

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL  
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, AUGUST 23, 2007  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL**

**OPENING CEREMONIES**

Mayor Pro Tem Willie Head, Jr. 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., John Eunice, Robert Yost, and James Wright. Mayor John Fretti and Councilman Sonny Vickers were absent. The invocation was given by Councilman David Sumner, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag led by Scout Troop 429.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the August 9, 2007 Regular Meeting was approved by unanimous consent (5-0) of the Council.

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

There were no citizens to be heard.

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

Consideration of an Accommodations Tax Ordinance (First Reading).

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the existing Hotel/Motel Tax Agreement with Lowndes County was canceled over a year ago and Lowndes County recently passed a policy to fund the Industrial Authority out of the millage. Since this was one of the issues in arbitration and based upon that and several other factors, it is recommended that the City proceed with imposing its own Hotel/Motel Tax. Every city the size of Valdosta and most cities that are smaller than Valdosta have their own tax. There are few examples of a city allowing the county to have a countywide tax. The tax currently generates \$1.7 million and over 80% of that is generated from properties in the City of Valdosta so the majority of the revenue comes from the City. There are many new hotels in some state of construction and development and they are all in the City so the tax will continue to grow. Larry Hanson recommended that the tax be imposed with an effective date of January 1, 2008 but to honor the budgets that were approved by the City and the County this past July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008 in order to fulfill the commitments that were made in passing the tax in the existing fiscal year. When going through the next budget process and pending the outcome of arbitration, it would then be decided how to allocate that money beginning July 1, 2008 based on the direction of Mayor and Council. The City would also have to comply with the State law which states that if it is a five-cent tax, then two cents or 40% of that tax must go toward tourism. Larry Hanson stated that he and George Talley, City Attorney, spoke with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in preparing the ordinance and reviewing different code sections because they wanted to select the one that provided the greatest latitude in how the 60% allocation could be used. With the guidance of DCA, who oversees the administration and compliance of this tax, the code section that was selected gives the City full latitude on the 60% to use it for any General Fund expenditure. Larry Hanson stated that this is the first reading of the Accommodations Tax Ordinance and it will be voted on at the next City Council meeting.

**LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2007-39, AN ORDINANCE TO EXTEND THE BILLBOARD MORATORIUM FOR ONE WEEK**

Consideration of a request to extend the billboard moratorium for one week.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that a moratorium on billboards had been requested in May, 2007 until September 1, 2007 in order to allow the consultant time to review the entire sign ordinance and make recommendations. The consultant is well into the process; however, the City Council meeting dates were such that September 1 is next weekend and the following Monday is a holiday so the first Council meeting following the moratorium is September 6. Larry Hanson recommended that Council extend the moratorium until September 7, 2007 so that there are no unintended consequences in that week between when it expires and when Council meets. A recommendation will then be made to Council on an interim billboard policy and ordinance because the consultant has received a lot of positive feedback from the community about what direction we need to go in. The interim ordinance would be in effect from September 7, 2007 until the consultant makes a recommendation next spring or summer.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Sumner, seconded by Councilman Payton, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2007-39, to extend the billboard moratorium for one week to September 7, 2007, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XI.

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

Consideration of bids for uniforms for the Fire Department (Bid No. 03-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the current Fire Department uniform contract has expired and the Department makes multiple purchases of this nature during each fiscal year to replace old uniforms and provide uniforms to new personnel. Sealed bids were received on August 14, 2007 with the low bid submitted by Artistic Designs in the amount of \$430.70. The pricing reflects the cost for one unit of each item (shirts, pants, etc.), and the contract is for one year with options to renew for two additional years. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid submitted by Artistic Designs in the amount of \$430.70 and allow the Fire Department to proceed with the purchase.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Eunice, seconded by Councilman Yost, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to follow the recommendation of the Purchasing Agent and approve the low bid submitted by Artistic Designs in the amount of \$430.70 and allow the Fire Department to proceed with the purchase of uniforms.

