

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL**  
**5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2020**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL**

**OPENING CEREMONIES**

Mayor Scott James Matheson called the regular meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. Council members present were: Joseph “Sonny” Vickers, Tim Carroll, Ben Norton, Eric Howard, Andy Gibbs, and Vivian Miller-Cody. Councilwoman Sandra Tooley was absent. The invocation was given by Councilman Tim Carroll, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Consideration of the August, 2020 Employee of the Month Award (Ray Brown, Public Works Department).

Ray Brown began his employment with the City of Valdosta in December of 2016 and currently holds the position of Heavy Equipment Operator in the Residential Trash Division. Ray is responsible for driving a truck and trailer equipped with a hydraulic scoop and lifting arm to remove yard debris from residents along his route. The nomination for Ray was submitted by Mr. Matt Courson because his Mother resides in a house on Ray’s route. Mr. Courson submitted the following to us, “Ray Brown drives the route that passes my parents’ house on Park Avenue. My Mom used to walk every day for her exercise until the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the restrictions on outdoor and group activities were in place. During this time, she has maintained social distancing and her usual physical activity by working in the yard. She has been working in her yard every day since COVID started. During this time, she has had a pile of yard debris at the road every week. Mr. Brown is her regular yard debris pick-up man. She has spoken about him to me every week since she embarked on this routine. She has nothing but praise for the man. Mr. Brown calls my mother by name and is always pleasant in conversation with her. He is seemingly always positive and in a good mood. She looks forward to his weekly chat while he loads up her weeks work of debris and then moves down the road. My Mom has sung praises of Mr. Brown and his competency with the hydraulic arm on his truck. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Brown after helping my Mom with a project at her house. Mr. Brown pulled up to the house, set up, and removed the yard debris from her yard within minutes and with no damage to the ground under the pile. I was impressed by the skill with which he was able to collect that debris. Mr. Brown exhibits the kind of attitude we should all have when we come to work each day. He also provides the kind of personalized customer service that genuinely makes a positive difference in our interactions with the public. His reliability, quality of work, disposition, and pleasant and positive attitude when dealing with members of the public deserve to be recognized.” It is for these reasons and many others that the Employee Relations Committee nominated Ray Brown as Employee of the Month.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the July 23, 2020 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (6-0) of the Council.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2020-10, AN ORDINANCE FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) FOR A PERSONAL SERVICE SHOP (WAXING SALON) IN A RESIDENTIAL-PROFESSIONAL (R-P) ZONING DISTRICT**

Consideration of an Ordinance for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Personal Service Shop (Waxing Salon) in a Residential-Professional (R-P) Zoning District as requested by Ricky Weeks (File No. CU-2020-04). The property consists of 0.55 acres and is located at 2418 Bemiss Road. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their July 27, 2020 Regular Meeting and recommended approval with two conditions (10-0 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning & Zoning Administrator, stated that Ricky Weeks is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Personal Service Shop (Waxing Salon) in a Residential-Professional (R-P Zoning District). The

property consists of 0.55 acres and is located at 2418 Bemiss Road. This is along the west side of the street approximately 300 feet south of the intersection of University Drive. The property contains a professional office building (2,454 square feet). The applicant's prospective tenant, Brazil's Waxing Center, is proposing interior renovations and to occupy the building as the sole tenant with no changes to the building exterior or the site. The property is located within a Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The existing R-P Zoning is compliant with the Character Area. This portion of Bemiss Road was first developed many decades ago and was dominated by scattered residences and a few businesses; however, after the road was widened to four lanes and the traffic began increasing, commercial and office use became more prevalent and many of the existing residences were converted to office type uses. This particular portion of Bemiss Road, between Castle Park and the Northside Drive intersection, continues with a pattern that is dominated by multi-family residential, offices, and a few light commercial uses. The subject property and its existing R-P Zoning fits in very well with this pattern. Although the proposed use is a little more commercial in nature, the existing building and site have more of a residential appearance and have always been used for office purposes. Surprisingly, the subject property is actually located within the official FEMA 100-year floodplain due to the headwaters channel of Two Mile Branch being located along the property's south property line. This channel is very small and is controlled by the upstream piping and weir associated with Bemiss Road. There is no known flooding history on the property. Because there are no proposed changes to the existing building or to the overall site, there will be no change to the existing drainage patterns and none of the floodplain regulations are triggered. Therefore, this is considered a non-issue with regard to this proposed CUP. Any future redevelopment on the site would still be subject to floodplain regulations at that time, if applicable. The only other potential issues with this proposed change of use is that of parking (of which the site has more than the minimum requirement), and hours of operation (which are deemed to be acceptable along the Bemis Road corridor). Staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review Criteria, and recommended approval with the following conditions: (1) Approval shall be granted for a Personal Service Shop in the form of a waxing salon or esthetician services only. (2) Conditional Use approval shall expire after two years from the date of approval if no Business License for the approved use has been requested by that date. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their July 27, 2020 Regular Meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review Criteria, and recommended approval subject to the following conditions (10-0 vote): (1) Approval shall be granted for a Personal Service Shop in the form of a waxing salon or esthetician services only. (2) Conditional Use approval shall expire after two years from the date of approval if no Business License for the approved use has been requested by that date.

