

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL**  
**5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2019**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL**

**OPENING CEREMONIES**

Mayor Pro Tem Sandra Tooley 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, Andy Gibbs, and Vivian Miller-Cody. Mayor John Gayle and Councilman Eric Howard were absent. The invocation was given by Councilman Andy Gibbs, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the January 10, 2019 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (5-0) of the Council.

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2019-3, A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION WITH THE GEORGIA CITIES FOUNDATION (GCF) FOR A REVOLVING LOAN FUND FOR 121-123 NORTH PATTERSON STREET**

Consideration of a Resolution supporting the filing of an Application with the Georgia Cities Foundation (GCF) for a Georgia Cities Foundation Revolving Loan Fund for 121-123 North Patterson Street in the amount of \$250,000.

Ellen Hill, Main Street Manager, stated that the Project involves the renovation of 121-123 North Patterson Street. This is one building with storefronts on North Patterson Street. The building is currently unutilized and has been for a number of years. Renovation of this building will add to the revitalization of the heart of Downtown Valdosta. This Project is designed to save a historic building and provide key steps for the continued renaissance of Downtown Valdosta. This building, which was designed by S. F. Fulgham and built in 1900 for two brothers, T. B. and A. Converse, is approximately 9,000 square feet. Brownstone, bricks, and marble from the Kennesaw Marble Company in Marietta, Georgia are among the materials used to construct the building. A. Converse and Sons was one of Valdosta's earliest mercantile establishments. At one time, dances were held upstairs in the Armory and at another time the Valdosta Athletic Club occupied an upper floor which had boxing rings for competitions. The planned Project includes renovation and conversion of the building into offices which will be used by the purchaser, IDP Building, LLC and its affiliate, IDP Housing as Corporate Headquarters as well as one professional office space on the second floor and two commercial retail spaces on the first floor. It is the intent of the owner to maintain as much historical preservation both inside and outside as feasible. Currently, the building is owned by IPD Building, LLC. The building is a historic structure and recognized as a resource in the Valdosta Commercial Historic District. It is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The total investment is estimated to be \$1,500,000 and the Project will bring an estimated ten jobs to the Downtown area. The renovation will include renovation of floors, ceilings, windows, roof, doors, and walls. The Georgia Cities Foundation will have the only lien on the Project. The assets of the Project will be owned by the lien holders and the Project owners upon completion. As stipulated in the DDRLF funding information, this Project would be awarded to the City of Valdosta who will then enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Central Valdosta Development Authority (CVDA), a constitutionally created authority in Georgia. The ultimate sub-recipient of the DDRLF will be IDP Building, LLC. A Resolution of Support has been prepared authorizing the filing of an Application with the Georgia Cities Foundation for a Georgia Cities Foundation Revolving Loan Fund in the amount of \$250,000. Ellen Hill, Main Street Manager, recommended that Council approve the Resolution of Support.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to enact Resolution No. 2019-3, a Resolution of Support for filing of an Application with the Georgia Cities Foundation for a Georgia Cities Foundation Revolving Loan Fund in the amount of \$250,000 for 121-123 North Patterson Street, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book VI.

Consideration of bids for the purchase of 4 traffic cabinets and 15 signal controllers for replacement of inventory.

Pat Collins, City Engineer, stated that every year the City must restock its inventory of various specialized parts for traffic maintenance. The annual purchase of four traffic cabinets is necessary to replace the inventory of traffic cabinets taken from the warehouse for signal maintenance over the past year. This purchase was budgeted in the adopted 2019 Fiscal Year Budget. Due to the total cost of this requisition exceeding the administrative threshold, the purchase requires City Council approval. Traffic cabinets typically need to be replaced for various reasons such as accidents at intersections, lightning strikes, and occasional power surges. Staff routinely pursues insurance claims and reimbursement against responsible parties in the case of traffic accidents. The frequency of traffic cabinet replacement varies and is unpredictable. The fact that this type of equipment is not readily available locally creates the need for restocking and warehouse inventory. Two bids were received and opened on January 8, 2019 at 11:30 a.m. The low bid was submitted by Southern Lighting in the amount of \$69,435 (\$39,960 for 4 traffic cabinets and \$29,475 for 15 signal controllers). Pat Collins, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve the low bid was submitted by Southern Lighting in the amount of \$69,435 bids for the purchase of 4 traffic cabinets and 15 signal controllers for replacement of inventory.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Vickers, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to approve the low bid was submitted by Southern Lighting in the amount of \$69,435 bids for the purchase of 4 traffic cabinets and 15 signal controllers for replacement of inventory.

Consideration of bids for 12 rear wheel drive pursuit vehicles for the Police Department (Bid No. 17-18-19).

