they have not given Mayor or Council time to read the letter. The County has had the proposal for two weeks and then they ask for an answer from Council within 15 minutes of the time that Council meets. The County should want to sit down to discuss or provide more time for review. Larry Hanson stated that he has inquired each day this week about the response from the County and he too was disappointed that he received it just prior to the meeting.

Councilman Sumner stated that the County is asking to extend the Agreement until the next budget cycle and if that is the case, the City has not decided not to go into arbitration. Larry Hanson stated that the County is not really asking just to extend the Agreement. Council passed a motion to extend the Agreement until June 30, 2008 leaving everything the same and the County came back wanting to extend the Agreement and to change the funding of the Industrial Authority to a Countywide millage and add the Turner Center for the Arts to receive hotel/motel tax funding for a year. Councilman Yost inquired as to how the Turner Center for the Arts is currently funded. Larry Hanson stated that they are given \$35,000 a year from the City's General Fund and the County provides \$45,000 or \$50,000 per year out of their General Fund. Councilman Yost inquired as to what percentage currently goes to the Industrial Authority, Airport, and Conference Center and Tourism Authority. Larry Hanson stated that by law, 40% has to go to the Tourism Authority and the remaining 60%, which is approximately \$800,000, goes to the others. The Industrial Authority receives half of the \$800,000, the Tourism Authority receives a small portion of it, and the Airport Authority receives approximately \$400,000. By taking the Industrial Authority out and funding them through millage it creates some room for the Turner Center for the Arts. Councilman Yost inquired as to how much would go to the Turner Center for the Arts. Larry Hanson stated that he has not seen the budget for the Turner Center for the Arts but asked for the approved budgets today from the County. Councilman Yost stated that the City would be almost tripling what we currently give the Arts Center and inquired as to where the County comes in. Larry Hanson stated that if the hotel/motel tax generates \$1.5 million, the County gets all of it now because it is a Countywide tax and if the City imposes it, then the City would get 80% and the County would get 20%. The City would then give 40% of their 80% and the County would give 40% of their 20% so they are each funding proportionately to the total budget their share of the agencies. Larry Hanson stated that even though we do not know what the budget is for the Arts Center it would be fair to say that they would receive more because that is the reason they asked for a portion of the hotel/motel tax. Councilman Yost stated that in the letter that the County sent regarding the hotel/motel tax, the County is willing to possibly agree with the hotel/motel tax situation. Larry Hanson stated that Council has cancelled the Agreement and has not voted to impose our own tax. Councilman Yost stated that he was worried about the hotel/motel tax because he did not want someone telling us how it should be spent. The arbitration process is still ongoing and the County is still delaying it with their attorneys not agreeing to meet or look at the lists for a third arbitrator. Mayor Fretti stated that Council likes to have policy in front of them that has been reviewed by the City Manager. There is time needed to work this out and Council has indicated

