

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, AUGUST 8, 2019
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, Sandra Tooley, Eric Howard, Andy Gibbs, and Vivian Miller-Cody. The invocation was given by Pastor Larry Sayre, The Gideons, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY THE GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF WATER PROFESSIONALS

Mayor Gayle introduced Gary McCoy, District 5 Director for the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP), who will be making a special presentation in recognition of Jason Barnes, Superintendent of the Water Treatment Plant. Mr. McCoy stated that the Elizabeth McEntire Award is presented to a member who has excelled in the operation of a public water system in the State of Georgia. GAWP has over 4,500 members in their organization and only one person receives this award each year. He received this award one year and it was truly an honor because it let him know what his peers think of him. They have a very strict Committee that looks over all of the nominees. The Elizabeth McEntire Award was presented to Jason Barnes at their Annual GAWP Conference in Savannah on July 15, 2019. Jason Barnes is very deserving of this award. Many years ago, he started at the Water Treatment Plant as a Laborer and worked his way up to being the Water Superintendent in December of 2014. He has been a member of GAWP for 13 years and they are very proud of his accomplishments. It is truly a great honor to receive this award. Mr. McCoy congratulated Jason Barnes for winning the Elizabeth McEntire Award.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION

Mayor Gayle introduced Chuck Mathis, District 2 Director for the Georgia Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA), who will be making a special presentation in recognition of Franklin Kier, Maintenance Worker II for the Public Works Department. Mr. Mathis stated that it was a privilege for him to be here because he represents the Georgia Chapter of the APWA. He wanted to acknowledge one of the City of Valdosta’s best, Franklin Kier. The Georgia Chapter of the APWA recognized Franklin Kier as Public Works Employee of the year on July 11, 2019 at their Annual Meeting in Jekyll Island. Mr. Mathis stated that it was quite an honor to make this special presentation to Franklin Kier, Public Works Employee of the Year.

PRESENTATION OF THE AUGUST, 2019 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH AWARD

Richard Hardy, Public Works Director, stated that Robert Burkhalter began his employment with the City of Valdosta Public Works Department in June of 2007. He started out as an Automotive Service Technician and presently holds the position of Mechanic II. Mechanic II is responsible for maintaining the 26,000- 66,000 Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) fleet. He has become the top mechanic in his career field and is an important part of the City’s automotive program. Not only is Robert a hard worker, he is also a mentor to the kids residing around Fleet Maintenance Center and the Public Works Compound. For about two years now, mainly during the summer months, Robert has helped a few local children keep their bicycles operational. This all started one day when a child brought his bicycle to the shop and asked Robert if he would air up the tires. Robert could have easily said he was too busy or he did not have time. This is not Robert because he made time to air up the tires on the child’s bike knowing the difference he could make. Now the children will come up to the big bay doors of the Maintenance Center and ask Robert to fix a tire, tighten a chain, or repair a sprocket. All taking a mere fraction of time but making the day brighter for a child. Robert is a true ambassador as he represents the City during these interactions. Robert’s actions display great kindness and a “Service-Before-Self” attitude both which are superb qualities and say a lot about his commitment and compassion for the neighborhood children. It is for these reasons and many others that the Employee Relations Committee nominated Robert Burkhalter as Employee of the Month.

Mayor Gayle stated that several weeks ago there was a group of athletes who were going to attend the National Jr. AAU Championships in North Carolina. We found out afterwards that we had another young athlete who had looked up a particular event and he learned how to do himself. He then went to the State Championship and then to the Jr. AAU Championships and became a world class cup stacker. He was not a member of the team here, but he was placed on a relay team that won a gold medal. He eventually ended up winning five medals. Mayor Gayle asked Zachary Routsong to come forward and he presented Zachary with a Mayor's gold coin in recognition of his accomplishments.

