

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2015
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL**

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor Gayle called the regular meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:31 p.m. Council members present were Joseph "Sonny" Vickers, Tim Carroll, Ben Norton, Sandra Tooley, Robert Yost, and Alvin Payton, Jr. The invocation was given by Pastor Wayne Hughes, Abundant Life Church of God, and immediately followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Councilman Wright arrived at 5:38 p.m.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR THE WINNER OF THE MAYOR'S COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ESSAY CONTEST.

This contest challenged high school juniors and seniors to write about the diversity of skills people with disabilities have to offer and confront common misconceptions about people with disabilities. The theme for this year's essay was "**Expect, Employ, Empower.**" This contest was meant to be thought-provoking and possibly eye opening, helping many of us to realize that persons with disabilities are unique individuals who expect to be treated as everyone else, who desire to be employed for their individual skills, and who will love, inspire, and empower us to be better people. This year's winner, Autumn Platt, is a junior from Lowndes High School. The title of her essay is "**Disability or BIG ABILITY**"? Autumn's teacher is Ms. Kristy Cates and her principal is Mr. Jay Floyd. Her essay was judged by a panel of professionals in the community and as the winner she will receive \$500.

Mayor Gayle welcomed Autumn and stated the Mayor's Council for Persons with Disabilities was started some years ago by Mayor Rainwater. As Mayor, I've been fortunate to interact with other members in the community who share my concern on improving the quality of life for these individuals. This year to increase awareness, the Mayor's Council for Persons with Disabilities challenged high school juniors and seniors to write an essay that would make them think more about individuals with disabilities. Autumn's essay was by far the best of all those received. It was heartwarming and I'd like her to share just a bit of it with you.

Miss Platt stated that while on vacation with her family and walking along the beach, a young gentleman named Cole hit her with a ball. Afterwards Cole came over and started a conversation and they soon became fast friends. Cole has Down Syndrome and has been such an inspiration that I decided to pursue shadowing at Valdosta Pediatric Therapy Services. I have been able to work with children with all types of disabilities and realize that they have the biggest hearts and best attitude toward life. As a result of interacting with them, my goal is to become an Occupational Therapist so that I can hopefully touch these individuals' lives as they've touched mine.

Mayor Gayle thanked Autumn again and presented her with a certificate and a Mayor's coin. He stated that a copy of her essay was on display outside of Council Chambers for anyone who would like to read in its entirety.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST: A PUBLIC INFORMATION DIVISION/VSU PARTNERSHIP.

Sementha Mathews, Public Information Officer, stated that in 2014, conversations with VSU Social Media Professor Dr. David Nelson began concerning how to utilize VSU Social Media students in a project that

would provide the city's Public Information Officer (PIO) with realistic suggestions to expand the city's social media efforts. It was equally important to provide applicable experience for these college students, while engaging them in their local government. The Public Information Division has for years enjoyed a great relationship with Valdosta State University and has utilized its students to help produce local programming for Metro 17 and assist in the division offices. A decision was made to divide Dr. Nelson's social media class into four groups, who would be tasked to develop a realistic social media plan that would be graded (resulting in a large part of their class grade) and judged by the PIO. Winning group members will receive "bragging rights" and a reference letter from the Valdosta Mayor to include in their professional portfolios.

Mayor Gayle thanked Dr. Nelson and the students who participated in the Social Media Contest and stated that the information will definitely benefit the city and help to expand our social media. Mayor Gayle presented each student with a certificate and a Mayor's coin. Each student as well as Dr. Nelson also received letters of recommendation from Mayor Gayle.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF MEMBERS OF THE VALDOSTA HIGH SCHOOL DEBATE TEAM

Mayor Gayle recognized Pam Childress, an educator at Valdosta High School, and two of her students who are members of the Valdosta High School Debate Team. Raja Sadarangani and Marquis Grant are the first students from Valdosta High School to qualify for the National Speech and Debate Tournament. They will compete in the World Schools Debate event in Dallas, Texas June 14 - 19. The National Speech and Debate Tournament is the largest academic competition in the world. The top 18 student winners in each main event will receive scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$15,000.

Mayor Gayle stated that the City of Valdosta is proud to have Raja and Marquis represent our city at this elite event. He presented each student with a lucky coin and wished them the best.

CONSIDERATION OF THE JUNE 2015, EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH (SHAWN MASSEY AND DOUGLAS STEVENSON, UTILITIES DEPARTMENT).

