

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2016
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, Alvin Payton, Jr., Sandra Tooley, and Vivian Miller-Cody. Councilman Robert Yost was absent. The invocation was given by Pastor Winston Taylor, Grace Fellowship Seventh Day Adventist Church, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 7, 2016 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (6-0) of the Council.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

ORDINANCE NO. 2016-1, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE VALDOSTA TREE COMMISSION

Consideration of an Ordinance to amend the Valdosta Tree Commission Ordinance.

Pat Collins, City Engineer, stated that the Valdosta Tree Commission was created by Ordinance on August 9, 1984. The Tree Commission is designed to improve the general welfare and health of people of the City by promoting informed management of the City’s urban forest through education and community planting projects. Since the original Ordinance was adopted, two amendments have been made in 1986 and 2003 to increase the number of Tree Commission members, as well as to designate the Chairman as a non-voting position. The requested revisions are simply a house-keeping item so that there is one document. Pat Collins recommended that Council approve the Ordinance to amend the Valdosta Tree Commission.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilwoman Tooley, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2016-1, an Ordinance to amend the Valdosta Tree Commission Ordinance, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIII.

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-2, A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE A MODIFICATION TO THE GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY (GEFA) LOAN FOR WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Consideration of a Resolution to approve a modification to the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) loan for Water and Sewer Infrastructure Projects.

Henry Hicks, Utilities Director, stated that in 2013, GEFA approved a \$36,781,448 loan (2013-CWSRF) to the City of Valdosta for the construction of the new Force Main, Pump Stations, Headworks, and EQ Basin Project. Garney Construction was awarded the contract and issued a Notice to Proceed in June, 2014. This Project is nearing completion and it is approximately five months ahead of the completion date in the Consent Order with the Environmental Protection Division (EPD). Following the completion of the Supplemental Environmental Project in August, 2015, as required under the Consent Order and in conjunction with additional information gathered through on-going smoke testing and Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) work by the Utilities Department, three critical Projects were identified requiring immediate attention. In November, 2015, Council authorized Amendment No. 9 to the existing Parsons Contract for the replacement of two undersized gravity sewer mains in the Remer Lane area and two seriously deteriorated parallel gravity sewer lines and associated manholes in the Meadowbrook area, all of which were continuing to cause sewer overflows in these areas during heavy rain events. Staff identified the available funding sources in the existing loan contingencies for the Project as well as a modification of the existing GEFA loan to add another \$1.0 million to the loan total in order to complete all the proposed work in that Amendment. GEFA had agreed to fund the additional work as it was consistent with the intent and scope of the original loan. In order to finalize the modification to the original 2013 loan, GEFA requires

a modification to the promissory note, legal opinion of borrowers Counsel, and a new City Council Resolution agreeing to the modifications of the loan. Council has already authorized this work in November. Henry Hicks recommended that Council approve the Resolution to approve a modification to the GEFA loan for Water and Sewer Infrastructure Projects.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilwoman Tooley, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution No. 2016-2, a Resolution to approve a modification to the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) loan for Water and Sewer Infrastructure Projects, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book V.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of bids to purchase four fire trucks for the Valdosta Fire Department (Bid No. 06-15-16).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the Valdosta Fire Department needs to replace four pumper trucks that are 18 years old in their current fleet. A few of the older trucks will be put into the reserve fleet to be used only when repairs or heavy maintenance is necessary for the newer trucks. The new trucks will be front line pumpers that have the latest and most updated equipment and meet the current National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. A Committee of firemen was selected to design and assemble the specifications. A pre-bid conference was advertised and held on December 17, 2015 to discuss the upcoming purchase and specifications with fire truck companies. The actual bid was opened on January 5, 2016 with the low bid was submitted by Sutphen Corporation in the amount of \$1,966,900 (unit price \$491,725 each). While several other companies attended the pre-bid meeting, they choose not to respond to the invitation to bid. The Fire Department purchased the last units in early 2012 at approximately \$437,000 each. Greg Brown recommended that Council approve the low bid submitted by Sutphen Corporation in the amount of \$1,966,900. Councilwoman Tooley inquired as to whether the old trucks would be put into a reserve. Greg Brown stated that the older trucks will be replaced and some may be used as reserve units while others may be placed on the GovDeals website for sale. Larry Hanson stated that there will not be more active trucks but there will be a couple held in reserve. Councilwoman Tooley stated that the more trucks they have in reserve then the more maintenance they will have to do in order to keep them up which means an extra expense. Fire Chief Freddie Broome stated that the four fire trucks they are purchasing will be replacing four fire trucks that they currently have. They have six engines that are kept on the front line and two that are kept in reserve. The oldest two trucks that they currently have will be sold on the GovDeals website or they will be donated to another municipality. Councilman Carroll stated that the new trucks have twice the capacity of holding water to carry to a fire scene. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that these new trucks will have a 1,000 gallon storage capacity on them as opposed to the 500 gallon capacity of the existing trucks. Councilman Carroll inquired as to whether this was the third or fourth time we have utilized the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) Lease Pool Program. Larry Hanson stated that is the third time we have used the Lease Pool Program which will help us with our cash flow. They also looked at several other options such as straight purchase or leasing through the vendor; however, GMA's Lease Pool Program was a seven-year term at a lower rate.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Vickers, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Sutphen Corporation in the amount of \$1,966,900 to purchase four fire trucks for the Valdosta Fire Department.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that we are currently advertising opportunities for citizens to serve on various Boards, Commissions, and Authorities. There are two positions on the Valdosta Historic Preservation Commission, one on the Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizen's Advisory Committee, two on the Land Bank Authority, and one on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Conference & Tourism Authority.

