

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2018
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, Tim Carroll, Ben Norton, Eric Howard, Sandra Tooley, Andy Gibbs, and Vivian Miller-Cody. The invocation was given by Pastor William Morgan, Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

READING OF THE ELECTION RESULTS

Reading of 2017 Municipal Election and the Run-off Election Results.

Mark Barber, Interim City Manager, stated that results of the 2017 General Municipal Election held on November 7, 2017 have been certified by the Lowndes County Board of Elections. The results for the Valdosta City Council are as follows: (1) Valdosta City Council District 2 - Sandra J. Tooley (Incumbent) received 171 votes (54.98%), Vernotis Williams received 140 votes (45.02%), and Write-in votes received 0. (2) Valdosta City Council District 4 - Kevin J. Bussey received 71 votes (27.00%), Eric G. Howard received 118 votes (44.87%), Angela Penn received 73 votes (27.76%), and Write-in votes received 1 (0.38%). (3) Valdosta City Council District 6 - Ron Borders received 165 votes (36.18%), Andy Gibbs received 251 (55.04%), Felix P. Vayner received 40 votes (8.77%), and Write-in votes received 0.

The results for the Valdosta City School Board are as follows: (1) Valdosta School Board District 4 - Tyra Howard received 231 votes (97.88%), and Write-ins received 5 votes (2.12%). (2) Valdosta School Board District 5 - Trey Sherwood (Incumbent) received 192 votes (98.46%), and Write-ins received 3 votes (1.54%). (3) Valdosta School Board District 6 - Tad Moseley (Incumbent) received 394 votes (98.25%), and Write-ins received 7 votes (1.75%).

Results of the General Municipal Run-off Election held on December 5, 2017 have been certified by the Lowndes County Board of Elections. The results are as follows: (1) Valdosta City Council District 4 - Eric G. Howard received 136 votes (73.12%) and Angela Penn received 50 votes (26.88%).

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the reading of the results of the 2017 Municipal Election and the Run-off Election.

OATHS OF OFFICE FOR THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL DISTRICTS 2, 4, AND 6

Oaths of Office for the Mayor and Council Districts 2, 4, and 6.

The Honorable James G. Tunison, Jr. of the Southern Judicial Circuit administered the Oath of Office for Councilwoman Sandra Tooley (District 2), Councilman Eric Howard (District 4), and Councilman Andy Gibbs (District 6). Copies of the Oaths of Office are on record in the permanent file of the January 11, 2018 Regular Meeting of the governing body.

ELECTION OF THE MAYOR PRO TEM AND OATH OF OFFICE

Mayor Gayle stated that it has come to his attention that there are two Council members vying for Mayor Pro Tem and there could be a possible tie vote because this is one of the cases where he will get to vote. If there is a tie, he will place the two names in a box and ask Judge Tunison to draw a name from the box. The person's name that is drawn will be the Mayor Pro Tem.

Mayor Gayle entertained nominations from Council for the office of Mayor Pro Tem. Councilman Norton placed in consideration the name of Councilman Tim Carroll. Councilman Howard placed in consideration the name of Councilwoman Sandra Tooley. There being no other nominations, Mayor Gayle closed nominations.

Councilman Carroll received four votes with Mayor Gayle, Councilman Norton, Councilman Carroll, and Councilman Gibbs voting in favor. Councilwoman Tooley received four votes with Councilman Vickers, Councilman Howard, Councilwoman Tooley, and Councilwoman Miller-Cody voting in favor. Mayor Gayle placed the two names in a box and asked Judge Tunison to draw one name. Judge Tunison drew the name of Councilwoman Sandra Tooley as the new Mayor Pro Tem.

The Honorable Superior Court Judge James G. Tunison, Jr. of the Southern Judicial Circuit administered the Oath of Office for Mayor Pro Tem to Councilwoman Tooley. A copy of the Oath of Office is on record in the permanent file of the January 11, 2018 regular meeting of the governing body.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION OF THE MUNICIPAL AUDIT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017

Presentation of the Municipal Audit for Fiscal Year 2017.