Shawn Massey began his employment with the Utilities Department September of 2006, as a Light Equipment Operator and is currently a Heavy Equipment Operator for the Storm Water Division. Shawn's primary responsibility is to operate a backhoe; however, he is skilled with other equipment and brings a wealth of knowledge through his nine years of service. He assists with making sure the storm water system operates properly by re-grading ditches, tree removal, inspecting, cleaning and repairing catch basins, headwalls, storm pipes and other structures throughout the City. Douglas Stevenson began his employment with the Utilities Department February of 2004, as a Laborer and is currently a Crew Leader for the Storm Water Division. Doug assists with planning daily activities, record keeping, supervision of crews and the maintenance of the storm water system. Doug serves the Storm Water Division well using his careful attention to detail and versatility in working with brick, block and other materials. The City recently received a grant from the Georgia Department of Transportation for a new gateway sign and landscaping on North Valdosta Road. The original project was estimated to cost \$34,490 which included \$19,490 for landscaping and \$15,000 for signage. When the City received a quote of \$20,000 for the sign, staff began thinking of ways to reduce the cost. After the department received the gateway sign design drawings, it was decided that Doug and Shawn would take the lead on the project. It took 24 days to build the sign; the cost including design, material and City labor was \$14,048. The cost alone for the materials was \$6,283 which allowed for two additional signs to be purchased and are planned for construction later in the year. Through their leadership, it not only saved the City a significant amount of money, but also resulted in a symbol that represents the dedication and hard work of our community. Both Shawn and Doug are dedicated public servants who strive to serve this great community and take pride in their work. For these reasons and many others, the Employee Relations Committee nominates Shawn Massey and Douglas Stevenson as Employees of the Month.

Mayor Gayle presented each employee with a Certificate of Recognition and a Mayor's coin.

MINUTES APPROVAL

The minutes of the May 21, 2015 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (7-0) of the Council.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Consideration of an Ordinance for a Conditional Use Permit to Allow a Doublewide Mobile Home in a Single-Family Residential (R-6) as Requested by Mike Gung (File No. CU-2015-02). The property is located at 801 Penny Place. The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their May regular meeting and recommended denial (8-0 vote).

Matt Martin, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated this is a request by Mike Gung to allow a doublewide mobile home in R-6 zoning district. The property is located at the southeast portion of the city at the corner of Penny Place and Lake Park Road. This is an established residential character area on the Future Development Map. R-6 is zoning where we allow standalone mobile homes by conditional use permit which is what the applicant is requesting. One of the major criteria reviewed is the housing patterns in the area. In this particular case, no mobile homes were found in the immediate area. This is actually a site-built single family residential area, which consist of duplexes and site-built homes. The proposed mobile home is currently sitting on a vacant field north of the city. Note that all mobile homes brought into the city must be inspected and meet all standards for a dwelling unit. Staff believes it would be difficult to bring the proposed mobile home up to standards. The Planning Commission found this request inconsistent with our Conditional Use criteria and recommends denial.

Councilman Yost asked if the mobile home currently sat on property located within the City. Mr. Martin stated the trailer is currently located on property that was annexed into the city years ago as part of annexation request and is not visible from the road. At the time of annexation it was new to the property but is now in a dilapidated condition. Councilman Yost asked if this was a case that could be grandfathered in. Mr. Martin stated no and that a code enforcement case has been reopened regarding issues on the property. Councilman Vickers stated that in the past mobile homes have been approved because they were new and owner occupied but this home looks terrible. In my 27 years on Council, we have never approved mobile homes for rental property and I don't think this is a good fit for our City.

Mayor Gayle asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request. No one spoke in favor of the request. Mayor Gayle asked if anyone would like to speak against the request.

Ms. Linda Battle spoke against the request. I grew up in this neighborhood and I thought the City's goal was to do away with substandard housing. This mobile home does not fit in that neighborhood.

A **MOTION**, by Councilman James Wright and seconded by Councilman Ben Norton was unanimously adopted to follow the recommendation of staff and deny the request for a Conditional Use Permit.

ORDINANCE NO. 2015-9 AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE 0.377 ACRES FROM RESIDENTIAL PROFESSIONAL (R-P) TO COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL (C-C)

Consideration of an ordinance to rezone 0.377 Acres from Residential Professional (R-P) to Community Commercial (C-C) as requested by Bree Durden (File No. VA-2015-05). The property is located at 508 University Drive. The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their May Regular Meeting and recommended approval (8-0 vote).