Applications are currently being taken for the City Government 101 Program which will begin April 4, 2016 and will run through May 16, 2016. An extra class has because this Program has been so popular and there is so much information to present. The Program is limited to 25 people and the deadline to apply is March 18, 2016.

The January/February edition of the City Beat newsletter is available on-line and citizens are encouraged to view it in order to keep informed about things going on in our community.

The South Troup Street Project will begin very soon and a Kick-off Meeting will be held on January 28, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Annex Building. The Contractor and Engineering Department Staff will be present to answer any questions that residents may have about the Project. All citizens living in that area are encouraged to attend.

The resurfacing of the main street in Sunset Cemetery has been held up due to the weather but we anticipate that the Contractor will begin work next week.

There was a Press Conference held today announcing that the Valdosta Fire Department has received a Class 1 ISO rating. This is very significant because there are only 136 Class 1 ratings in the United States out of 48,000 communities and only 11 in Georgia out of nearly 700 local governments. Less than one-half of 1% of Fire Departments in the United States achieves the Class 1 ISO rating. That is the best rating that you can have and it says a lot about our Fire Department and the professionalism of the men and women, the quality of the equipment, and the commitment of our elected officials to support our Public Safety Agencies. It also says a lot about the City's water supply because 40% of the score is water supply, 50% is firefighting, equipment, and personnel, and 10% is communication. We had to get a score of 90 to get a Class 1 rating and we scored approximately 94. We are extremely proud of our Fire Department because this benefits our community and all property owners in the City will have lower insurance premiums. It is also a great economic development tool which demonstrates that Valdosta is a good place to do business.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Carroll stated that there has been a lot of talk around the community regarding one component of the Tree Ordinance and he would like for Mayor Gayle to convene a group to research and review that component to see what changes are needed and brought back before Council for adoption. Councilman Vickers stated that he agreed with Councilman Carroll. Mayor Gayle stated that they convened a group last year to review the Ordinance and they will do it again this year. A Committee will be appointed the first part of next week.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There were no citizens to be heard.

ADJOURNMENT

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

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Vickers, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the January 21, 2016 meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 5:48 p.m. and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing real estate.

Mayor Gayle reconvened the regular City Council meeting at 6:06 p.m. and stated that there was discussion of real estate in the Executive Session and action would need to be taken.

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion for a Downtown Hotel Project.

A MOTION by Councilwoman Tooley, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to authorize the City Manager to negotiate an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Central Valdosta Development (CVDA) to sell the land in question for \$250,000 subject to a reversion in favor of the City if the Wyndham Hotel and Conference Center is not begun within two years and also authorizing the City Manager to negotiate lease terms with the Authority for a new Customer Service Center.

Councilman Carroll inquired as to whether the Mayor or City Manager would be making an announcement in regards to this. Mayor Gayle stated that there is a Developer who is with us tonight who has offered to build a Downtown Wyndham Garden Hotel with 125 rooms along and a roof-top restaurant and bar. It will be positioned across the street from City Hall. The Developer will also purchase land across the street for relocation of the City's Customer Service Department. The new Customer Service Center will be larger and more accessible. The Developer has also agreed to build a new parking deck in the future. The City will open that up for public discussion in order to determine the best location for a new parking feck. This Project will be a tremendous boost to the Downtown area and it will increase property values and parking spaces. Larry Hanson, City Manager, stated that the Developer has committed to make a \$12 million capital investment. Mayor Gayle introduced the Developer, John McDonald, from Las Vegas, Nevada. His partner is Stone Workman who is the Mayor Pro Tem in Monticello, Georgia. Mr. McDonald stated that he was glad to be here and appreciated the opportunity to work with everyone. The leadership has been outstanding and they are excited about the Project.

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion for adjournment.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the January 21, 2016 Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:12 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, February 11, 2016.

City Clerk, City of Valdosta

Mayor, City of Valdosta