Mayor Gayle also recognized members of the Leadership Lowndes Class who were in attendance at the Council Meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of July 25, 2019 were approved by unanimous consent (7-0) of the Council.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-12, AN ORDINANCE FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) FOR A MANUFACTURED HOME (DOUBLEWIDE MOBILE HOME) IN A SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-6) ZONING DISTRICT

Consideration of an Ordinance for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Manufactured Home (doublewide mobile home) in a Single-Family Residential (R-6) Zoning District as requested by Daiana Colon Martinez (File No. CU-2019-04). The property is located at 2729 Dogwood Circle. The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their July Regular Meeting and recommended approval (8-0 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning & Zoning Administrator, stated that Daiana Colon Martinez is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Manufactured Home (doublewide mobile home) in a Single-Family Residential (R-6) Zoning District. The property consists of 0.48 acres located at 2729 Dogwood Circle. This is along the south side of the street approximately half-way between Dogwood Lane and Cason Street. The property is currently vacant, but has an existing well and septic system from when it formerly contained a mobile home (which was removed from the property six years ago). The applicant purchased the property three months ago and is proposing to place a new 28' x 48' doublewide mobile home on the property. The property is located within an Established Residential (ER) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The property is part of an old rural hamlet neighborhood that originated in the unincorporated area during the 1950's along a system of narrow dirt roads on a grid-like system. The housing pattern of the area became a mixture of modest site-built homes, some manufactured homes, and even one or more small rural churches. Despite the relatively small lots and mainly residential land use pattern, the area was given Agricultural Zoning when the County first adopted zoning in 1972. Development was very slow to occur over the years and most of the surrounding lands remained in large undeveloped tracts including the Bray land estate properties which were annexed into the City in 1989. The Bray land annexation rendered this neighborhood area as an unincorporated island completely surrounded by the City Limits. The City-wide "Islands Annexation" in 2006 brought this neighborhood into the City limits and it was given R-6 Zoning. A few years later, the City installed water and sewer services for the entire neighborhood and paved the dirt roads with an improved drainage system. In the Dogwood Circle portion of the neighborhood, there are currently 48 dwelling units and only 6 of these (12.5%) are manufactured homes with the newest one of these being a 1999 model. The Lonesome Dove Road area reflects the same percentage. The property once contained a manufactured home (doublewide) up until 2012 when it was removed, and there is still a manufactured home remaining on the property immediately to the west. Despite the specific history of the property, the dominant housing type in this neighborhood is still site-built single-family. All of the existing manufactured homes are now 20+ years old, with the oldest one dating to 1983. The development trends in the neighborhood have now been exclusively for more site-built single-family, with some of the former manufactured homes being converted over and some of the vacant lots now being developed for the first time. The property has been empty for the past seven years, and the applicant acquired it only three months ago with the hopes of placing a doublewide mobile home on the property which will utilize the existing well and septic system from seven years ago. Unfortunately, as part of the Islands Annexation and the City's installation of water/sewer services throughout the neighborhood (with stub-outs to each parcel), any development on this property will be

required to connect to the City utility system. Although the property is eligible for consideration of having a manufactured home, and there are a few such existing homes in the area, this is truly not the dominant housing type of the neighborhood and it would contradict the recent development trends of adding more site-built single-family residences to the neighborhood. Staff found the request inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review Criteria, and recommended denial. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their July 29, 2019 meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review Criteria, and recommended approval with no conditions (8-0 Vote).

No one spoke in favor of the request.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION was made by Councilwoman Miller-Cody to approve a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Manufactured Home (doublewide mobile home) in a Single-Family Residential (R-6) Zoning District as requested by Daiana Colon Martinez. The motion was seconded by Councilman Howard. The motion was adopted (5-2) with Councilman Norton and Councilman Carroll voting in opposition to enact Ordinance No. 2019-12, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-13, AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE 0.98 ACRES FROM NEIGHBORHOOD-COMMERCIAL (C-N) TO COMMUNITY-COMMERCIAL (C-C)