that they would like to work this out without going to arbitration. Mayor Fretti inquired as to whether Council would like more time to work this out without it affecting the millage rates. Councilman Sumner inquired as to whether the arbitration process would be postponed if Council moved forward with what the County has proposed through this next budget cycle and increases the millage rate to fund the Industrial Authority. Larry Hanson stated that the two arbitrators are still trying to select a third one. Councilman Sumner stated that if we go into arbitration then it could go on for several months and would still not satisfy the budgeting request of some of the entities that need to be funded such as the Industrial Authority. Larry Hanson stated that from a contractual standpoint that was correct because the Agreement states that it is for one year including the proposed funding for the Industrial Authority; however, from a practical standpoint, once it is done then it is done. That is based upon giving the County adequate funding to retire debt and to obligate themselves to buy land which they are already actively looking for. If the County buys land for \$5-\$10 million and pledges a tax it will be very difficult to undo it June 30, 2008. Councilman Sumner inquired as to whether there was a disagreement for the funding of the Industrial Authority. Larry Hanson stated that the City's proposal on the hotel/motel tax was to address either real or perceived issues of equality between the City and County. There has been a feeling that if the County funds the Industrial Authority solely out of the Countywide millage then it could be perceived as a County entity which has caused some of the Council members to be concerned because they felt it should be a community entity and that we should be equal partners. The City's proposal to fund the hotel/motel tax and having the City pay 80% does make us equal partners. The County would be the primary funder of the Industrial Authority and the City would become the primary funder of the Airport Authority and we would place that in one Agreement for 50 years so that they are all connected including the Parks and Recreation Authority. Then if any of those Agreements are cancelled then they are all cancelled so you would have leverage. Councilman Sumner stated that the Agreement with the County is to postpone it through the next budget cycle and if Council approves the County's request then it would affect House Bill 489 and future funding and obligations. Larry Hanson stated that it could have some effects. Mayor Fretti stated that the County has selected the Industrial Authority and placed them at a higher importance than the Airport Authority or the Tourism Authority and he was not sure how that became more important than the other issues. If the City is going to negotiate then they should negotiate all of the issues and not just one or two. Councilman Sumner stated that the County is asking to extend the Agreement for one year and the budgets are pretty much set and they are trying to find a mechanism to fund the Industrial Authority. The Agreement has nothing to do with House Bill 489 because we are still going to be discussing the hotel/motel tax and Parks and Recreation. Councilman Sumner stated that he was trying to find out what would be an equitable solution for the City and if the City does decide to agree with what the County is proposing, Councilman Sumner inquired as to how it would affect the City, would it undo what has been done to this point, and what would the impact be on future negotiations on House Bill 489. Mayor Fretti stated that Councilman Sumner has inquired about that in several meetings and they have been unable to answer it. Councilman Sumner asked for the Mayor's recommendation in clarifying and rectifying the issues in order to move forward. Mayor Fretti recommended that Council not act on this right now and that the City Manager and County Manager meet to discuss the details. Councilman Sumner inquired as to the timeline for those negotiations considering budget restraints and setting the millage rate. Larry Hanson stated that this would not affect setting the millage rate at the City Council meeting on August 9, 2007; however, it is more time sensitive for the County because they want to add the mill for the Industrial Authority. If the City can set the millage rate on August 9 then the County can set their millage rate as late as August 9. Councilman Sumner stated that he was in favor of funding the Industrial Authority and he did not want to see them suffer through the next budget process but it has not been made clear to him what the funding would be for the Industrial Authority this year if the City does not move forward. Mayor Fretti stated that the Industrial Authority has placed their budget request in for funding through normal channels. Councilman Sumner inquired as to whether the Industrial Authority's funding from the City's budget cycle would change from what was done the previous year. Larry Hanson stated that the Industrial Authority is funded through a Countywide hotel/motel tax which the County collects so the County would have to answer that question as to how they are going to be funded because the County adopted a budget with no funding for the Industrial Authority out of the hotel/motel tax planning because they were planning to implement the dedicated millage.

Councilman Head stated that he could not support the position the County has taken with the City. The City sent over a proposal asking that things remain the same and now the County has come back with something different. Councilman Head recommended that the Mayor and the City Manager meet with the County as soon as possible in order to resolve the issues prior to August 9. If the County is not willing to negotiate then the City should continue with things staying the same for the next year.

Councilman Yost inquired as to whether the County would place one or two mills on the tax bills to be dedicated to the Industrial Authority and what would prevent the County from doing that without the City's approval. Even if the County does place a mill on the tax bills, why would the City be obligated to put 80% of the hotel/motel money towards that to make it equal since the majority of the mill would come from the residents of the City of Valdosta? Larry Hanson stated that it is an issue because the Service Delivery Agreement specifically states that the Industrial Authority will be funded out of a hotel/motel tax. The County wants to change that which requires Council approving a change in the Service Delivery Agreement. Valdosta and two more cities, along with the County, must approve any change to the Service Delivery Agreement. Councilman Yost stated that if the City does not approve it then the County cannot place a mill on the tax bills. Larry Hanson stated that this will become a legal question and may be an issue next week.

A MOTION was made by Councilman Head to postpone the request to extend the Service Delivery Agreement and for funding related to services under arbitration to remain as currently agreed to until June 30, 2008 until the August 9, 2007 City Council meeting and to have the Mayor and the City Manager meet with the County prior to the August 9, 2007 City Council meeting to negotiate for a cooperative agreement on House Bill 489 issues. Councilman Sumner seconded the motion. Councilman Eunice stated that the City Manager had presented three options which were to either postpone it, accept it, or accept it with conditions and they never heard the conditions. Councilman Eunice stated that he would like to hear those conditions prior to taking a vote. Larry Hanson stated that the third option was to approve the Service Delivery Agreement and the proposed change in funding of the Industrial Authority to a Countywide millage with the following conditions: (1) Clean up some of the language, (2) An Authority would be created with Countywide millage to operate a Countywide Parks and Recreation Department similar to the Industrial Authority concept advocated by Lowndes County and it would be a separate legal entity, (3) Both the City and County would impose a non-duplicate hotel/motel tax with 40% of total collections funding the Tourism Authority and funding for the Airport Authority, Conference Center, and Turner Center for the Arts based upon the City and County's proportionate share of total collections Countywide, (4) The Agreements would be memorialized in an Intergovernmental Agreement that would include the funding for the Industrial Authority, Airport Authority, Conference Center and Tourism Authority, Parks and Recreation Authority, and the Turner Center for the Arts. The Intergovernmental Agreement would specifically state that all services are funded jointly and equally. Councilman Head called for the question. The motion to vote on the motion on the floor was tied (3-3) and Mayor Fretti voted in favor breaking the tie (4-3). The motion to postpone the request was adopted (4-2) with Councilman John Eunice and Councilman Alvin Payton voting in opposition.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of a request to transfer surplus Police vehicles to the District Attorney's Office.