Mark Barber, Interim City Manager, stated that the purpose of an annual audit is to review the financial statements, footnotes, and supplementary information to ensure compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and to provide an opinion on the financial statements. The audit of the City of Valdosta's Fiscal Year 2017 CAFR was conducted by the firm of Henderson & Godbee, a local full service accounting firm with significant experience in governmental auditing. The audit team leader was Mark Rogers, Engagement Partner. Mark Barber also noted that the City of Valdosta's Finance Department is unique in that they produce their own financial statements whereas many other local and State governments hire someone to prepare their statements and then hire a separate auditor to audit their statements.

Mark Rogers, Engagement Partner, stated that they have completed the audit of financial statements for the City of Valdosta for the year ending June 30, 2017 and have issued an unqualified auditors' report on those financial statements. The Finance Department does a great job in keeping up with the City's finances and preparing these financial statements. They have once again obtained the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Georgia Government Finance Officers Association (GGFOA). The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) is 154 pages and Henderson & Godbee has issued a non-modified opinion on that Report which encompasses all 32 Funds of the City, \$80 million in income, and \$369 million in assets. Mark Rogers stated that this is a robust Report and he summarized the CAFR to eight pages and two graphs. The summary lists the revenues and expenses of each Fund and it is grouped by each type of Fund which are the Capital Projects Funds, Special Revenues Funds, Enterprise Funds, and the Internal Service Funds.

The General Fund ended with a budgetary income of \$489,302 compared to a budgetary loss of \$111,000 the previous year which is a \$600,000 swing from the prior year. Revenues received totaled \$34,267,333 compared to the year of \$31,549,000 which is an increase of \$2,718,333. Most of this increase was from taxes which increased by \$2,463,000. In the General Fund revenue, property taxes account for 36%, sales tax accounts for 23%, and other taxes represent 30%. The total Department expenditures in the General Fund were \$33,925,000 compared to \$33,513,000 in the prior year. Public safety (Police and Fire) accounts for 67% of the total Budget. The third largest Fund is the Capital Projects Fund. The Capital Projects Funds had revenues of \$14,646,448 and expenditures of \$8,621,796. The Sales Tax 2013 Fund accounted for \$11,286,970 of the revenues and \$6,637,606 of the expenditures for the year. The Airport Improvements Fund had revenues of \$2,293,319 and expenditures of \$1,980,000. The Enterprise Funds total revenues were \$27,323,100, expenses were \$24,193,191, capital contribution of \$904,180, and operating transfers out of \$1,892,569 resulting in net loss of \$1,159,684. The Water/Sewer Reserve Fund revenues were \$18,482,449 and capital contributions from SPLOST were \$904,180 resulting in net loss of \$1,857,557. This Fund had a lot of activity over the past three to four years in that a Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA) loan was obtained and the Force Main Project was completed. The Fund incurred increased interest expense related to the GEFA loan and depreciation on those assets. The Sanitation Fund revenues were \$5,166,514 resulting in a net loss of \$277,019. The Internal Service Funds total revenues were \$10,677,617, expenses were \$13,039,509, and transfers were \$2,550,092. The Motor Pool Fund broke even on revenues of \$4,040,208, the Group Insurance Fund broke even on revenues of \$4,960,030, the IT Service Fund broke even on revenues of \$962,121, and the Workers' Compensation Fund had net income of \$201,535 on

revenues of \$715,258. In summary, the City had a good year financially. Mark Rogers thanked the Mayor and Council for the opportunity to serve as their Auditor. Mayor Gayle stated that \$486,000 was put into the rainy day fund and for the first time in many years, the Permits and Inspections Department showed a profit which means things are going well in Valdosta right now. Mark Rogers stated that Councilman Vickers usually asks about the number of days of working capital and it is currently 32 days which is an increase from last year.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the Municipal Audit for Fiscal Year 2017 for the City of Valdosta.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH AWARD

Consideration of the January, 2018 Employee of the Month Award (Ronnie Lancaster, Utilities Department).