Consideration of an Ordinance to rezone 0.98 acres from Neighborhood-Commercial (C-N) to Community-Commercial (C-C) as requested by Vicki and Tony Franks on behalf of Jay & Tee Georgia Properties, LLC (File No. VA-2019-04). The property is located at 603 North St Augustine Road. The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their July Regular Meeting and recommended approval (8-0 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning & Zoning Administrator, stated that Vicki & Tony Franks, on behalf of Jay & Tee Georgia Properties, LLC, is requesting to rezone 0.98 acres from Neighborhood-Commercial (C-N) to Community-Commercial (C-C). The property is located at 603 North St. Augustine Road which is along the east side of the road about 175' north of the intersection with Rouse Road and is approximately 850' north of the intersection with Lankford Road. The property currently contains an existing commercial building (5,850 square feet) with two tenant spaces, and the applicant is proposing to market this property to a wider range of potential commercial tenants as allowed in C-C Zoning, as well as have additional signage as also allowed by C-C Zoning. No building expansions or changes to the site are being proposed. The property is located within a Community Activity Center (CAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan, which allows the possibility of C-C Zoning. The property was part of the "Islands Annexation" in 2006. It was previously zoned C-N in Lowndes County and was developed with the existing commercial building about 20 years ago. When it was annexed, the property was errantly given the City's C-N Zoning which is less intensive than C-N in the County. As with other similar C-N properties at the time, this property should have been given the City's C-C Zoning which has always been considered comparable. The North St. Augustine Road corridor has a fairly intensive development pattern and it is dominated by both commercial zoning and commercial uses as is typically found along a four-lane State highway traversing an urban area; however, this particular portion of the corridor is a little less intensive than other areas mainly because of the existing lighter commercial and office uses on many of the properties, as well as the existing residential neighborhoods both to the east and across the highway. This rezoning request initially seems very similar to the request last fall for property located diagonally across the street at the corner of North St. Augustine Road and Hightower Circle, which was requested and approved for C-N Zoning (File No. VA-2018-17 - Treina Dove). The primary differences are that the 2018 request was speculative and the subject property was a corner lot located at one of the entrances to the neighborhood. In this case, the subject property is smaller and already developed with an acceptable commercial building, and it is situated between two properties that have Commercial Zoning (one that is C-N and one that is the more intensive C-H classification). The applicant is not proposing to make any physical changes to the site and the only differences the C-C Zoning would bring in this case is to allow a slightly wider range of commercial uses (while still meeting standard C-C requirements) and also a little more commercial signage that puts the property on par with the C-H property to the south. Staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommended approval. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their July 29, 2019 Meeting, found it

consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP), and recommended approval (8-0 Vote).

No one spoke in favor of the request.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve Ordinance No. 2019-13, an Ordinance to rezone 0.98 acres from Neighborhood-Commercial (C-N) to Community-Commercial (C-C) as requested by Vicki and Tony Franks on behalf of Jay & Tee Georgia Properties, LLC, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-14, AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE 9.40 ACRES FROM SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL-CONDITIONAL (R-6)(C) TO SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-6) WITH NO CONDITIONS

Consideration of an Ordinance to rezone 9.40 acres from Single-Family Residential-Conditional (R-6)(c) to Single-Family Residential (R-6) with no conditions as requested by Clint Joyner (File No. VA-2019-05). The property is located at 3660 Mt. Zion Church Road. The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their July Regular Meeting and recommended approval (8-0 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning & Zoning Administrator, stated that Clint Joyner, on behalf of Building Valdosta, LLC, is requesting to rezone 9.40 acres from Single-Family Residential-Conditional (R-6)(c) to Single-Family Residential (R-6) with no conditions. The property is located at 3660 Mt. Zion Church Road which is along the south side of the road directly across from the intersection with Kelsee Circle. This is also about half way between the intersections with North Forrest Street Extension and Jaycee Shack Road. The property is currently vacant and cleared and the applicant is proposing to develop the property as a 42-lot single-family residential subdivision. The property was initially annexed and rezoned in 2007 with the following three conditions: (1) Cut-through to Chadwyck Place Subdivision [connection] required, (2) All lots must face an interior street, (3) Minimum lot size of 8,000 square feet. The applicant is proposing this new development to simply be a "regular" R-6 type subdivision, and wants to not be required to connect to the streets of Chadwyck Place Subdivision. The subject property is located within a Suburban Area (SA) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan, which allows the possibility of R-6 Zoning. The original annexation and rezoning request in 2007 was somewhat contentious, with opposition being voiced by residents of the County neighborhoods to the east and northeast which were zoned R-10 and R-15. The condition pertaining to the minimum 8,000 square foot lot size was seen as a compromise between the proposed R-6 and what might have otherwise been approved as R-10. The other two conditions were because these requirements were not part of the City's standard Development Code at that time. They are now part of the City's Land Development Regulations (LDR) which was adopted and became effective in January, 2009. This adoption also resulted in the elimination of R-6S Zoning from the Development Code. The City later rezoned this property from R-6S(c) to R-6(c) in May, 2009 as part of a mass rezoning to correct problems with the defunct R-6S and other Zoning Districts. All "conditions of approval" were specifically carried over to the new Zonings that were approved at that time, and these conditions of approval are still in effect for this property today. The property has remained vacant and cleared (undeveloped) in the City ever since its annexation. Now, a different developer (the applicant) has purchased the property and is seeking to do a more regular R-6 subdivision that is in keeping with the existing R-6 subdivisions to the west which were developed after 2007. This form of higher density single-family development has certainly been the dominant development trend for these City properties along the south side of Mt. Zion Church Road. As for the conditions of Zoning approval, it is Staff's preference to not have any such conditions when they are not necessary and they are not germane to the land use questions in hand. As a reminder, this is just a Rezoning request. It is not a subdivision plat approval or a special site plan that we might consider in reviewing a CUP or Planned Development request. Staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommended approval. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their July 29, 2019 Meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP), and recommended approval (8-0 Vote). Councilman Vickers inquired as to the square footage of the homes in the neighborhood. Matt Martin stated that he was not certain about the square footage but they will have deed restrictive covenants. They are proposing to have a Homeowners Association with protective covenants.