Ricky Weeks, 4473 Davis Road Southwest, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Weeks stated that he is the owner of the property and asked Council's consideration in approving the Conditional Use Permit for this property. He thinks this will blend in well with everything around it and it will not cause any undue traffic. The salon will bring new jobs to Valdosta and this company already has eight other locations. It is a well-established business and he would like to bring it here to Valdosta.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

**A MOTION** was made by Councilman Howard to approve an Ordinance for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Personal Service Shop (Waxing Salon) in a Residential-Professional (R-P) Zoning District as requested by Ricky Weeks with the following two conditions: (1) Approval shall be granted for a Personal Service Shop in the form of a waxing salon or esthetician services only. (2) Conditional Use approval shall expire after two years from the date of approval if no Business License for the approved use has been requested by that date. Councilman Gibbs seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2020-10, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

#### **AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE 1.80 ACRES FROM SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-15) ZONING TO SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-6) ZONING DENIED**

Consideration of an Ordinance to rezone 1.80 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-15) Zoning to Single-Family Residential (R-6) Zoning as requested by Stoker Development, LLC (File No. VA-2020-06). The property is located at 310 Eager Road. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their July 27, 2020 Regular Meeting and recommended denial (9-1 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning & Zoning Administrator, stated that Stoker Development, LLC is requesting to rezone 1.80 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-15) to Single-Family Residential (R-6). The property is located at 310 Eager Road which is along the north side of the street, about half-way between Jadan Place and Walmar Place. This is directly across the street from the Langdale Place retirement community. The property contains an existing single-family residence (1,453 square feet) and the applicant is proposing to redevelop this property into a mixed-residential development that contains 15 dwelling units. The applicant is also seeking Planned Development Approval for this proposed development, and that request is being reviewed concurrently under File No. VA-2020-07. The property is located within an Established Residential (ER) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan, which allows the possibility of R-6 Zoning. The property is a classic example of a proposal for infill development. Under R-15 Zoning, the property has enough land area (78,500 square feet) for up to five single-family lots; however, it does not have enough road frontage along Eager Road for more than one lot (each lot must be at least 100' wide and contain at least 15,000 square feet of land area). The only solution for subdividing this property conventionally under R-15 Zoning is to construct a new street (50' right-of-way) along the eastern property line with a cul-de-sac approximately three-fourths of the distance into the lot, and then subdivide lots off of the new street. The main problem is that the new street right-of-way would consume nearly one-third of the total land area and, therefore, the new subdivision would yield a total of only three lots under R-15 Zoning. A very similar kind of scenario would apply under R-10 Zoning. The property is still not wide enough along Eager Road to have more than one lot (each lot must be at least 80' wide and contain at least 10,000 square feet), and it must use the same kind of street design to subdivide and develop the property with more than one lot. Because of the smaller lot widths allowed in R-10 Zoning, this scenario would instead allow a subdivision with four lots along the new internal street. Ironically, in this scenario, each lot would average approximately 13,000 square feet due to irregular lot shapes and net buildable areas caused by the cul-de-sac. Under the proposed R-6 Zoning, this scenario dramatically increases to perhaps eight lots, depending on actual lot design, but probably more comfortably at seven lots maximum. It should, however, also be noted that R-6 Zoning allows the additional possibility of duplexes if the lots are at least 9,000 square feet in area. All of these scenarios are intended to illustrate a main point, which is that conventional development which includes a new standard internal street is cost-prohibitive and is wasteful of land, when considering the net result of only a few lots and unimaginative design. Given the property's characteristics, it is truly a prime candidate for some type of Planned Development approach. The main purpose of this rezoning request is simply to set the guidance for overall development density of the property. The existing land use pattern along Eager Road is dominated by Single-Family Residential Subdivisions of various shapes and sizes. There is no question that the residential land use pattern should continue. In terms of the Zoning pattern, most all of the properties along the north side of Eager Road are zoned R-15; however, it should be pointed out that this is a little deceiving in that the abutting small Subdivisions along Jadan Place and Walmar Place are non-conforming in that one-third of their lots do not meet the R-15 minimum standard. By today's standards, they would be zoned R-10. Other nearby developments with a little higher density include those along the south side of Eager Road where there is a mixture of R-15, R-10, and PRD-10 Zoning, as well as the Langdale Place development which has R-P Zoning; however, the most recent and the most significant development in all of this is the 2013 rezoning of the property about 300' to the west at 316 Eager Road. This property is the exact same dimension and size (1.80 acres) and was successfully rezoned to R-10, and also received a Planned Development approval for eight dwelling units. Given the actual R-10 nature of the abutting properties to the east and west, using this prior rezoning approval as a benchmark, it seems like a logical solution and still leave open the possibility of up to nine dwelling units with a quality Planned Development proposal. Staff found the request for R-10 Zoning consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommended approval of R-10 Zoning instead. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their July 27, 2020 Regular Meeting, found it inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP), and recommended denial (9-1 vote).

