

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL**  
**5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2009**  
**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, Alvin Payton, Jr., Willie Head, Jr., and James Wright. Councilmen John Eunice, Tim Carroll, and Robert Yost were absent. The invocation was given by Councilman Alvin Payton, Jr., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the July 9, 2009 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (4-0) of the Council.

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Deborah Baker, 3523 Lenox Drive, stated that she was concerned about a subdivision that is being built adjacent to Windsor Park II which is located on Oak Street Extension. Construction is currently underway and the biggest issue is safety because it is a very small subdivision and the roads are very narrow. The developer is planning to open Lenox Drive on one end and connect to Wesley Drive. Ms. Baker stated that she met with Von Shipman, City Engineer, two years ago about the safety in this subdivision. Remax Realty's Lawn Service was parking in the road which created a problem due to the layout of Wesley Drive. They placed "No Parking" signs there and then the Lawn Service trucks backed up even further to park. The new developer is planning to add a road on Wesley Drive which is in the same place where there were previous problems. There will be an increase in traffic and a problem with vehicles trying to enter Oak Street Extension. Ms. Baker stated that this is a nice quiet neighborhood with one way in and one way out and very little traffic. The biggest problem will be that they are connecting into Wesley Drive because it is a backwards S design. Mayor Fretti inquired as to whether Ms. Baker had spoken with Von Shipman, City Engineer, about the new development. Ms. Baker stated that she had not met with the City Engineer and had just learned about this recently.

Von Shipman, City Engineer, stated that a preliminary plat has not been submitted to date. Lovell Engineering had prepared an initial layout and brought it to his attention and Councilman Carroll's. The City is concerned about any new development and safety. Lenox Drive dead ends to this particular tract of property and the new Land Development Regulations specify that subdivisions must connect to the end of a stub out street when property is developed. There is a reverse curve and the visibility is there as long as no one parks on the street. Lovell Engineering has gone over more details of the development today and reviewed the drainage and lot layout. Mayor Fretti inquired about the increase in traffic and the ingress/egress onto North Oak Street Extension and whether an accel or decel lane would be required. Von Shipman stated that the Doctor's office would be required to have access off of North Oak Street Extension. The property currently has two driveways and they would not need to have a side driveway onto Wesley Drive. Von Shipman stated that in the morning most of the residents leaving the subdivision turn right to come into town and in the afternoon they are trying to turn into the subdivision which creates a small backlog. With the bridge opening on Staten Road and the bridge closure on Skipper Bridge Road, there may be some traffic congestion when school opens; however, they will be monitoring the situation and will regulate the traffic light in front of Three Oaks Apartments to give gaps for the neighborhoods in the area. There are only 12 lots being proposed and there is no timeline for the project. Mayor Fretti asked that Von Shipman set up a meeting between the developer and the neighbors so that some of the misconceptions can be worked out.

**BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES**

Consideration of a Sub-Lease Agreement between the City of Valdosta and Lowndes County. Mayor/Council postponed the request at the June 25, 2009 regular meeting for 30 days.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that on June 25, 2009, the City approved a Lease Agreement between the City and Central Avenue Church of Christ for a 20-year lease on the property across the street at the corner of Smithland Place and Lee Street as well as an Option Agreement which allows the City the right to acquire the property at the end of the 20-year lease. The City also has the right of first refusal to acquire all of the remainder of the Church's property if at any time in the future the Church decides to sell. The City has been exploring the possibility of sharing a parking lot with Lowndes County because they are now in Phase II of the new Judicial Complex which will create a lot of additional administrative capacity and there is a lack of parking to support that. The City has designed a parking area and will have construction drawings ready to go out for bid within several weeks to build a 259-car parking lot which would more than adequately meet the needs of both the City and the County. The City's daily parking needs for the City Hall Annex building is approximately 30 vehicles. The City has proposed a Sub-Lease Agreement with the County but they have not accepted it at this time. Larry Hanson asked that Council postpone this request for two weeks to allow for further discussions and authorize the City to proceed with having the Architect complete the drawings and get the project ready to bid. Councilman Payton inquired as to what the alternate plan would be for the City and the County if there was no parking lot. Larry Hanson stated that the City has an Option Agreement with the Church so the City will be able to satisfy its parking needs but the City does not have a need for 259 parking spaces. If the City was building the parking lot just for us, it could be built with 50 spaces and then the remainder of property could be left vacant. The cost for the 259-car parking lot would be approximately \$600,000 which includes the parking lot, lighting, landscaping, and storm drainage requirements. The City would not invest that much if we were not trying to meet the needs of everyone. Mayor Fretti stated that the County would have to investigate alternative measures which may be more expensive than this. He has called Chairman Ashley Paulk twice and the County had misunderstood that this is a long-term lease because they indicated that they would like to help with the construction and purchase but no lease payments were mentioned. The County was reminded that this was a lease with construction improvements and then in 20 years the City would have the first right of refusal for purchasing.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman Payton to postpone the Sub-Lease Agreement between the City of Valdosta and Lowndes County until the August 6, 2009 Council meeting and to authorize the Architect to proceed with the design. Councilman Wright seconded the motion. Councilman Vickers inquired as to whether the City would scale back the parking design if it is just the City using the parking lot. Larry Hanson stated that there are several options and if that was the case the City would go back and look at that. At some point this area will be a parking lot because there is a need for it and it is across the street from the facilities that need it. Councilman Wright inquired as to whether the City would continue to move forward if the County failed to come up with an agreement. Larry Hanson stated that would not stop the City from proceeding. The motion was unanimously adopted (4-0).

## LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of a request to approve a Construction Manager at Risk for the Mud Creek Waste Water Treatment Plant Expansion Project.

Henry Hicks, Utilities Director, stated that an upgrade to the Mud Creek Waste Water Treatment Plant was needed to increase the treatment capacity. Camp Dresser & McKee (CDM) was selected as the Design Engineer for this project in 2008. In order to qualify for Federal funding, the selection of a Construction Manager at Risk had to be bid separately from the original contract with CDM. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was sent out in June and only three firms expressed interest. The Selection Committee, which consisted of Councilman John Eunice, John Whitehead, Deputy City Manager of Operations, Mark Barker, Deputy City Manager of Administration, Henry Hicks, Director of Utilities, and Von Shipman, City Engineer, met on July 14, 2009 and heard presentations from CDM and The Haskell Company. Both of these firms are located in Jacksonville, Florida. The Selection Committee unanimously voted to select CDM for the project. Henry Hicks recommended that Council approve the selection of CDM as the Construction Manager at Risk for the Mud Creek Waste Water Treatment Plant Expansion Project.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (4-0) to follow the recommendation of the Utilities Director and the Selection Committee and approve CDM as the Construction Manager at Risk for the Mud Creek Waste Water Treatment Plant Expansion Project.

Consideration of a request to select a Transportation Program Manager to assist the City with implementation of Transportation Improvement Projects.

Von Shipman, City Engineer, stated that a Transportation Program Manager is needed to assist the City with the implementation of Transportation Improvement Projects. A Request for Qualification (RFQ) was sent out in late 2008. There were 14 companies who expressed an interest. The Selection Committee, which consisted of Councilman Alvin Payton, Jr., Larry H. Hanson, City Manager, Mark Barber, Deputy City Manager of Administration, John Whitehead, Deputy City Manager of Operations, and Von Shipman, City Engineer, met on July 8, 2009 and created a short list of four companies to make presentations on July 20, 2009. The four firms were PBS&J (Atlanta), LPA Group (Atlanta/Jacksonville), Genesis Group (Tallahassee/ Jacksonville), and RS&H (Jacksonville). After deliberation, the Committee unanimously selected the LPA Group based on their program management work with other cities and counties. They are ranked 34<sup>th</sup> out of 500 in the Engineering News Report Annual Survey and they are planning to establish an office in Valdosta. They also have a fee structure that is very enticing to the City and based on the complexity of the project, the fee structure changes. There will also be options to have other consultants design projects and the LPA Group will manage those consultants or they could design some of the projects and lower the program management fee. They will also have a computer management program that shows the status of the transportation projects and can be accessed by citizens. Von Shipman recommended that Council approve the selection of the LPA Group as the Transportation Program Manager.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Head, was unanimously adopted (4-0) to approve the selection of the LPA Group as the Transportation Program Manager to assist the City with implementation of Transportation Improvement Projects.

**CITY MANAGER’S REPORT**

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Georgia Department of Transportation will have money for the Local Assistance Road Program (LARP) and they have asked the City to submit a list of streets. Council members will need to look in their districts and submit streets for resurfacing to the City Engineer for evaluation. This will be placed on the Agenda for the August 6, 2009 Council meeting. Councilman Vickers inquired as to whether something can be placed on the City’s web site to ask the citizens for input. Larry Hanson stated that we could put something on the City’s web site as well as send out a Press Release and have the citizens contact the City Engineer.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilman Head stated that the 100 Black Men of Valdosta will be hosting the 100 Black Men Barbecue on Saturday, August 1, 2009 at the Lowndes County Courthouse. There will be some of finest barbecue pit bosses from south Georgia and north Florida competing for prizes and trophies. Councilman Head encouraged the Mayor and Council and citizens to attend this fun family event.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Fretti entertained a motion for adjournment.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Head, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (4-0) to adjourn the July 23, 2009 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:15 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, August 6, 2009.

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City Clerk, City of Valdosta

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Mayor, City of Valdosta