Councilman Vickers also inquired about the holding pond. Matt Martin stated that the retention ponds are required for drainage which is required for new subdivisions of this size. They are proposing in the preliminary design to have the retention ponds in the lower left and lower right corners which is a typical area where you see them. The drainage also goes in that direction so it makes more sense to drain it like that. Councilman Vickers inquired as to who would be responsible for the future maintenance of the retention ponds. Matt Martin stated that once the preliminary design is approved, they will then submit construction drawings for all of the infrastructure for the Engineering Department to review. When that is approved, they will then begin building which will be inspected in multiple stages. At the end, there will be a final approval and they can start selling lots. All of the details of the frequency and methodology of maintaining the retention ponds is part of that review. Councilman Howard inquired about a fence being placed across the back. Matt Martin stated that it is still part of the consideration of the design. It is not part of the rezoning request. In 2007, it was not a requirement that the neighborhoods connect so Council made that a requirement as part of the rezoning change. It is now in the Land Development Regulations as a requirement with discretion by the City Engineer. There have been several discussions with the City Engineer about that particular item and his agreement is to connect them for emergency vehicle purposes only if needed. There are different ways to do that and the applicant will reflect that in the construction drawings. The pathway and connection point to maintain the southwestern pond is where the Brandonshire right-of-way stubs out and so the path is there. They would simply create a section of the fence that could be unbolted and moved out of the way to let an emergency vehicle through.

J. D. Yeager spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Yeager stated that they are looking at 1,600 to 1,700 square feet for the homes. They are trying to develop something where they can sell houses to people in the \$139,900 to \$145,000 range because there is nothing out there for people who can buy in that price range right now. The subdivision will have covenants. They would like to put an eight foot privacy fence. Their goal is to 100% divide this subdivision from Chadwyck Subdivision. They are trying to create something that would be very good for the people who are going to live there and for people to have something to be proud of.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION by Councilman Howard, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve Ordinance No. 2019-14, an Ordinance to rezone 9.40 acres from Single-Family Residential-Conditional (R-6)(c) to Single-Family Residential (R-6) with no conditions as requested by Clint Joyner, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

A REQUEST BY THE CITY OF VALDOSTA TO INITIATE THE REZONING REVIEW AND PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS FOR TWO PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 405 AND 407 PINE TREE ROAD TABLED

Consideration of a request by the City of Valdosta to initiate the Rezoning Review and Public Hearing Process for two properties located at 405 and 407 Pine Tree Road. This request will be properly advertised and considered at the Greater Lowndes Planning Commission Regular Meeting on August 26, 2019 and at the Valdosta City Council Regular Meeting on September 5, 2019.

