

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL**  
**5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2018**  
**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: Tim Carroll, Ben Norton, Sandra Tooley, Eric Howard, Andy Gibbs, and Vivian Miller-Cody. Councilman Joseph "Sonny" Vickers arrived late at 5:44 p.m. The invocation was given by Pastor Don Gibbs, Liberty Baptist Church in Lyons, Georgia, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Oaths of Office for the 2018-2019 Valdosta Youth Council.

Mayor John Gayle stated that the Valdosta Youth Council was created in September of 2015 by a Resolution approved by the Mayor and City Council to inspire local 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to build leadership skills, learn about civic responsibility, gain a better understanding of municipal government, and to prepare these youth for a lifetime of public and community service. The inaugural VYC program year consisted of 14 youth who were successful in accomplishing several goals, which resulted in dozens of community service hours, an anti-bullying awareness campaign, and the adoption of a .6 portion North Lee Street, among others. Now, in its fourth year, the VYC has 17 students in grades 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>, representing Valdosta Middle School, Valdosta High School, J. L. Newbern Middle School, St. John Catholic School, Lowndes High School, and Classical Conversations (Home School) who were selected by the Youth Advisory Board to participate in the 2018-2019 class. The first meeting of the VYC was held on September 20, 2018 from 4:00 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers and featured the induction of 2018-2019 VYC officers by the Honorable Chief Judge, State Court, John Kent Edwards. The scheduled VYC Monthly Meetings will run through May, 2019, and the VYC members must also each complete a minimum of eight hours of community service during that time period. This group of exceptional youth will operate much like the Valdosta City Council (guided by the Advisory Board) and will have an opportunity to grow as leaders and continue their positive impact among their peers and within our community. The Advisory Board members appointed by Mayor Gayle (who serves as the head of the board) to serve for 2018-2019 are as follows: Valdosta City Councilwoman Vivian Miller-Cody, James White, Assistant Principal at J. L. Newbern Middle School, Laurie Wallace, Guidance Counselor at St. John Catholic School, and City Staff members Teresa Bolden, Ashlyn Becton, and Marcus McConico. The City of Valdosta applauds these extraordinary youth and wishes the Valdosta Youth Council another successful year. Mayor Gayle asked that the following VYC members to come forward as he called their name for administering the Oath of Office: Juan Angel - 9<sup>th</sup> grade (Valdosta High School), Brayden Anderson - 7<sup>th</sup> grade (Valdosta Middle School), Dean Barnett - 7<sup>th</sup> grade (Valdosta Middle School), Najah Blankumsee - 8<sup>th</sup> grade (J. L. Newbern Middle School), George Butters - 7<sup>th</sup> grade (Classical Conversations), Joseph Butters - 8<sup>th</sup> grade (Classical Conversations), Aniya Davenport - 9<sup>th</sup> grade (Valdosta High School), Emily Dinkins - 8<sup>th</sup> grade (St. John Catholic School), Will Gerber - 9<sup>th</sup> grade (Valdosta High School), Janay Hill - 8<sup>th</sup> grade (Valdosta Middle School), Daniel Holcombe - 9<sup>th</sup> grade (Valdosta High School), Nevin Miller - 9<sup>th</sup> grade (Lowndes High School), Catriona Moore - 8<sup>th</sup> grade (St. John Catholic School), Toni Salami - 9<sup>th</sup> grade (Valdosta High School), Natalie Savoie - 8<sup>th</sup> grade (St. John Catholic School), Anthony Thomas - 8<sup>th</sup> grade (J. L. Newbern Middle School), and Erick Thomas, Jr. - 8<sup>th</sup> grade (Valdosta Middle School).

Mayor Gayle stated that he would like to ask J. D. Dillard, Southern Georgia Regional Commission, to give the Council an update on some transportation issues.

J. D. Dillard, Southern Georgia Regional Commission, stated that he would like to give an update on the Georgia House Commission on Transit and Governance Funding that has been occurring for the past two years at the State level. They had their last meeting in August at Amicalola Falls State Park and heard reports from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), the Department of Human Services, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and the Community Health (Medicaid) on transit issues at the State level. Some of the biggest issues are transit systems operating in multiple counties with rural and small urban designations and different conflicting rules. This is the rural public transit and the 5307 urban public transit which is unique to Valdosta and Lowndes County giving both designations. As rural areas become more urbanized, trending urban will take place

with the 2020 Census and can impact the funding availability. These are issues that are being taken very seriously, especially with regard to 5307 urban public transit as it is limited funding. The study is definitely looking at a new governance model. The State has recognized that three independent agencies operating under a different set of rules make it almost impossible to coordinate. The word "regional" has been tossed around numerous times and they are still taking that word into consideration as far as what it actually means. Does it mean regional governance, regional funding, or a regional structure at the State or local level? This also allows for an innovative funding approach. Innovative funding is their way of saying that they are not exactly sure of what is going on right now. Regarding funding, coordination among Regional Commissions, MPOs, cities, and counties is essential; however, the one thing they can agree on is that coordination between neighboring rural and urban operators is fundamental if anything is to be done. They want to maximize the existing Federal funds and they have also discussed TSPLOST which goes into effect in our region on October 1, 2018. They are also looking at special tax districts as well as tax incentives for large employers to promote transit. They will be meeting in October in Dublin, Georgia to hear recommendations regarding the steps for the legislative process to consider in January, 2019.