Matt Martin, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that this is a request from Bree Durden to rezone property located at 508 University Drive from (R-P) Residential Professional to (C-C) Community

Commercial. The subject property has been used for many years as a daycare center. It was grandfathered in as a non-conforming use of the medium size. The applicants are proposed tenants and would like to open a daycare center of the commercial size. This property is bordered by commercial property on the north and east side. The future development map shows a neighborhood center which supports Commercial Zoning. The Planning Commission reviewed this request in May at their regular meeting; found it consistent with the comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power and recommended approval (8-0).

Mayor Gayle asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request.

Travis Carter and Bree Durden, the applicant who resides at 4049 Landeau Circle, Valdosta, Georgia, stated that they currently have a daycare that has been open since November but have outgrown their current location. Councilman Vickers asked how many children would the applicant like to have at the center. The applicant stated that they are currently approved for 46 children. Ms. Durden stated that the facility has been brought up to code and is handicapped equipped so they will be reaching out to those families also. I have been in the daycare business for over six years and would just appreciate your support on this rezoning request so that we can continue to help families in the city.

Mayor Gayle asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition of the request. No one spoke in opposition of the request.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Payton and seconded by Councilman Norton was unanimously adopted (7-0) to follow the recommendation of the Planning Commission and enact Ordinance 2015-9, an Ordinance to rezone 0.377 acres from Residential Professional (R-P) to Community Commercial (C-C) as requested by Bree Durden; the complete text of which shall be found in Ordinance Book XIII.

ORDINANCE NO. 2015-10 AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE 0.33 ACRES FROM SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-10) TO OFFICE PROFESSIONAL (O-P)

Consideration of an ordinance to rezone 0.33 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Office Professional (O-P) as requested by Ron Borders (File No. VA-2015-06). The property is located at 1803 Green Circle. The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their May Regular Meeting and recommended approval (8-0 vote).

Matt Martin, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that this is a request from Ron Border asking to rezone 0.33 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Office Professional (O-P). The subject property is located on east side of Green Circle that runs off the north side of Baytree Road. The zoning pattern in this area is already a mixed and consist of (R-10) and (O-P). Originally this was a residential street but over the last couple of decades many of the homes have been converted to (O-P). The applicant recently acquired the property and would like to convert this to Office Professional. The Future Development Map allows for O-P zoning and fits the pattern of this area in terms of zoning and land use. The Planning Commission reviewed this request at the May 26, 2015, regular meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power and recommended approval (8-0).

Mayor Gayle asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request.

The applicant Ron Borders, 1718 Williams Street, stated that he would be happy to answer any questions regarding the request.

Mayor Gayle asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition of the request. No one spoke in opposition of the request.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Payton was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Ordinance 2015-10, an Ordinance to rezone 0.33 acres from Single-Family (R-10) to Office

Professional (O-P) as requested by Ron Borders, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIII.

ORDINANCE NO. 2015-11, AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE 0.75 ACRES FROM CONDITIONAL MULTI-FAMILY (R-M)(C) TO COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL (C-C)

Consideration of an ordinance to rezone 0.75 acres from Conditional Multi-Family (R-M)(C) to Community Commercial (C-C) as requested by Thomas Shapard (File No. VA-2015-07). The property is located at 400 Baytree Road. The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their May regular meeting and recommended denial (6-2 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that Thomas Shapard is requesting to rezone 0.75 acres from Conditional Multi-Family (R-M)(c) to Community Commercial (C-C). The property is located at 400 Baytree Road. You may recall this was the subject of a zoning request last year which involved eight different parcels of land; this is one of those eight parcels. The subject property is located near a Neighborhood Activity Center on the Future Development Map on the Comprehensive Plan which allows the possibility of C-C zoning when property faces a major road such as Baytree. There is an established residential pattern to the north and a mixed land use pattern that is dominated by the VSU campus to the south that includes apartments and other facilities that are non-residential. The Baytree Corridor near the university is not a commercially zoned area.

Since the work session, staff has received a written request from the applicant to amend his request and rezone the property to R-P instead of C-C. This information was sent to you earlier today. The amended request is more restrictive than what the applicant originally requested and might be something that might be considered more favorably. Staff is more supportive of removing the conditions of the R-M or using R-P or O-P as an alternative. (C-C) zoning is detrimental to the land use pattern of the area and has a broad range. R-P is blended and has residential zoning, professional offices and Multi-Family. This property had O-P zoning and was downzoned to R-M last year. The Planning Commission reviewed this for a (C-C) request and recommended denial (6-2). Now you have before you for consideration an R-P zoning request which is a lot less intense than what was originally requested.