Matt Martin, Planning & Zoning Administrator, stated that the two (2) properties located at 405 and 407 Pine Tree Road total of 0.58 acres and were originally zoned Single-Family Residential (R-10) as part of the adjacent Alden Park neighborhood which was developed during the 1950's. They were also part of a Rezoning approval in 2014 whereby eight parcels of land were collectively rezoned from Single-Family Residential (R-10) and Office-Professional (O-P), to conditional Multi-Family Residential (R-M)(c) to be collectively redeveloped as one large apartment complex. The four conditions of approval for the R-M Zoning were based on the original proposed apartment layout, and stipulated as follows: (1) For multi-family development, combine all parcels of land into one lot. (2) From Pine Tree Road, minimum setbacks shall be at least 30' for buildings greater than one story, and 100' for buildings greater than 2-story. (3) Buffer Yard landscaping shall include a minimum of 3 canopy trees, 4 understory trees, and 30 shrubs per 100 linear feet. Buffer yards shall maintain a minimum width of 20'. There shall be an unbroken 6' tall opaque solid fence or wall along the entire western boundary as well as the entire frontage area of Pine Tree Road. There shall be no vehicular or pedestrian access to Pine Tree Road. (4) Structures abutting the Pine Tree side (4 existing parcels area, about 1.34 acres) shall be no more than 2 stories tall. Since 2014, each of the other six properties have been rezoned again to allow individual apartment complexes to be

developed, each of them with different conditions of approval or with no conditions at all. The most recent of these occurred last month with the rezoning of the three (3) parcels to the east and southeast (Joe Nijem, File No. VA-2019-02). As a result, these two properties along Pine Tree Road will now be physically isolated in terms of site design from the now smaller apartment complexes to the east and south. These two parcels were originally rezoned and planned to be part of a much larger apartment complex that never came to fruition, and they are all that remain of that previous decision. The conditions of approval that were placed on them in 2014 still remain in full force and effect today. Because of these zoning conditions, particularly Condition (3) which prohibits pedestrian or vehicular access to Pine Tree Road and requires solid fencing along the street frontage, the existing Single-Family Residential design of these properties is non-conforming. Therefore, the current zoning of these last properties is both illogical and misleading as depicted on the current Zoning Map. Any redevelopment of these properties will now require their own separate rezoning approval. Because they were once planned to be part of a larger apartment complex that never materialized and they are still developed as Single-Family under the same original pattern as the adjacent neighborhood, their proposed future usage as apartments may no longer be considered compatible or appropriate. Section 242-4(A)(1) of the Land Development Regulations (LDR) states that proposed amendments to the Official Zoning Map (a Rezoning request) "...may be initiated by the owner(s) of the subject property or the authorized agent(s) of the owner(s) of the property, by majority vote of the members of the City Council, by the Planning and Zoning Administrator, or by recommendation of the Planning Commission." This is the same kind of language that has existed in all prior Zoning Ordinances of the City, as well as Ordinances in other communities in that it grants authority to the City Council to "initiate" the Public Hearing process for possible rezoning of any properties in the City. The actual decision of whether or not to change the existing zoning, would then be made at a future advertised Public Hearing just like any rezoning request submitted by a private property owner. Although this procedure is not common, it has been used numerous times in the past, particularly in the case of a neighborhood-scale rezoning or simply cleaning up an irregular or misleading pattern on the Zoning Map. Councilman Gibbs stated that the purpose of this is to rezone the parcels back from Multi-Family Residential (R-M)(c) to Single-Family Residential (R-10) so there will be no more development down Pine Tree Road. There is no reason not to change it back to R-10 because of the conditions that are put into place; however, with the owners living out of town, he thought it would be best if he reached out to them and let them know what is being proposed. If Council is in agreement, then he will make a motion to table the request until he hears back from the property owners.

A MOTION was made by Councilman Gibbs to table the request until the September 19, 2019 Regular Council Meeting so that we can have something by September 25, 2019 to place in the advertisement. Councilman Carroll seconded the motion. The motion was adopted (6-1) with Councilwoman Tooley voting in opposition.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AUTHORITIES, AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Consideration of appointments to the Valdosta Tree Commission.