Mayor Pro Tem Tooley asked Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, to go through each of the bid items prior to a motion. Greg Brown stated that the Police Department needs to replace 10 aging vehicles (vehicle numbers 0258, 0287, 0307, 0309, 0310, 0323, 0324, 0325, 0329, and 0332) that need to be removed from the current fleet while adding 2 additional vehicles due to new positions for a total of 12 new pursuit vehicles. The replacements are due to age, mileage, and rising maintenance cost. These 12 vehicles are in the current fiscal year Budget approved by Mayor and Council and were budgeted at \$23,500 each. Sealed bids were received on January 8, 2019 with the low bid submitted by Cass Burch in the amount of \$270,324 (\$22,527 each). The price for these vehicles last year was \$22,091 for each unit.

Consideration of bids for four rear wheel drive administrative pursuit vehicles for the Police Department (Bid No. 18-18-19).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the Police Department needs to replace four aging vehicles (vehicle numbers 0274, 0334, 0341, and 0273) that are currently in the fleet. This is due to age, mileage, and rising maintenance cost. These four vehicles are in the current fiscal year Budget approved by Mayor and Council and budgeted at \$23,500 each. Sealed bids were received on January 8, 2019 with the low bid submitted by Cass Burch in the amount of \$86,596 (\$21,649 each). The price for these vehicles last year was \$21,124 for each unit.

Consideration of bids for one rear wheel drive Chevrolet Tahoe for the Police Department (Bid No. 19-18-19).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the Police Department needs to replace one existing vehicle (vehicle number 1593) in the Training Division. The existing vehicle is old, has high mileage, and has rising maintenance costs. This vehicle is in the current fiscal year Budget approved by Council and was budgeted at \$35,000. Sealed bids were received on January 8, 2019 with the low bid submitted by Cass Burch in the amount of \$34,608. The price for this vehicle last year was \$34,757.

Consideration of bids for two Ford F-150 trucks for the Fire Department and the Police Department (Bid No. 20-18-19).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the Fire and Police Departments need to replace one vehicle each which are numbered as 0343 and 1531 in the current Budget. This is due to age, mileage, and rising

maintenance costs on the current vehicles. The truck for the Fire Department is for fire prevention and the truck for the Police Department is for Investigations. The budgeted amount was \$60,000. The vehicles are Council approved Budget items for the current fiscal year. Sealed bids were received on January 8, 2019 with the low bid submitted by Langdale Ford in the amount of \$55,974 (\$27,987 each). The last truck comparable to this was purchased for \$26,340.

Consideration of bids for nine, half ton Pickup Trucks for the Engineering Department, the Utilities Department, and the Public Works Department (Bid No. 21-18-19).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that multiple Departments which include Engineering (vehicle number 1527), Utilities (vehicle numbers 1403, 1586, 1522, 1575, 0221, and 0220), and Public Works (vehicle number 0305) need to replace existing trucks to upgrade their fleet. This is due to age, high mileage, and rising maintenance costs. The Utilities Department is adding a new truck to their fleet for the Water Plant. These vehicles are in the current fiscal year Budget approved by Council and were budgeted at \$253,000. Sealed bids were received on January 8, 2019 with the low bid submitted by Cass Burch in the amount of \$238,923 (\$26,547 each). The cost last year for a similar truck was \$25,284.

Consideration of bids for a four wheel drive Ford F-150 truck for the Public Works Department (Bid No. 22-18-19).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the Public Works Department needs to replace an existing truck (vehicle number 1525) due to age, high mileage, and rising maintenance costs. The original Budget amount was \$32,000 with the overage being absorbed by savings on other vehicle purchases. This truck is in the current fiscal year Budget approved by Council. Sealed bids were received on January 8, 2019 with the low bid meeting specifications submitted by Langdale Ford in the amount of \$33,291. It has been a few years since the City has purchased a four wheel drive truck.

Consideration of bids for two, one ton trucks with service bodies for the Utilities Department (Bid No. 24-18-19).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the Utilities Department needs to replace two existing trucks (vehicle numbers 1763 and 1547). These trucks are old, have high mileage, and the maintenance costs are increasing. The budgeted amount was \$38,000 each. The two new trucks are in the current fiscal year Budget approved by Council and the cost overage will be absorbed by other vehicle purchases. Sealed bids were received on January 8, 2019 with the low bid submitted by Langdale Ford in the amount of \$81,576 (\$40,788 each). The last comparable truck was purchased for \$38,502.

Consideration of bids for four Ford F-150 XL trucks for the Inspections Department, the Public Works Department, and the Utilities Department (Bid No. 25-18-19).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that the Inspections Department needs to replace two trucks and the Public Works Department needs to replace one truck due to age, high mileage, and rising maintenance costs. The Warehouse Division of the Utilities Department was approved for a new truck within the Division assigned specifically to them. These trucks are in the current fiscal year budget as approved by Council. The replacement vehicles are 1552, 1612, and 1533 and \$25,000 was budgeted for each truck. The cost overage will be absorbed by savings on other vehicle purchases. Sealed bids were received on January 8, 2019 with the low bid submitted by Langdale Ford in the amount of \$103,870 (\$25,967.50 each). The last price the City paid for similar vehicles was \$25,284.