Mayor Gayle asked Mr. Martin what he would be his recommendation. Mr. Martin stated that staff's recommendation is to approve the amended request of R-P zoning. Councilman Payton asked if the applicant would need to go back before the Planning Commission again. Mr. Martin stated that the applicant is not required to go before Planning Commission again. It is required that the request be initially reviewed by them so that Council has a recommendation but the information contained in your packet is very informative and I feel will allow you to make an informed decision on (R-P).

Mr. Hanson, City Manager, stated that had the request been more intense, then staff would have required the applicant to go through the process again, but since the request is less intense Council can elect the proceed. Councilman Yost asked if the applicant indicated what the property will be used for.

Mr. Martin stated that there is a site plan included in the packet that shows a building that can accommodate an office complex. Staff has treated this as a generic zoning change; it could easily be commercial or office whether it is medical or professional. Councilman Carroll stated that it should be noted as it pertains to site the layout of the existing structure or a new structure, that part should be handled through permitting. Mr. Martin stated that all codes must be met whether the existing building is renovated and utilized or a new development is erected.

Mayor Gayle asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request.

Mr. Thomas Shapard, 3933 Weatherby Lane, asked if Council had questions regarding the rezoning. Councilman Yost asked Mr. Shapard what were his plans for the property and what might happen to the home

currently located on the property. Mr. Shapard stated this is something that is being evaluated. We hope to allow whoever purchases the property the opportunity to renovate so that it will be beneficial to the neighborhood and community. Councilman Wright asked if Mr. Shapard could be more specific. Mr. Shapard stated that the location would be appropriate for office professional development or a doctor's office which would be in line with the neighborhood but stated that his goal was to sell the property and allow the purchaser to decide what to do with the property. Councilman Vickers stated that in other words the applicant is trying to get a more favorable zoning for the property before selling it. Mr. Shapard agreed.

Mayor Gayle asked if anyone would like to speak in opposition of the request.

Coleen McDonough, 1631 Boone Drive, stated that she is not in opposition to the zoning request but would like to comment on the site plan. I have an issue with the Multi-Family zoning that came in last year and the position of a detention pond. I believe there are other ways to handle storm water other than digging a large pit in a corner. We have permeable surfaces that might be used instead and there are ways of setting up containers in the parking lot that would minimize the detention pond. The pond is the cheapest option. This is a prominent corner and a gateway into our community and we should have more responsible development.

Mayor Gayle asked Ms. McDonough if she was in opposition of the request. Ms. McDonough stated that she would just like to see some responsible development and felt that other alternatives are available as it relates to the pond. She further stated that she's heard that containers could be placed underneath parking lots as a possible alternative.

Ed Willis, 2518 Winding Way, stated that he has lived in Valdosta for sixty years and objects to the placement of detention pond. I think you should make a condition that it is placed elsewhere. I have also observed the site plan and it places a dumpster in front of the building. With a few strategic changes this will probably make a great place for someone's office.

Mr. Larry Hanson, City Manager, made everyone aware that this hearing is for rezoning and not plan review. This is not site specific; it's not a planned development so it depends on who purchases the property and what they'd like to do with it. Plans for development on the property would have to be submitted, reviewed by various city departments, and all those decisions would have to be made as part of the plan review process.

Electa Rickett, 1217 Hickory Drive, stated that she attended all of the meetings last year regarding this property. I like all kinds of architectural styles and read the story about five ladies who saved the Crescent from becoming a gas station. I was upset last fall when this property was rezoned into Multi-Family and the recent request for Commercial Zoning made me think that it just going from bad to worse. However, I'm glad to see that the owner is considering changing it back to R-P; at one time there was an

office there. This really is a historical home, and the current owners have trashed this property. It was not kept up so there's no wonder the property hasn't sold. Inside and out, this home is now a disaster. If this property was clean, it might be used as an office. In closing, I'm not opposed to the R-P zoning as it is not as intensive. I would however like to state that placing a detention pond on this property would not be a great way to welcome people to our city.

Councilman Carroll stated that as it relates to the trash receptacles and storm drainage pond; he would like to encourage whoever does acquire this property to address the concerns and issues of the neighbors. I think it's a worthwhile goal.

There was a **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Vickers to follow the recommendation of staff.