Mayor Gayle stated that the Valdosta Tree Commission has three members, Monica Haynes, Laura Yale, and Dr. David Nelson, whose terms will expire on September 6, 2019. Ms. Haynes and Dr. Nelson have expressed an interest in being reappointed and Ms. Yale has not expressed an interest in being reappointed. These appointments were advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants are as follows: (1) Monica Haynes, Landscape & Grounds Superintendent (Valdosta State University), and (2) Dr. David Nelson - Professor (Valdosta State University).

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion to appoint Monica Haynes and Dr. David Nelson to the Valdosta Tree Commission.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilwoman Tooley, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to appoint Monica Haynes and Dr. David Nelson to the Valdosta Tree Commission to serve a term of four years.

Consideration of appointments to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments & Appeals.

Mayor Gayle stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments and Appeals has been inactive for quite some time now because we have not had an appeal; however, there are three members,

Erik Cox, Keith Scarborough, and Jimmy Cone, whose terms have expired. The term for Mr. Cox expired on June 30, 2017, the term for Mr. Scarborough expired on June 30, 2018, and the term for Jimmy Cone expired on June 30, 2019. Mr. Cox and Mr. Scarborough have not expressed an interest in being reappointed. Mr. Cone did express an interest in being reappointed but did not submit his application by the deadline of July 31, 2019. The City was also supposed to appoint a General Contractor, which rotates between the City and County, when the term of Jim Sineath (who was appointed by the County in 2014) expired on June 30, 2017. The City will now make the General Contractor appointment; however, the term will expire on June 30, 2020 and the County will make the next appointment in 2020. Also, Mayor Gayle will appoint a Council Member to serve as an Ex Officio on this Board. These appointments were advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants are as follows: (1) Dennis Carlton - Owner and HVAC Contractor (Carlton Mechanical), (2) Michael G. Miller - Electrician (Mike's Electric Service), and (3) Charles "Chuck" Smith, General Contractor (Chuck Smith & Son Contractors, Inc.). Councilwoman Vivian Miller-Cody has volunteered to be the Ex Officio on this Board.

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion to appoint Dennis Carlton, Michael Miller, and Chuck Smith to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments & Appeals.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilwoman Tooley, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to appoint Dennis Carlton (whose term will expire June 30, 2021), Michael Miller (whose term will expire June 30, 2020), and Chuck Smith (whose term will expire June 30, 2020) to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Construction Board of Adjustments & Appeals.

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mayor Gayle stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals has one member, Nathanael D. Brantley, whose term will expire on October 11, 2019. Mr. Brantley has expressed an interest in being reappointed. This appointment was advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The applicants are as follows: (1) Nathanael D. Brantley - Attorney (Dover Miller Karras & Langdale, P.C.), and (2) Daniyel Mills - Information Assurance Officer (Artic Slope Regional Corporation).

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion for an appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals.

Councilman Howard placed in consideration the name of Nathanael Brantley. There being no other nominations, Mayor Gayle closed nominations.

Nathanael Brantley was appointed to serve a term of three years on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals.

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks & Recreation Authority.

Mayor Gayle stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks & Recreation Authority has a member, Andy Gibbs, who resigned due to personal reasons. His term will expire on June 30, 2020. This appointment was advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. The only applicant to apply was Vincent Miller, Vice President of Student Affairs at Valdosta State University.

Mayor Gayle entertained a motion to appoint Vincent Miller to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks & Recreation Authority.

A MOTION by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to appoint Vincent Miller to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks & Recreation Authority to serve the unexpired term of Councilman Andy Gibbs which ends on June 30, 2020.