Councilman Vickers inquired about the special tax districts for transportation and how that would be set up. J. D. Dillard stated that there would have to be some legislation involved to enable taxable districts if the city and county governments do not enable it as well. Most of this is taking place around metro Atlanta and the model that they are proposing are for areas around the Airport which would allow them to tax, in addition to the local taxes, for special purposes only to be used in the Airport area. Mayor Gayle inquired about the match for Federal funds. J. D. Dillard stated that for capital assets it is 80% and the local match would be 10%. Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that one of the important areas that the Governor's Transit Authority is looking at is the tax credit for private owners that contribute to the system because they will need those employers to provide constant ridership in order to operate the transit. Getting the buses is not a problem but keeping it operational is important for our area. J. D. Dillard stated that any public/private partnerships are key in moving forward with any public transit operation. Gainesville and Hall County have a tremendous public/private partnership with the large manufacturers who are contributing on a contractual basis a certain amount of dollars to operate the system and have a designated vehicle stop at their facilities.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the September 6, 2018 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (7-0) of the Council.

## **BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES**

Consideration of bids for replacement of the roof at the Traffic Management Center.

Pat Collins, City Engineer, stated that the Traffic Management Center (TMC) on East Adair Street is the location of the controls for the traffic signals and the traffic control cameras. The building is a one-story wood frame building with metal roofing. Over time, the roof has leaked and subsequent repairs have been made. Recently, the leaks have become so severe that repairing them is not effective anymore. In the Budget process, \$40,000 was budgeted within the current Fiscal Year for repairs. The Budget overage will be resolved by the purchasing less traffic controllers and cabinets for inventory. Roofing contractors have declined to repair the roof leaks for concern of liability which has caused conditions to worsen. In March of 2018, Staff had several roofing contractors visit the TMC and provide quotes to install a reinforced thermoplastic single ply surface with a fleece underside, identical to the roof recently installed on the Police Department headquarters. This system is manufactured by Duro-Last®. In August of 2018, the City received a letter from Duro-Last® which certified that J. H. Strickland Roofing & Construction is the only certified contractor in Lowndes County. J. H. Strickland visited the TMC during the week of August 27, 2018 and found that the roof was in the expected structural condition with the exception of the east one-third. That portion of the roof section requires the removal of existing metal, the attachment of 2 x 6 joists to support the roof deck, and the installation of ½ inch oriented strand board decking. On August 31, 2018, a quote was submitted by J. H. Strickland Roofing & Construction in the amount of \$47,720.60. A 10% contingency will also be needed for this Project to handle any unforeseen circumstances. The total amount of the Project will be \$52,492.66. Pat Collins recommended that Council approve the low bid

submitted by J. H. Strickland Roofing & Construction in the amount of \$47,720.60 plus a 10% contingency to handle any unforeseen circumstances.

A **MOTION** by Councilwoman Tooley, seconded by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the low bid submitted by J. H. Strickland Roofing & Construction in the amount of \$47,720.60 plus a 10% contingency to handle any unforeseen circumstances for a total of \$52,492.66 to replace the roof at the Traffic Management Center.

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

There were no citizens to be heard.

**CITY MANAGER’S REPORT**

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that at the last Council Meeting there was a petition from the Westside Community about a convenience store that had shut down and the residents in the neighborhood were afraid the new owners were going to open it back up as a liquor store; however, right now the new owner would like to open up another convenience store.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilman Vickers stated that a couple of months ago there were some citizens from Griffin Avenue who had concerns and he has not seen anything on the outcome of those concerns. Mayor Gayle stated that Vanassa Flucas, Neighborhood Development and Community Protection Manager, was handling that and she met with the citizens several weeks ago and gave them an update on what was being done. Councilman Vickers stated that he would like to receive something in writing. He also congratulated Mayor Gayle and Chairman Bill Slaughter for meeting with the Hospital Authority on their issues. Mayor Gayle stated that he would be giving the Mayor and Council an update tomorrow on the Hospital Authority.

Councilwoman Miller-Cody stated that the Winnersville football game will be tomorrow and asked that everyone be safe.

**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 September 20, 2018 Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:01 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, October 11, 2018.

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City Clerk, City of Valdosta

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Mayor, City of Valdosta