Ronnie Lancaster began his employment with the City of Valdosta Utilities Department in May, 1998 and presently holds the position of Backflow Prevention Program Coordinator. Ronnie is responsible for all backflow devices throughout the City and ensures that the backflow devices for commercial establishments are up to code. Recently, Ronnie took on the task of handling the Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Coordinator position. He welcomed the task of handling both positions while the City searched for a new Coordinator. Ronnie not only maintained his compliance record of over 98% of backflow devices tested and inspected, he also worked with businesses to achieve almost 90% compliance with the FOG program. With the previous two hurricanes affecting this area, Ronnie asked to be on call to help any Department in any way he could during the emergency situations. Lending his help and knowledge, he was an asset under the conditions. Ronnie distinguishes himself as an outstanding employee and dedicated professional. He never hesitates to do whatever is required of his position each day or any task asked of him outside of his position. It is for these reasons and many others that the Employee Relations Committee nominated Ronnie Lancaster as Employee of the Month.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the December 14, 2017 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (7-0) of the Council.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of bids for the Cured-In-Place-Pipe (CIPP) Lining Project.

Darryl Muse, Utilities Director, stated that in August, 2017, crews from the Utilities Department responded to a call from a resident on Lakeshore Drive concerned about a sink hole and odors in their backyard. Knowing that an 8-inch and 12-inch vitrified clay sewer pipe (VCP) traveled through the resident's yard, crews began a thorough inspection of the mains and manhole on the property. Following the initial inspection, crews performed line cleaning and Closed-Circuit Television Camera (CCTV) inspection of the mains, adjoining mains, and manholes in the area. These inspections showed numerous fractured lines, a partially collapsed section of sewer main, and two connecting manholes in need of rehabilitation. Crews responded to a second call in August about a possible broken sewer main off Wisenbaker Lane near Griffin Avenue. Subsequent CCTV inspection of this VCP sewer main indicated numerous fractures and a partial collapse along the 42-foot section of 15-inch pipe. Due to the location of the sewer lines, repair methods were very limited. As a result, Staff had only two viable alternatives for repair. The first was to excavate the areas of the sewer lines to access the broken sewer pipe and then make necessary repairs; however, because of the proximity to numerous residences as well as costs related to excavation and repair to the road, driveways, and stormwater systems, this was not considered the best option. The 12-foot depth of the 15-inch main near Wisenbaker Lane and its proximity to a nearby business and Dukes Bay eliminated excavation as a viable option for its repair. The least intrusive and most feasible alternative for both locations was to utilize Cured-In-Place-Pipe (CIPP) lining technology to rehabilitate the failed sewer pipe. Rehabilitation of the two manholes for the Lakeshore Drive portion was included with the Project due to the deteriorated condition and proximity to the affected sewer lines and residences. A Project to line 42 linear feet of 15-inch sewer pipe, 264

linear feet of 12-inch pipe, 151 linear feet of 8-inch pipe, and rehabilitation of two manholes was advertised for bid. Two companies capable of performing this type of work submitted proposals on November 27, 2017. The lowest responsive bidder was Southeast Pipe Survey, Inc. at \$63,468.75. In some cases, CIPP work must be preceded by point repairs should a section of pipe be deteriorated beyond CIPP capabilities. Based on the CCTV inspections, Staff does not foresee the need for point repairs on these mains; however, as a precaution and for planning purposes, bidders were asked to submit estimates for performing point repairs. Bidders included their estimates with each bid package, but the estimates were not a factor in determining the base bid price. Darryl Muse recommended that Council approve the low bid submitted by Southeast Pipe Survey, Inc. in the amount of \$63,468.75 for repairs to the sewer pipes using the Cured-In-Place-Pipe (CIPP) Lining. Councilman Norton inquired as to what the life expectancy would be for the sewer pipes using the Cured-In-Place-Pipe (CIPP) Lining. Darryl Muse stated that typically they are looking at a life expectancy of 30-40 years but hope to get more than that.