Deidre White-Powell stated that she wanted to speak on behalf of the fine citizens gathered in the Council Chambers who are here representing the larger community. They are respectfully asking for this Council to place on its Agenda for the next Council Meeting on August 22, 2019 a called vote to approve the inclusion of a Referendum on the November, 2019 Ballot commonly referred to as the "Better Brunch Bill" which will allow the voters in our community the opportunity to permit their restaurants to serve alcohol beginning at 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. We have this opportunity thanks to our State legislature including our own Representative Dexter Sharper who voted to amend State law regulating Sunday sales. She invited Representative Sharper to join us tonight so we could publicly thank him for his support on this measure. Currently, the City of Valdosta allows licensed restaurants to begin serving alcohol on Sundays at 12:30 p.m. Council members and Staff have been given a packet of relevant information such as the Georgia communities whose voters have already passed this measure and as of today, there are 82 communities who have already passed this. There are 11 Georgia communities who will be voting on this measure this November. We would like to be number 12. Also in the packet is the economic impact on Georgia restaurants. More food and beverage sales equals more tax revenue and jobs. We all know in our area the high percentage of dollars and jobs that local restaurants already bring in to support our local economy. Approval of this measure will create a level playing field with State-owned facilities such as the Georgia World Congress Center, the Georgia Dome, and Lake Lanier Islands. You may question what that has to do with Valdosta. Her answer would be, "what is good for the goose." Should private businesses not be afforded the same earning opportunities as our government-funded structures and foundations? Closer to home, any private clubs in our community are already allowed early Sunday sales because they set their own timetable for service. Should not the private businesses in the same community be afforded the same earning opportunities as the private clubs? A reminder for those who may be unclear as to how the process works, we are not asking Council to approve earlier Sunday sales, but we are asking this Council to vote yes to allow the voters of our community to decide if earlier Sunday sales is something we would like to offer in the City of Valdosta. We respectfully request your favorable consideration on this measure.

George Boston Rhynes, 5004 Oak Drive, stated that freedom of the press is very important to this nation. It is what distinguishes us among many other nations. Sunday he had no knowledge of what he is about to discuss; however, Monday morning, he received a phone call about a local business on Industrial Boulevard and there was a noose displayed in the work area. He did not sit on it, hide it, or cover it up; however, he wanted to move on it in a professional manner. He will not mention the business name or the people who work there, but he did interview people for the past three days who want it to be known that they were not happy in the workplace and they did everything they could to keep from getting violent. He is not sure if our main stream news media will ever report it to you or the general public, but he will in a few more days. The reason he is not going to break the news and this story is because he wants to see our main stream news media accommodate the people who called him when they should have been calling people who get paid for this because he does not get paid for it. He loves this republic and served this country for 20 years and when we say metro city and freedom of the press, citizens have a right to know what is going on in their community whether it be radio, television, or whatever. When you hang a noose up it really offends a lot of people because they have a history of the nooses and what happened to black people in this country from the year 1555 until 2019.

Alison Shenton, Artistic Director of Dance Arts, stated Dance Arts is a 48 year old dance school and business in this community. They present the Nutcracker each year and this year will be the 48th annual performance. She has been involved in Dance Arts as the Director, Associate Director, a teacher, and a student since she was four years old. She rents Mathis Auditorium 17 days out of the year. Valdosta has seven dance schools and some are even older than Dance Arts. She comes here representing not only herself and her business, but also the six other dance schools in this town. Each one of these schools has served many children in our community for the past 80 years. She thanked Mark Barber, City Manager, for welcoming the dance schools to previously meet with him. He took time to discuss the City's intentions on the sale of Mathis Auditorium and the purchase of the Valdosta Performing Arts Center (PAC). He welcomed their concerns as they navigate through this. They left a packet with him of what the seven dance schools agreed would be their biggest concerns as women business owners. They took the schedule of the Valdosta High School (VHS) PAC and they overlaid it with the Mathis Auditorium schedule and they showed him what conflicts they know they would have as they got through with their productions for the year. They truly believe that the City Council has everyone's best interests to accommodate not only them, but many other local entities and programs with this change. They support the Council enhancing the community with aspirations to obtain the VHS fields for parks and recreation as well as the building for the Police and Fire Departments. They came to this meeting today asking how the City can help them

and accommodate the performing arts of this town with this change. As a group they have come to a decision that the sale of Mathis Auditorium could negatively affect their businesses. Selling Mathis Auditorium and moving all community events to the PAC and joining the events that already happen at that venue will be a problem. The City would be selling a building because it needs work just to purchase another building that needs work and that is taking Valdosta from a two-stage town to a one-stage town. Everyone would love for Valdosta to be the jewel of the south. Right now Tifton is bringing in big musical concerts and performances because of their Performing Arts Center. We know our town would like to do this too. How can we go from two venues splitting up touring shows which the Turner Center brings in, film festivals, traveling dance competitions, community shows like dance recitals, the Nutcracker, Sleeping Beauty, wrestling matches, and try to add what is already happening at the VHS PAC?