Police Chief Frank Simons stated that the Southern Circuit District Attorney's Office works closely with and prosecutes cases for the Valdosta Police Department. Funding for the District Attorney's Office is developed from individual budgets from each of the five counties served by the District Attorney's Office and the State. District Attorney David Miller has indicated that his office was in dire need of two vehicles for his prosecutorial staff and investigators to perform their duties. Their recent budgets have not enabled them to maintain a suitable vehicle fleet for their needs. In the past several years, the City of Valdosta has sold surplus police vehicles to the District Attorney's Office for the fee of \$1.00 each to assist them. The Police Department currently is in possession of two surplus vehicles that are suitable for transfer to the District Attorney's Office for their use. Chief Simons asked Council's consideration in selling the two surplus vehicles to the Southern Circuit District Attorney's Office for the fee of \$1.00 each to assist in their efforts in investigating and prosecuting criminal cases with this Circuit.

A MOTION by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the request to transfer surplus Police vehicles to the District Attorney's Office.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated Commander Brian Childress has been accepted into the FBI Academy which is very prestigious. He will be out of the office for several weeks but the benefits to him and the community are tremendous.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the recent trip to Washington, D.C. was very successful and Council members had a very productive meeting with General Moseley. They also met with officials at the Pentagon and discussed several issues affecting Moody Air Force Base which included CBAT, the Moody housing issue, and the bedding down of the A-10's which will begin in August. They were also able to work with Congressional leaders on special appropriation requests and watched Congressman Jack Kingston make a motion on the Transportation Bill which included funding for the City of Valdosta. To date, there have only been three special appropriation requests approved for the 12-member Congressional delegation and two of those three were approved for the City of Valdosta. They also made some contacts about the West Hill Avenue overpass project which will be a Federally funded project administered solely by the Georgia Department of Transportation. This is not the City's project and but we are doing everything we can to push the State and Federal government to get that project back on track.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that two new signals are in flash mode on Patterson Street in front of Valdosta State University and will be activated next Thursday, July 26, 2007. This will provide some safety for the Valdosta State University students crossing in that area as well as improve traffic flow.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that Councilman Payton attended the Deep South Solid Waste Regional Authority Meeting and new opportunities for the region were discussed as well as the City's solid waste program under the leadership of John Whitehead.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the City's millage rate will be set at the August 9, 2007 Council meeting. There will not be a tax increase and the millage rate will be lowered. Several Council members have inquired about the three public meetings and why an ad has not been run in the newspaper for the City of Valdosta. Larry Hanson stated that if you are keeping growth in the tax digest due to a re-evaluation, which according to the 1999 Georgia Tax Payer Bill of Rights is a tax increase, then you must run an ad and hold three public hearings.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Head inquired about the Martin Luther King, Jr. Corridor contract and whether the City has done everything that is needed so that the project will not be held up. Larry Hanson stated that Von Shipman, City Engineer, met with Mr. Jackson today and the plans are 90% complete and everything is in order.

Councilman Yost inquired about the traffic light at the intersection of Patterson Street and Georgia Avenue. Von Shipman, City Engineer, stated that the traffic light will stay but may be removed in the future. Councilman Yost stated that officials from Valdosta State University will be making a presentation on the new parking deck at the next Work Session. If construction of the parking deck is planned for the spring of 2008, students will be in school and there will be nowhere for them to park. Councilman Yost asked that the City Engineer and the City Manager work with Valdosta State University in assisting them with finding places for the students to park so that the neighborhoods are not overrun. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that Council had postponed a decision on parking arrangements around Valdosta State University pending the parking study. Dr. Ron Zaccari, President of Valdosta State University, and Jim Black, Vice President of Valdosta State University, will be presenting the results of that study to Mayor and Council so that everyone will have an understanding of the direction to be taken for parking around Valdosta State University.

Councilman Sumner stated that the Washington, D.C. trip was one of the best ones that Mayor and Council has had and commended Councilman Head for his outstanding job in filling in for Mayor Fretti who was unable to attend.

ADJOURNMENT

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

A MOTION by Councilman Yost, seconded by Councilman Eunice, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the July 19, 2007 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 7:09 p.m. and enter into Executive Session.

Mayor Fretti reconvened the regular City Council meeting at 7:46 p.m. and stated there was no action necessary in relation to the discussion of personnel and real estate in Executive Session.

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion for adjournment.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Wright, seconded by Councilman Payton was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the July 19, 2007 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 7:47 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, August 9, 2007.

City Clerk, City of Valdosta

Mayor, City of Valdosta