A MOTION by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilwoman Tooley, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Southeast Pipe Survey, Inc. in the amount of \$63,468.75 for repairs to the sewer pipes using the Cured-In-Place-Pipe (CIPP) Lining.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of revisions to the City of Valdosta's Standard Specifications for Water and Sewer Construction Manual.

Darryl Muse, Utilities Director, stated the current City of Valdosta Standard Specifications for Water and Sewer Construction Manual was published in 2012 and consists of approximately 540 pages. The Manual provides guidance and instruction on how goods and services related to water and sewer utilities are to be designed, constructed, manufactured, handled, conducted, and tested. The Manual follows prescribed national standards and best management practices (both public and private) used throughout the United States. The overall intent of the Manual is to specify the workmanship and the method of doing the work. Thus, it serves as a guide to a contractor as well as to City Inspectors to ensure City expectations are met. It also serves to establish a level playing field for engineering firms doing design work and underground utility contractors constructing City-owned infrastructure. Development of the 2012 Manual involved a coordinated partnership with local contractors, developers, and other interested parties and consisted of numerous meetings, feedback sessions, discussions, and agreements. In the five years since the Manual's publication, there have been various changes to industry standards, regulations, and construction practices in the water and sewer sector. To adjust to these changes, ensure quality workmanship, and facilitate cohesion with contractors and developers during the water and sewer construction process, revisions to the Manual are necessary. Invitations were sent to local utility contractors, engineering firms, and developers to join a multi-faceted team to update the Manual. Beginning in 2016, the team assembled periodically for a series of in-depth meetings and discussions to address changes to the standard specifications. Team members included personnel from the Utilities and Engineering Departments, and local underground utilities contractors, and engineering firms. Following extensive research, feedback, and discussion, the team agreed upon a list of proposed revisions to the two primary divisions within the Manual, 480 - Water System Construction and 490 - Sanitary Sewer Construction. The revisions include clarifications, changes and updates to various specifications, and corrections to grammatical errors, typos, and formatting. Darryl Muse stated that David Frost, Assistant Utilities Director, worked very hard on the changes and spent a lot of time with local contractors and engineers to make sure all the changes were incorporated into the new Manual. Darryl Muse recommended that Council approve the revisions to the City of Valdosta's Standard Specifications for Water and Sewer Construction Manual.

A MOTION by Councilman Gibbs, seconded by Councilwoman Tooley, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the revisions to the City of Valdosta's Standard Specifications for Water and Sewer Construction Manual.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AUTHORITIES, AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority.

Mayor Gayle stated that he had previously asked Councilman Alvin Payton, Jr. to serve in his place as the Ex Officio member on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority. There are currently three City and three

County members on the Airport Authority and this particular slot is a non-voting position. Mayor Gayle stated that he wanted to go back and assume his position as the Ex Officio member on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority for the time being. There will be another City appointment to this Authority coming up in May. Mayor Gayle asked for Council's vote of confidence in returning him as the Ex Officio member.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve Mayor Gayle as the Ex Officio member on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Floyd Rose, 1619 North Lee Street, stated that he wanted to invite the Mayor and Council to a Martin Luther King, Jr. Program on Monday, January 15, 2018 with guest speaker Kendrick Gardner.