There was further discussion on the topic from Councilman Yost. Councilman Yost stated that if the

property had remained in (C-C) he would have voted against. (C-C) would have been too intrusive for this neighborhood. I do appreciate the change in the zoning request and I think it's workable. I can vote on this zoning request and appreciate the applicant's change.

The **MOTION** was adopted (6-1) with Councilman Alvin Payton voting in opposition to enact Ordinance No. 2015 – 11 to rezone 0.75 acres from Conditional Multi-Family (R-M)(C) to Commercial Community (C-C) as requested by Thomas Shapard, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIII.

ORDINANCE NO. 2015-12, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CITY'S LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS (LDR) AS IT PERTAINS TO CHAPTER 328 LANDSCAPE, BUFFERS AND SCREENING

Consideration of an ordinance to amend the City's Land Development Regulations (LDR) as it pertains to Chapter 328 Landscape, Buffers and Screening. (File No. VA-2015-08). The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their May regular meeting and recommended approval (6-2 vote).

Matt Martin, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that this was request was an amendment to chapter 328, the Landscaping provisions. This document consists of about three dozen pages in the chapter and there are minor amendments on every page. A lot changes are scrivener's errors, bookkeeping, and a few fundamental changes, for example the Arbor was once in a different department in the city so many of the changes will reflect that change to Engineering. In your packet is the detailed amendment as well as a cover page listing summary highlights and the Arborist is present tonight should you have questions. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their May 26, 2015 meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommended approval (6-2).

Mayor Gayle asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the request.

Kevin Conrad, 1 Ridgeview Circle, stated that he was a strong community advocate and the current Chair of the Valdosta Tree Commission. Before you is a very workable and doable document. Traveling west on North Valdosta Road at the intersection of Country Club, you will find Southwest Georgia Bank. Prior to the building, the contract wanted to completely clear this site. With help from the previous City Arborist and the Valdosta Tree Commission we were able to negotiate and the end result was a mutual agreement and the result is a magnificent and visual site. Southwest GA Bank was pleased with their site, allowed us to use the site for the Arbor Day Celebration and donated \$250 dollars to the Valdosta Tree Commission to help preserve and plant trees. Directly across from that site you have Dr. Adams' office. Dr. Adams placed his office strategically to preserve a large tree on his property, something he did with pride. He was later presented with a Preservation Award for his awareness. "Just another example that the Landscape Ordinance works." In closing, a couple of years ago, Dean Polling with Valdosta Daily Times wrote an article titled Valdosta - The City of Trees, what a great accolade to our community. I think the ordinance and the recommended changes are very doable and very sustainable for our community now and in the future. On behalf of the Tree Commission I ask for your support in adopting this ordinance so we can move forward and continue to be a city of trees.

Mayor Gayle asked if anyone would like to speak against the request. No one spoke against the request.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Payton, seconded by Councilman Norton was to approve the recommendation of staff.

Councilman Carroll thanked Councilman Payton, Councilman Norton and members of the Tree Commission for all the hard work they did in putting the ordinance together.

The **MOTION** was approved (7-0) and enacted Ordinance No. 2015 – 12, an ordinance to amend the City's Land Development Regulations as it pertains to Chapter 328 Landscape, Buffers, and Screening, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIII.

Mayor Gayle stated that this was one of his goals and thanked everyone for their hard work and the excellent results. I look forward to working with everyone on this in the future.

ORDINANCE NO. 2015-13, AN ORDINANCE TO THE CITY'S LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS (LDR) AS IT PERTAINS TO CHAPTER 310 STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

Consideration of an ordinance to amend the City's Land Development Regulations (LDR) as it pertains to Chapter 310 Storm Water Management. (File No. VA-2015-09). The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their May regular meeting and recommended approval. (7-1 vote)

Matt Martin, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that this is also a request to amend the LDR as it relates to Chapter 310, the City's Land Development Regulations and consist of one page. These are companion amendments to go with the stand alone Storm Water Ordinance. The changes affect only one paragraph. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their May 26, 2015 meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and recommended approval (7-1 vote).

The **MOTION** was approved (7-0) and enacted Ordinance No. 2015 – 13, an ordinance to amend the City's Land Development Regulations as it pertains to Chapter 310 Storm Water Management, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIII.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION 2015-6, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION WITH THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAM, BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDS FOR IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE VALDOSTA POLICE DEPARTMENT BODY-WORN CAMERA (BWC) PROGRAM.