Zachary Cowart, Attorney, 612 Howellbrook Drive, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Cowart stated that his understanding of the main objection to the R-6 Zoning is the density. It is important to look south of this property because you have Quail Rise Subdivision which is just to the left of Langdale Place and the average lot size in that neighborhood is .15 acres. That is very similar to what they are proposing here. If you go directly south of Langdale Place, you have Georgetown which is a Planned Development and the lot size there is .11 acres which would allow you to have 16 or 17 lots on 1.8 acres that is the subject property today. The plan that is outlined is for five townhouses and five duplexes. The intended purchasers of the townhouses and duplexes is for medical or nursing staff who are coming to work at South Georgia Medical Center. The Developer is hoping to entice younger

people to purchase homes in the City. Mr. Cowart stated that he does a lot of real estate closings and everybody that moves to Valdosta wants to live in the country. It would be nice to have some new development in the City. It is important to note that the 2013 rezoning requested R-6 Zoning, but they did not receive it and nothing has been developed on that property. From a financial perspective, without the R-6 Zoning you cannot afford to put a road in there and do all of the infrastructure that is necessary to be able to build these nice townhouses and make money. It is his understanding that the City ran water and sewer to this area when it was annexed as an island years ago. It is an odd shaped piece of property and you have to be creative with the design to be able to put something in there. There was \$1.3 million spent in running water and sewer to this location and adding 15 residences in this area would generate revenue for the City and increase the tax base. The proposed sale price is \$200,000 per unit and the taxes would go from approximately \$1,200 per year on that piece of property to \$42,000. Also, the water and sewer fees would go from \$1,100 to \$13,000 which is a tremendous increase for City especially since we have the worst economic quarter in the history of this country. Also, it is important to point out that the Developer in this case is local, Mr. Phelps and Mr. Stoker, and they will be hiring local crews, purchasing from local businesses, and generating a lot of money in our local economy. Mr. Coward stated that, in his opinion, this is a great opportunity for the City to have a high-quality development in the City that will increase the property value and that has a density similar to the two newest Subdivisions developed in the area.

Matt Phelps, 4560 Val North Drive, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Phelps stated that he is the Civil Engineer for the applicant. He recently had a project with the exact same density and similar size property in the County that was approved. This should not be a problem to have a similar density in the City. They are not in the heart of a neighborhood and are facing direct access off of Eager Road which is classified as a minor arterial road. Eager Road is in the process of being widened and it is an up and coming major traffic thorough fare for the City. Within the surrounding area of this property, you have the Winn Dixie shopping center, Five Points, Big Lots, and all of the restaurants along Ashley Street. There are professional offices between Patterson Street and Oak Street, there is Valdosta Middle School, McKey Park, the new tennis complex, and the Valdosta State University baseball and softball complexes. This is an urban area and they are trying to bring urban style housing which Valdosta desperately needs and is demanding particularly in this part of town. They do not want Eager Road to become Baytree Road where it is apartments as far as the eye can see. They want to have something with a slightly higher density and a townhome style which is exactly what we need in this part of town. Councilman Howard inquired as to the number of regular homes that could be put on this site. Mr. Phelps stated that with R-6 Zoning they could possibly have seven or eight regular homes. Councilman Howard inquired as to whether they would be the same size as the other homes in that area. Mr. Phelps stated that they would probably be a little smaller. The square footage on the townhouses is approximately 1,300 square feet and the houses would be similar in size to those in Georgetown and Quail Rise.