Consideration of bids for surveying equipment for the Engineering Department (Bid No. 04-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the Engineering Department is in need of some new surveying equipment to assist with their duties. The new equipment will allow for more effective and efficient use of time while in the field and while compiling the data in the office. Funds are budgeted for a purchase of this nature. Sealed bids were received on August 14, 2007 with the low bid submitted by Earl Dudley in the amount of \$28,276. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid submitted by Earl Dudley in the amount of \$28,276 and allow the Engineering Department to proceed with the purchase.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Wright, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to follow the recommendation of the Purchasing Agent and approve the low bid submitted by Earl Dudley in the amount of \$28,276 and allow the Engineering Department to proceed with the purchase of surveying equipment.

Consideration of bids for re-treading tires for mid to large size trucks for the City of Valdosta (Bid No. 05-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the City of Valdosta warehouse stocks a number of re-treaded tires for mid to large size trucks. The successful bidder will supply these type tires on an as needed basis for a firm price for the contract period. This is a new contract that will last for one year with an option to renew for two additional years. Sealed bids were received on August 14, 2007 with the low bid submitted by Hill Tire in the amount of \$7,900 which is an estimated monthly usage. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid submitted by Hill Tire in the amount of \$7,900 and allow the City to enter into the contract for the specified time period.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Yost, seconded by Councilman Eunice, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Hill Tire in the amount of \$7,900 and allow the City to enter into the contract for the specified time period.

Consideration of bids for a mini excavator for the Engineering Department (Bid No. 06-07-08).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the Engineering Department is in need of a new mini excavator to assist with their duties. This machine will be used in the street maintenance division. This is a Council-approved budget item for this fiscal year. Sealed bids were received on August 14, 2007 with the low bid meeting specification submitted by Hertz Rental in the amount of \$38,411. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid meeting specification of Hertz Rental in the amount of \$38,411 and allow the Engineering Department to proceed with the purchase of a mini excavator.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Wright, seconded by Councilman Eunice, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to approve the low bid meeting specification submitted by Hertz Rental in the amount of \$38,411 and allow the Engineering Department to proceed with the purchase.

### **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that Mayor Fretti was selected as one of the statewide captains for Lt. Governor Casey Cagle's web site initiative and he is in Atlanta meeting with the Lt. Governor and others to discuss this new program. The program, Connections to Communities, is intended to feature local initiatives that have statewide influence and Valdosta will be the first community highlighted because of the successful Group Workcamp.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that a kick-off press conference was held on August 17, 2007 for SPLOST VI and thanked Council members for attending. There have also been several educational articles in the newspaper regarding the use of SPLOST funds and there will be other avenues of advertising to promote the campaign.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the consultants, Jordan, Jones & Goulding, were in Valdosta this week for the kick off meeting on the Land Development Regulations. There was great public participation from the developers, realtors, and others and the consultants received very positive feedback. These new Land Development Regulations will serve the City well for the next 20 years and will also help improve many of the processes and forms for ease of registration and conducting business with the City. The consultants will be back in October for more public input and participation.

Also, Grice and Associates are working on the Transportation Plan and the survey instrument is very close to being finalized. It will then be sent to residents in their utility bills in order to receive feedback. After Grice and Associates receive the feedback, they will set up the public meetings in the Council Districts.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Mayor Pro Tem Head stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce hosted the IMPACT 2012 meeting this morning which is an economic development based initiative. The Chamber has received approximately 70% of the funding which is needed to support the initiative.

Councilman Yost stated that he attended the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan meeting and inquired as to how the City is participating in the Plan because the County's emblem is on the front of the document that was passed out at the meeting. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that this was done as an initiative through the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the City is an equal partner with the County in the program.

Councilman Sumner stated that he attended the IMPACT 2012 meeting along with Mayor Pro Tem Head and Councilman Wright and the video was very impressive.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**08/23/07 CONTINUED**

Mayor Pro Tem Head adjourned the August 23, 2007 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 5:52 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, September 6, 2007.

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City Clerk, City of Valdosta

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Mayor, City of Valdosta