Consideration of a resolution supporting the filing of an application with the Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, to fund improvements for the existing infrastructure for the Valdosta Police Department Body-Worn Camera (BWC) program.

Police Chief Brian Childress stated that the Valdosta Police Department purchased a new in-car camera system in 2014 and as part of the purchase, received 100 Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs) at no additional cost. Since that time there has been a reduction in citizen complaints and several of our officers have been cleared of wrongdoings. Since the Valdosta Police Department already has BWCs for all patrol officers and an established policy that complies with international and state accreditation standards, we would qualify for Category 4 of the grant solicitation which seeks to assist agencies with existing BWC programs who have established policies in place and are seeking to expand their program. If we are awarded this grant, we would like to upgrade all current BWCs to high-definition cameras and add cameras for our detective bureau and add software to allow for the download of BWC videos from inside our patrol cars using the in-car computers. This does require a 50% match from the City which should total \$40,000 as the total projected cost is \$80,000.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Yost, seconded by Councilman Wright was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Resolution 2015-6, a Resolution supporting the filing of an application with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Program, Bureau of Justice Assistance to apply for grant funds for improvements for

the existing infrastructure for the Valdosta Police Department Body-Worn Camera Program, the complete text of which will be found on Resolution Book V.

RESOLUTION NO. 2015-7, A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE TO FUND IMPROVEMENTS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES OF THE VALDOSTA POLICE DEPARTMENT AND THE LOWNDES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE.

Consideration of a Resolution supporting the filing of an application with the Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance to fund improvements for law enforcement capabilities of the Valdosta Police Department (VPD) and the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office.

Police Chief Brian Childress stated that he is seeking permission from Council to file an application for a grant. This is something staff has applied for each year since 2005. This is a joint grant application between VPD and the Sheriff's office under the disparity impact which is defined by the DOJ when you have two entities and the majority of crimes is in the largest area. We give a percentage of funding to the LCS but the main portion of funding comes to the City. The total funding for this grant is \$18,035 which is significant because crime has declined in the City and the county and this is one of the items considered under this grant. Last year we received \$24,415 and this year \$18,035. Per an agreement, the Sheriff's office will receive \$4,558 which they will use it for technology. There is no match for this grant.

Councilwoman Tooley asked if there is a limit to the number of grants a city can apply for. Chief Childress answered no and further explained that it appears that grant funding for law enforcement agencies is diminishing. In fact, Project Safe Neighborhood, a grant that the City and County has always applied for in the past is now completely gone.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Wright, seconded by Councilman Vickers was approved (7-0) to approve the request and enact Resolution No. 2015 – 7, a resolution supporting the filing of an application with the Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance to fund improvements for law enforcement capabilities of the Valdosta Police Department and the Lowndes County Sheriff's Office, the complete text of which can be found in Resolution Book V.

ORDINANCE NO. 2015 – 14, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CITY'S STORM WATER ORDINANCE

Consideration of Proposed Amendments to the City of Valdosta's Storm Water Ordinance

Pat Collins, City Engineer, stated that in each of the companion amendments to the LDR heard a little earlier all proposed development and redevelopment within the City of Valdosta must comply with the storm water regulations in the LDR, the provision in the City's Storm Water Ordinance and the engineering standards and guidance set by the state in the Georgia Storm Water Management Manual also known as the Blue Book. These three documents were developed separately by the state and city at different times for different purposes and are used to regulate and guide designers in developing site plan development and flood and water quality analysis. Over time and through the use of the documents, a number of conflicts have been found. Our goal tonight is to reconcile the three documents so that they work better together and complement each other. It eliminates the requirement in the case of redevelopment that the pre-development analysis shall be treated as forested conditions in all cases; rather than the actual existing impervious conditions. This is something that we've received many complaints about and the standards have been much higher than state standards so if you approve this ordinance tonight any new redevelopment will only have to address existing and impervious conditions and not forested conditions. Other changes consist of minor formatting errors which are underlined or highlighted for your benefit. Mr. Hanson, City Manager, also commented stating that by reducing standards for property that is redeveloped will help the city. Let's say you have a 10,000 square foot lot that has a 4,000 square foot building on it that the owners would like to redevelop and tear down and build something new or