Anthony Rowe, 317 Crestview Drive, spoke in opposition to the request. Mr. Rowe stated that the neighborhood he lives in has R-15 Zoning and a lot of families have lived there most of their lives. They do not need townhomes overlooking the houses that have already been established in their neighborhood. The section of the road that they are widening is already this width. The Developer had talked about putting a gate up front but that has not been approved by the Georgia Department of Transportation because 24 feet is not enough room for two vehicles to pull off of a main road into a neighborhood. Mr. Rowe asked Council's consideration in saving their neighborhood. This is their forever home and they would like to keep it R-15 Zoning.

Bud Ganaway, 2804 Walmar Place, spoke in opposition to the request. Mr. Ganaway stated that he has lived there since 1971. When he purchased the house, it was going to be a temporary second house for him; however, the neighborhood was so nice that they decided to stay. They remodeled the house and spent a lot of money on it. They were very happy until the City took them over. They are not happy now because they are trying to put a bunch of people in the area right next to them. They are trying to put a round peg in a square hole which will not work and that is what they are trying to do here.

Greg Demascio, 2807 Jadan Place, spoke in opposition to the request. Mr. Demascio stated that they would like to see some houses put in there that are comparable to the rest of the houses. The density is a big thing. They are trying to put too many houses in a small area. The houses are a lot smaller than what is there. The neighborhood does not like that, and they want it to be all consistent. That is why they moved there. He has been there at least 30 years and they moved into that neighborhood so that they could have a little space between neighbors, a back yard, and a place for their children to grow up.

Rick Squires, 2802 Walmar Place, spoke in opposition to the request. Mr. Squires stated that he is totally opposed to this. His family has lived there for 32 years. They do not need to put an island in the middle of an established neighborhood. They do have some rental property on their street, but it is minute. Council will be making a big mistake by allowing them to do what they are trying to do.

Mark Heffelfinger, 305 Betty Jo Drive, spoke in opposition to the request. Mr. Heffelfinger stated that he is opposed to the R-6 Zoning. The townhomes are going to be two-story and the garage will be at the bottom and living quarters on top. He lives right behind where they are wanting to put the townhomes and these two-story townhouses will be looking right down into his sunroom. His neighbors have a pool and the townhomes will have four or five families looking down on the pool. At the last Meeting, they mentioned having the elderly move in but there are no elevators, so he knows that is not the case. He rented duplexes when he was younger, and he remembers all the noise that he made. These townhomes are going to be rentals and he and his wife are definitely opposed to this plan. He and his wife have spent a lot of money on their home and have lived there for 15 years. They do not want these townhomes looking down on their home. He is opposed to the R-6 Zoning; however, he would not be opposed to the R-15 Zoning and putting a few houses in there in keeping with the neighborhood.

**A MOTION** was made by Councilman Carroll to follow the recommendation of Staff and the Planning Commission and deny the request to rezone 1.80 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-15) Zoning to Single-Family Residential (R-6) Zoning as requested by Stoker Development, LLC. Councilman Howard seconded the motion. Matt Martin, Planning & Zoning Administrator, asked for a clarification on the motion. The City Attorney has pointed out that the Staff recommendation and the Planning Commission recommendation for the rezoning are different and it would be hard to follow both. The Planning Commission's recommendation was for denial and the Staff's recommendation was to rezone to R-10 Zoning. Councilman Carroll stated that he would like to amend his motion to follow the recommendation of the Planning Commission and deny the request. Councilman Howard was in agreement. The motion was unanimously adopted (6-0) to deny the request to rezone 1.80 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-15) Zoning to Single-Family Residential (R-6) Zoning as requested by Stoker Development, LLC.

### **AN ORDINANCE FOR A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL FOR A MIXED-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN A SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-6) ZONING DISTRICT RULED INELIGIBLE**

Consideration of an Ordinance for a Planned Development Approval for a Mixed-Residential Development in a Single-Family Residential (R-6) Zoning District as requested by Stoker Development, LLC (File No. VA-2020-07). The property consists of 1.80 acres and is located at 310 Eager Road. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their July 27, 2020 Regular Meeting and recommended denial (10-0 Vote).