George Boston Rhynes, 5004 Oak Drive, stated that he appreciates the door that is open for citizen participation because there are a lot of governments that do not have that. Earlier this week he was in Cairo to witness the first black Mayor of Cairo, Booker T. Gainer, take office. Cairo is also the birthplace of Jackie Robinson. There were so many people who showed up and he commended the citizens of that community because a lot of other cities do not have the comradery that they had for accepting the new Mayor. That could be a role model for the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) to help other cities step up to the plate. A lot of the cities that he visits do not operate in a professional manner. Though Cairo was nice and good, he still feels that Valdosta is run exceptionally well when it comes to the professionalism that is shown on the City Council. He would not say it if it was not true. Many of the elected officials and cities do not receive positive comments but he will give it to them when he sees it. If he does not see it then he has to call it like it is. He commended Valdosta for being a star that could be shined with GMA. He encouraged the Council to continue the great work and exemplify the Azalea City and Moody Air Force Base.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mark Barber, Interim City Manager, stated that there are several upcoming events. The Rotary Law Enforcement Appreciation Dinner will be held on February 15, 2018. The 2018 General Assembly will start on Monday, January 15, 2018. The Bird Supper will be held on January 31, 2018 at The Depot in Atlanta. Applications are being accepted for the City Government 101 Class which will begin on April 2, 2018 and run through May 14, 2018 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The Police Department will hold a Community Forum on January 25, 2018 at Trinity Presbyterian Church located at 3501 Bemiss Road from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The Georgia Department of Transportation is beginning to put the striping back on Ashley Street and Patterson Street. They had to wait approximately 30 days for the asphalt to cure. They will then come back and put the thermoplastic striping on it which is the permanent marking.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Carroll stated that he had sent out an E-mail to the Mayor and Council members regarding a Resolution of Support for House Resolution 158 that deals with State fees and how they are directed. The State is charging fees for various things but they are not using the money collected for what it is charged for. A particular concern is that the fees that are supposed to be used to protect the branches, lakes, streams, and rivers and are not all being used for that purpose. There are some local groups who have been behind this and pushing for it. Councilman Carroll asked Council's consideration in placing this Resolution of Support on the next City Council Agenda.

Mayor Gayle stated that there will be a reception for the new City Council members and the re-elected Council member at the City Hall Annex Building in the Multi-Purpose Room after the Council Meeting.

Councilman Vickers inquired about an update on TSPLOST from Mayor Gayle. Mayor Gayle stated that the TSPLOST Executive Committee met on Friday, January 5, 2018 and they voted on the Transportation Projects that would make up the Regional TSPLOST Referendum. Valdosta and Lowndes County came out in good shape.

People understand that we are the largest in the region and we have the most needs so we ended up with \$72 million in Projects and the County ended up with \$70 million. We are still going through the process and could possibly end up with some more. The State wants us to have this Regional Concept so they are throwing money in as well for us and the County. We get 25% of the Sales Tax Discretionary Fund and we can spend that as we see fit. We can spend that on anything transportation-wise such as streets and sidewalks. They have not come up with a figure on what the collections would be. The TSPLOST Executive Committee will be meeting again tomorrow and they have to have the list of Projects to the State by the end of January. In February, the Projects will be approved and it goes on the ballot in May for the Regional Concept. We got all the things on our list with the exception of the Baytree Road and Jerry Jones intersection; however, the State has indicated that they would help us with that because it is a problem intersection. The TSPLOST Executive Committee will have two more meetings to finalize things and the last meeting will be for the full 36 members of the Round Table. There are two members from each county and they will approve the list. It will then be submitted to the State with the Referendum to be held on May 22, 2018. Councilman Vickers inquired about the Forrest Street Project. Mayor Gayle stated that Forrest Street is on the list and it is the biggest item on the list which is \$16 million. The Griffin Avenue interchange on U. S. Highway 41 is also on the list as well as two Airport Projects.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion to adjourn the Regular Council Meeting and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing real estate and litigation.

A MOTION by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the January 11, 2018 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:23 p.m. and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing real estate and litigation.

Mayor Gayle reconvened the Regular City Council Meeting at 6:41 p.m. and stated that there was discussion of real estate and litigation in the Executive Session and action would need to be taken on the real estate matter.

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion on the real estate matter.

A MOTION by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the purchase of Tax Parcel 0118C 238, approximately 1.064 acres, from Ameris Bank for the balance of the existing note not to exceed \$239,000.

Mayor Gayle stated that this was the property that is caddy corner from City Hall and could possibly be used as the site for a new Customer Service Center in the future.

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion for adjournment.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the January 11, 2018 Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:49 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, January 25, 2018.

City Clerk, City of Valdosta

Mayor, City of Valdosta