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that he wanted to congratulate the two City employees who were recognized here tonight and he was very proud of them. You will find those caliber of employees throughout the entire organization.

The Makers Market is scheduled for Saturday, August 10, 2019 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the Courthouse Square. This is our newly re-energized Farmers Market and it has been a popular event this year.

The next Food Truck Thursday will be held on August 15, 2019 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. These events have really grown and we are looking forward to having a fun family time.

The Valdosta Youth Council is currently accepting applications until August 23, 2019. Please encourage 7th, 8th, and 9th graders to apply.

The Valdosta-Lowndes Co. 9-11 Ceremony will be held on September 11, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. at the historic Courthouse lawn.

The Back-to-School Block Party was held on Saturday, August 3, 2019 at Drexel Park and it was a huge success. They served over 850 students in the community with fully supplied back packs. We appreciate everyone who participated in this event.

Also, regarding the response to Citizens to be Heard, we will start sending an update at every Council Meeting on how we are replying to citizens on their requests. This will help Council to keep up with our responses.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Carroll thanked Councilman Andy Gibbs for his service on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority. With the new Miracle League Field and all of the great work he has done, we hate to see him leave the Authority. He has contributed so much and we thank him for his service to the community. Councilman Carroll stated that he serves on the Conference Center and Tourism Authority and they have discussed the Brunch Bill. We owe it to the citizens to at least give them a voice in this important decision. It will be good for business and he is in support of that effort so we need to do whatever we can to get this out there and get something moving forward on it.

Councilman Vickers stated that he agreed with Councilman Carroll. He does not have a problem putting an issue before the voters to make decisions and he is in support of it. Councilman Vickers also stated that the Engineering Department has saved the City a lot of money on Wisenbaker Lane. We need to find a way to recognize them for the work that they have done in-house because we have paid contractors a lot of money in the past. Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that they have discussed some type of recognition like the Employee of the Month but have it for the entire group. They saved the City hundreds of thousands of dollars in what they did and they even changed their schedule to come in at non-work hours. They have been a tremendous asset to the City. Councilman Vickers stated that for the weekend voting, some of them are interested in having it on Saturday and Sunday but if not Sunday, at least have it on Saturday. We need to get that nailed down with the County and others because it will be a County-wide vote with SPLOST and we need to be on the same page. Mark Barber, City

Manager, stated that we have been in touch with Deb Cox at the Lowndes County Board of Elections and we were trying to get a Saturday set up for the weekend before the early voting ended. She cannot accommodate that request but she can accommodate Saturday, October 12, 2019 for that voting. Councilman Vickers inquired about the time. Mark Barber stated that we have not discussed a time with her yet.

Councilman Howard stated that he wanted to thank George Rhynes for bringing that to their attention because a lot of times citizens do not always see it on social media. He also thanked Deidra White-Powell for bringing the Brunch Bill to their attention, and he thanked Ms. Shenton for her concern about the PAC. Without our citizens, there would be no need for a City Council so they want citizens to continue to bring their views and concerns to their attention.

Councilman Gibbs stated that he agreed with Councilman Carroll and Councilman Vickers in allowing the citizens to have a say on the Brunch Bill. Also, we have our second year of the basketball league that was started by Councilman Howard. We have had over 50-60 children show up to at the Mildred Hunter Center to play basketball and teach them sportsmanship and respect. They ended up winning the championship again. Also, the Miracle League starts on September 10, 2019 and citizens are encouraged to attend the games at Freedom Park.

Councilwoman Tooley stated that citizens are encouraged to put notes in the Anonymous Box here at City Hall with any suggestions they might have. Also, for citizens who speak under Citizens to be Heard and the three minutes are not enough time, they are encouraged to have someone else their group to finish it up. We do act on these things and we can also present an action plan to the citizens. She also thanked the Departments Heads for the wonderful job they are doing.

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 August 8, 2019 Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:36 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, August 22, 2019.

City Clerk, City of Valdosta

Mayor, City of Valdosta