Mayor Matheson stated that with the denial of the previous rezoning request, there will be no discussion on the Planned Development Approval for a Mixed-Residential Development in a Single-Family Residential (R-6) Zoning District. It should be noted that the previous Agenda Item was the prerequisite rezoning for the Planned Development and since the rezoning request was denied, the Planned Development request was ruled ineligible and no action will be taken.

### **LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS**

Consideration of a request to approve a temporary Utility Grant Program for the City of Valdosta from the 2020 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-CV) funding and authorize Staff to complete the necessary compliance activities to access this funding from U. S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.

Vanassa Flucas, Neighborhood Development & Community Protection Manager, stated that in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in the United States, President Donald Trump signed into law the 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in March, 2020. In this Act, additional funding has been set aside to give directly to Governmental Departments, such as the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), to aid in the response and prevention of the spread of the coronavirus. States, cities, and entitlement communities have been given additional funding in the form of a Grant to assist with eligible activities to address

the local Pandemic response. As a HUD Entitlement Community, the City of Valdosta has been allocated \$387,715 in such funding to aid our community's fight against COVID-19 in April, 2020. Social distancing, mask wearing, constant hand washing, and personal and environmental hygiene have been noted as actions individuals can do to assist in the prevention and spread of this deadly virus. Many residents in our community have suffered job and financial losses due to governmental shut-downs in response to COVID-19. In order to assist these residents to maintain the utilities necessary to continue to shelter-in-place as necessary, promote constant hand washing, and personal/environmental hygiene, the City is requesting to utilize the awarded CDBG-CV funding to present a temporary Utility Grant Program. This public service activity will be made available to those residents who have fallen behind in their utility payments due to the national Pandemic. This assistance will only be available for those who reside in the City of Valdosta and can only be used for utility bills with the City of Valdosta, Georgia Power, or Colquitt Electric. Payment credits from the Grant Program will only be made to those who apply for the Grant Program, are income eligible, or those who can prove an income loss due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and were current with their utility bills up until March 1, 2020. Staff is seeking permission to complete the necessary HUD compliance activities to access this funding, to complete the required virtual Public Hearing for the community and to open the five-day public comment period for the proposed Program. Vanassa Flucas, Neighborhood Development & Community Protection Manager, recommended that Council approve the proposed temporary Utility Grant Program for the 2020 CDBG-CV funding for the City of Valdosta and give Staff permission to complete the necessary compliance activities to access this funding from HUD.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the proposed temporary Utility Grant Program for the 2020 CDBG-CV funding for the City of Valdosta and give Staff permission to complete the necessary compliance activities to access this funding from HUD.

Consideration of a request from the Central Valdosta Development Authority (CVDA) to transfer the Savannah Avenue parking lot to the City of Valdosta.

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that the City of Valdosta owns a parking lot that runs parallel to Savannah Avenue and IDP Parking Solutions, LLC owns a parking lot directly across the street from the old Bank of America building located between South Patterson Street and South Ashley Street. IDP Parking Solutions, LLC is in the process of redeveloping the block of the old Bank of America building located on South Patterson Street. Considerable work has been completed thus far regarding the Project. As we discussed at the May 21, 2020 Executive Session, IDP is requesting that there be a swap in the parking lots, as the lot owned by the City is needed to fully complete the redevelopment of the block. The Central Valdosta Development Authority (CVDA) has requested to facilitate this swap by having both parties transfer the respective properties to the CVDA. The CVDA will then sell the City's donated parking lot to IDP for the appraised value of \$96,000 plus the cost of appraisal (\$1,500). The CVDA will transfer the parking lot donated by IDP with an appraised value of \$58,000 to the City of Valdosta. The net difference in the appraised values of \$38,000, and the cost of the appraisal of \$1,500 will be maintained to fund the City's Main Street's Façade Loan Program. The CVDA approved a Resolution to this effect on June 16, 2020. Mark Barber, City Manager, recommended that Council approve the request from the Central Valdosta Development Authority (CVDA) to transfer the Savannah Avenue parking lot to the City of Valdosta. Tim Tanner, City Attorney, stated that the only reason there is a difference in price is that the corner lot is bigger than our lot and they are valued on a per square foot basis at the same rate. That is why we are having to go through this, but it satisfies a public interest and the CVDA has a public interest in redevelopment of Downtown. That is what will be accomplished on one hand and on the other hand, we will have \$39,800 to seed the Façade Loan Program and maintain Downtown parking. Councilman Norton inquired as to the approximate number of parking places on the Savannah Avenue lot. Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that the Savannah Avenue lot will hold 52 parking spaces. The lot owned by IDP Parking Solutions will hold 28 spaces.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Gibbs, seconded by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve request from the Central Valdosta Development Authority (CVDA) to transfer the Savannah Avenue parking lot to the City of Valdosta.

## CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Bessie Ferguson, 925 Ponderosa Drive, stated that she wanted to know if there was a law on the books that could not be enforced. The reason she was asking about that is because there is a young man who moved into a

rental home and he opened up a mechanic shop in an area where the law says it is wrong to have a business. She has spoken to all of the agencies except for the Sheriff's Department. Everyone has come out and given him notification; however, this young man has defied everyone in the City. She would like to know if there is anything that she can do. This has been going on for eight months and if the law is against it then someone should be able to stop it. Her husband is sick and she is sick and she wanted to know what she could do.

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

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that the City of Valdosta received the Georgia Smart Cities Grant Award along with Savannah, Sandy Springs, and Clayton County for innovation and technology. Pat Collins, City Engineer, spoke with Council about traffic cameras at the intersections and pre-emptive devices for public safety and we are the only municipality out of the metro Atlanta area that has that type of thing. We will be receiving \$100,000 in Grant Funds. There was a virtual Award Ceremony held this morning. Mark Barber also thanked Valdosta State University who has been a tremendous community partner with the City.

The City will be installing the new AMI water meters and they have done a few test runs in some neighborhoods. They will be hosting several meetings and placing door hangers on houses in the neighborhoods. The first area they are focusing on is Billing Routes 13, 14, and 15 which includes Terrace Boulevard, Mack Drive, Howellbrook Drive, and Berkeley Drive.

The new City Beat is out, and Council will be receiving the City Manager's Report in the very near future. Also, several of the City Departments have started their own newsletters which is great.

The Makers Market will be held on Saturday, August 8, 2020 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the old Courthouse square. Mayor Matheson inquired as to when the Food Truck event would start back. Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that it will not start back until next year.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilman Vickers stated that he read about a Police Officer who was knocked down and hurt a couple of days ago and he wanted Police Chief Leslie Manahan to let the Officer know that Council appreciates her, and they are sorry that it happened.

Councilman Howard stated that we are still doing the U. S. Census and we need to ask our local businesses to help push it. The deadline to complete it has been shortened so it will now end in September and not October. Mayor Matheson stated that the Georgia Municipal Association is also giving us some new tools to help promote the Census.

Councilman Vickers stated that he saw the video that Mayor Matheson did in conjunction with South Georgia Medical Center in promoting face masks and it was very good and effective. Mayor Matheson stated that the "Mask Up Valdosta" campaign was a big team effort and it got shared quite a bit.

Councilman Gibbs stated that on August 21, 2020, the Transformation Unity Movement will be held at the old Lowndes County Courthouse from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. It is a great event for everyone to come together and know that we are one Valdosta. Also, on August 29, 2020, the Miracle League has joined with Wild Adventures and the United Way and will bring back a "Ping Pong Race." All of the money that is raised will go to the Miracle League of Valdosta. Those who purchase ping pong balls will have a chance to win a car, a television set, a \$200 Amazon gift card, and lots of other items. They ordered 1,000 ping pong balls and they have already sold 360 as of this morning.

Councilman Miller-Cody stated that State Representative Dexter Sharper's mother passed away and it would be nice if the Mayor and Council and Department Heads could send their condolences and kind words to him and his family. The visitation will be held at Mt. Carmel Church in Lake Park on Friday. Councilwoman Miller-Cody asked for prayers for the family.

Mayor Matheson entertained a motion to adjourn the August 6, 2020 Council Meeting and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation.

**A MOTION** by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the August 6, 2020 Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:33 p.m. and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation.

Mayor Matheson reconvened the August 6, 2020 Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:43 p.m. and stated that no action was taken in Executive Session.

Mayor Matheson entertained a motion for adjournment.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the August 6, 2020 Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:44 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, August 20, 2020.

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City Clerk, City of Valdosta

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Mayor, City of Valdosta