even use the property. The way the ordinance is written now the property has to be treated as undeveloped property and provide storm water retention for all 10,000 square feet even though 4,000 of it is already has a building and is an impervious area. This new ordinance will reduce the standard and give credit for the footprint of the existing building and existing impervious area and will have to provide retention for only what is new and undeveloped on the site. This is important because we don't want an impediment to redevelopment of property. We have a lot of property in the city that is developed and might have dilapidated buildings on the premises that people would like to redevelopment but if a policy is in place that impedes this process they will go elsewhere where they don't have the cost of demolition. Additionally, there are three documents that is currently used in storm water regulations - the LDR, the state's Bluebook and the City's Storm Water Ordinance. This is an effort to merge the three documents as much as possible so that they are aligned with each other. It became very difficult when engineers complied with one document and were out of compliance with another. This ordinance will primarily use the state Bluebook as the backbone, with only a few changes thereby removing all conflict between the three codes. Councilman Carroll stated that he has interacted a lot with the business and development community in the last few months and this has been an ongoing complaint among those professionals. Many questions came up as to why we were not in line with the state Blue Book. I think this is an excellent step to becoming more business friendly and a great move for redevelopment in the Designated Revitalization Area and I'd like to thank everyone for their hard work on this one.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Norton was adopted by a (7-0) vote to enact Ordinance 2015-14, an ordinance to amend the City of Valdosta's Storm Water Ordinance, the complete text of which can be found in Ordinance Book XIII.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of an Amendment and Change Order to the Parsons' Design Build Contract for the New Withlacoochee Treatment Plant.

Henry Hicks, Director of Utilities, stated that this is an amendment and change order to Parson's Design Build Contract for the New Withlacoochee Treatment Plant. The amendment is to reduce the contract by \$84,057 and allow the City to make a direct purchase for \$81,262.43 thereby reducing the overall cost of the contract by \$5,600.00

A **MOTION** by Council Norton, seconded by Councilman Carroll was approved (7-0) to approve the request as presented.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of a request to revise the City of Valdosta Personnel and Procedures Manual. (First Reading)

Renassa Small, Human Resources Director, stated that she would like to present the first reading of the updated City of Valdosta Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual. This project was a priority for a few reasons. Firstly, because this manual has not been updated since 2008 and was in need of an update to bring it into compliance with federal and state regulations and laws. To include some clarification language for consistency and interpretation of the policies and also to make changes due to organizational changes such as the police department and shift changes which prompted a change in our accrual change. In amending this policy it was important for us to include personnel from the various departments so that the concerns of each department could be addressed and also have input as to what their procedures and processes were in place in each department. Additionally, that committee was instrumental in assisting with some of the updates and bringing in certain processes. This document was made available to all city employees to allow for feedback to the Human Resources Department and to provide an opportunity to address any issues and concerns. Mr. Hanson, City Manager, stated that Councilman Norton mentioned before the meeting that he is pleased to see the inclusion of a sick bank which is needed and will be a benefit and not a detriment. It is one of the new

things included that staff feels will help employees who have a critical need and will allow fellow employees to and assist those employees in their time of need. Councilman Vickers stated that he always assumed that a sick bank was included in the policy and already in place. Mr. Hanson stated no, there was discussion some years ago but nothing came of it.

Mayor Gayle stated that this was a first reading and this agenda item would be voted on at the June 25, 2015 meeting of Council.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Larry Hanson, City Manager stated he wanted to remind everyone that Farm Days are back and the event will be held each Saturday in June with the exception of June 20th. The event boasts over 35 vendors and is expected to grow before the end of the growing season. This is a great event; it is extremely successful in our downtown area and it is something that Councilman Wright mentioned some years ago.

Larry Hanson, City Manager stated that the Public Information Division has acquired a new Media Coordinator, Marcus McConico. Marcus is no stranger to the City; he once worked for a local television station and covered the City. He's been at Wiregrass for the last six years where he's been teaching and advising students in film and film careers. We're very pleased to have Marcus joining our team; he's going to do a very good job and I look forward to working with him.

Larry Hanson, City Manager, thanked Mayor and Council for all of their time over the last several nights. There's a lot of time, work, and effort that goes into budget preparation that begins in January with departments, employees and more so with Finance and the Budget staff. I'd like to publicly thank Mark, Carolyn, Amy, and Chuck for the role they played in getting us to this point but I also realize that it takes a lot of your time, energy, and attention to review the document which had approximately 283 slides. You've given over six hours of your time to this. Budgets are real educational tools and help all of us to understand what we're doing, what our challenges are, and what we'll be facing in the next couple of years and I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your attention and your willingness to give that kind of time. We look forward to adopting the budget two weeks from today.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Vickers thanked City Manager Hanson for his knowledge of the complete budget. In putting the budget together, you do a magnificent job of laying it out to us and implementing it throughout the year. We are very fortunate that Mayor Rainwater snagged you back in 1995. My hats off to you.