**A MOTION** was made by Councilman Carroll to approve by consent Agenda Items 4(b) through 4(i) and accept the low bid as recommended by Staff. Councilwoman Miller-Cody seconded the motion. Tim Tanner, City Attorney, stated that Agenda Item 4(g) was the low bid that met the specifications. The motion was unanimously adopted (5-0).

Marilee Malowitz Gipson, Fort White, Florida, stated that she wanted to address the Valdosta wastewater spills on the Suwanee River. Ms. Gipson stated that she owns an eco-tourism business and her livelihood is dependent on the waterways in Florida. The waterways provide them with \$84 million of tourist dollars and \$45 million of residential money that provide us with all kinds of reasons to enjoy the rivers of Florida. The Valdosta wastewater spills are impacting their way of life in Florida. Ms. Gipson stated that she had three books to share with the Mayor and Council. One is a book on water and ethics, one is on the Middle Suwannee River, and the third one is about restoration of water resources. She wanted to impress upon them the importance of waterways in Florida and what is happening with the Wastewater Treatment facility. She has been on a tour of the Wastewater Treatment facility and it was a good experience but the spills continued after that. There have been 6.5 million gallons of wastewater spilled into the Withlacoochee River and Alapaha River recently. Something needs to be done. The Wastewater Treatment Plant in Valdosta is gorgeous and \$34 million buys you a wonderful, shiny place with a lot of wastewater to go into but apparently it is not big enough. Ms. Gipson suggested that the City of Valdosta look in to a wetland treatment center instead of discharging directly into these systems (into the Withlacoochee River at the residential one and into the Alapaha River at the industrial one). Also, Valdosta needs to control the manhole covers because there is raw sewage spilling out into the streets. That is what they are hearing but she did not actually see that. Mark Barber, City Manager, asked Ms. Gipson to get with Darryl Muse, Utilities Director, and set up a meeting to discuss her concerns.

John Quarterman, 3338 North Valdosta Road, stated that he wanted to invite the Mayor and Council to come boating with them. The next event is on February 2, 2019 and they will put in at the Troupville boat ramp. They will go down the Little River and turn onto the Withlacoochee River. The Langdale Company has agreed to let them in at the Old Quitman Highway this time. He also thanked Lowndes County for picking up the mound of tires at the gate there. Mr. Quarterman stated that the last time he spoke to the Mayor and Council, he had asked for their help in getting the Georgia Environmental Protection Division to publish sewer spill reports when they get them. They have now decided to start doing that as of December 20, 2018. Unfortunately, in that report, it seems that the City of Valdosta has spilled more than 2 million gallons since 2015. Last year he was bragging on Valdosta because it seemed things were getting better; however, in 2018 there were 28 spills in which 25 were in the month of December which is not really an improvement. He believes there is room for improvement.

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

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that there will be a celebration tonight at Valdosta State University for the Blazers Championship football team. It will be held at 6:00 p.m. at the Sports Complex instead of on the front lawn.

The Bird Supper will be held on February 13, 2019 at The Depot in Atlanta beginning at 5:00 p.m. There are still tickets available for this event.

The City Beat Newsletter for January-March, 2019 is now available for review.

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has appointed Vanassa Flucas, Neighborhood Development/Community Protection Division, and her Staff to head up a point-in-time homeless count on Monday, January 28, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. for Valdosta, Lowndes County, and surrounding areas. Citizens are encouraged to donate travel size toiletries, cold weather items, and care packages.

There are eight opportunities to serve on Boards and Commissions. The deadline to apply is January 30, 2019.

City Government 101 will begin in April and we currently have 15 people who have signed up. There are 25 slots for this Program and citizens are encouraged to complete the application.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilman Carroll thanked the citizen who came here from north Florida. It is a bit of an effort to drive here to spend time with us but we do hear you and we want those spills to stop as well.

Councilwoman Miller-Cody stated that they had a cleanup last Saturday at 215 Chester Street and they had approximately 65 volunteers. They picked up 2,000 tons of debris and she thanked all those who were involved.

Mayor Pro Tem Tooley stated that our Wastewater Treatment Plant is new and it has prevented quite a bit of spills. She said that God keeps taxing us and giving us more and more and we keep building more and more. We will not stop looking at ways to try to stop these spills. Mayor Pro Tem Tooley thanked the concerned citizen who came here from Florida.

Councilman Vickers thanked Council for their support of the Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration during the past week. They collected approximately 1,500 pounds of canned goods for the soup kitchen and they had 2,540 individuals that attended all four of their events. There is no way they could have done that if they did not have the support of the Mayor and Council and the community and it is very much appreciated.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Pro Tem Tooley entertained a motion for adjournment.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (5-0) to adjourn the January 24, 2019 Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 5:55 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, February 7, 2019.

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City Clerk, City of Valdosta

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Mayor, City of Valdosta