Councilman Carroll reiterated Councilman Vickers words and thanked Mayor and Council. One thing I've noticed over these last eight years while serving on this body is that it is a fair and balanced approach, a citizen and community focus approach and we try to ensure that we are doing the right things for all of the people in our city in putting forth a sound budget that works for the majority. We could not do that if it weren't for the talents of Mr. Hanson and our staff that work so hard. Many of the Department Heads brought forth true needs. One item that I saw on virtually every department's list was wage increase and that did not go unnoticed. This is something that we as a Council need to continue working to address. Again, thank you Mr. Hanson and Mayor and Council for your attention to this.

Councilman Wright also reiterated Councilman Vickers and Councilman Carroll's comments. I really appreciate everything that you've done and the information that you provide to this city is unsurpassed in terms of us being able to see what is going on and I really appreciate that.

Councilman Yost stated that there were several people he needed to thank. Mark Barber was the person that I went to this year to answer all of my many questions before the budget presentation. He did a great job and I appreciate his time. Also staff is to be commended for the presentation, getting the budget

ready, and getting it to us. I also want to thank Renassa; last night she sat with me regarding the Personnel Policy and answered all of my questions. I think we're making much needed and really good changes; and are headed in a good direction.

Henry and his staff did a great job representing the City on Monday night at the community meeting that was held in the City Annex regarding the force main. It was productive and went really well. Lastly, I commend Council for finally agreeing that a trailer belongs in a trailer park.

Councilman Payton also thanked Mr. Hanson and staff and agreed with the numerous comments and accolades from Council. It was definitely a job well done.

Mayor Gayle stated that Council had been present taking care of city business approximately 12 hours after hours since Tuesday. I also want to thank all of you for your time and effort and I want to personally recognize two people in the audience. Ms. Battle and Ms. Cody have both stayed the same amount of time that we have all week and are to be commended. We really appreciate your interest in your city and wish we could get other citizens to come out and get involved and hear what is being said and understand the needs of the city.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Ms. Gracie Bacon, 708 Holly Drive, stated that the situation in her neighborhood has not changed. I now live next to two junk yards and I've started having breathing problem. I am now more frustrated than ever, especially after receiving a tax bill this week for over \$900. I don't believe my neighbor pays any taxes and he is allowed to do anything he wants. How many of you live next door to two junk yards? I'm living next door to paint and vehicle fumes and no one cares. I hear you talk about beautifying Valdosta. Holly Drive also is in Valdosta and there should be an ordinance that prohibits this living situation. I am a taxpayer but I'm not getting the benefit of a taxpayer.

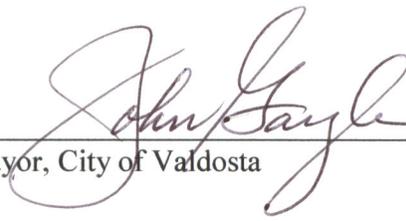
Councilman Vickers asked if there was anything else that could be done. Mayor Gayle, Mr. Hanson, and Councilwoman Tooley all stated that the City has had a presence in the neighborhood and has done everything legally that can be done. Mayor Gayle further stated that the neighbor has been cited and several cases have been made. Chief Childress has been out and met with Ms. Bacon. The neighbor has actually cleaned up some stuff since he's been to court.

Chief Brian Childress stated that the gentleman has been cited and photographs have been taken and delivered to the Mayor and City Manager. There has been a dramatic improvement. I've talked to Ms. Bacon and I understand her frustration, but the ordinance specifically asks vehicles are drivable or not and the ones on his property are drivable. In chatting with her a few minutes ago, I understand that she is upset but we have done everything in our power to try and resolve this issue. The gentleman is now in compliance with the existing ordinance.

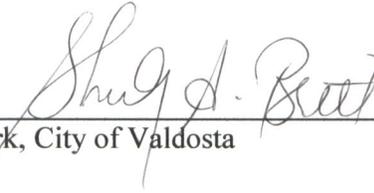
ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion for adjournment.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the June 11, 2015, meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:58 p.m. to meet again in regular session on Thursday, June 25, 2015.



Mayor, City of Valdosta



City Clerk, City of Valdosta