

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021
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, Sandra Tooley, Ben Norton Tim Carroll, Andy Gibbs, and Vivian Miller-Cody. Councilman Eric Howard was absent. The invocation was given by Councilman Ben Norton, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

Presentation of the 2020 Greater Valdosta Christmas Parade Awards.

Mayor Matheson stated that the presentation of the 2020 Greater Valdosta Christmas Parade Awards has been postponed until a later date.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the December 10, 2020 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (6-0) of the Council.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Mayor Matheson stated that if there was no objection from Council, Agenda Items 4(a) through 4(m) would be considered under a Consent Agenda. There was no objection from Council. Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, will present these items.

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, presented the following Agenda Items: (1) Item 4(a) Consideration of bids to purchase 11 Dodge Charger pursuit vehicles for the Police Department (Bid No. 11-20-21) - the low bid was submitted by Cass Burch Dodge in the amount of \$25,907 each for a total of \$284,977, (2) Item 4(b) - Consideration of bids for six unmarked Detective vehicles for the Police Department (Bid No. 13-20-21) – the low bid was submitted by Cass Burch Dodge in the amount of \$25,997 each for a total of \$155,982, (3) Item 4(c) - Consideration of bids for two Chevrolet Malibu vehicles for the Public Works Department (Bid No. 20-20-21) – the low bid was submitted by Cass Burch Chevrolet in the amount of \$21,462 each for a total of \$42,934, (4) Item 4(d) - Consideration of bids for four, one-half ton Crew Cab Trucks for the Engineering Department and the Utilities Department (Bid No. 21-20-21) - the low bid meeting specifications was submitted by Cass Burch Dodge in the amount of \$29,387 each for a total of \$117,548, (5) Item 4(e) - Consideration of bids for two, one-half ton Regular Cab Trucks for the Utilities Department and the Engineering Department (Bid No. 22-20-21) - the low bid meeting specification was submitted by Cass Burch Dodge in the amount of \$25,487 each for a total of \$50,974, (6) Item 4(f) - Consideration of bids for two, one-half ton Crew Cab Trucks with Tonneau Bed Covers that lock for the Fire Department and the Public Works Department (Bid No. 23-20-21) - the low bid meeting specification was submitted by Cass Burch Dodge in the amount of \$29,987 each for a total of \$60,174, (7) Item 4(g) - Consideration of bids for one, three-quarter ton Crew Cab Truck with 4-Wheel Drive for the Utilities Department (Bid No. 24-20-21) - the low bid was submitted by Cass Burch Dodge in the amount of \$32,287, (8) Item 4(h) - Consideration of bids for a one ton Truck with a Standard Utility Body for the Utilities Department (Bid #25-20-21) - the low bid was submitted by Nextran in the amount of \$41,952.20, (9) Item 4(i) - Consideration of bids for a one ton Crew Cab Truck with a Regular Body for the Public Works Department (Bid No. 26-20-21) - the low bid was submitted by Nextran in the amount of \$29,087.20, (10) Item 4(j) - Consideration of bids for one Ford F-450 Truck with an Altec AT200A Lifting Device Bucket for the Engineering Department (Bid No. 27-20-21) - the low bid was submitted by Nextran in the amount of \$75,264.20, (11) Item 4(k) - Consideration of bids for one Ford F-550 Truck with a Utility Body for the Utilities Department (Bid No. 28-20-21) - the low bid meeting specification was submitted by Nextran in the amount of \$80,752.20, (12) Item 4(l) - Consideration of bids for one Ford F-550 Truck with a Utility Body for the Public Works Department (Bid No. 29-20-21) - the low bid meeting specification was submitted by Wade Ford in the amount of \$85,707, and (13) Item 4(m) - Consideration of bids for one Ford F-550

Cab and Chassis with a Dump Body for the Engineering Department (Bid No. 30-20-21) - the low bid meeting specification was submitted by Nextran in the amount of \$54,255.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to follow the recommendations as presented and approve the low bids under a Consent Agenda for Agenda Items 4(a) through 4(m).

Consideration of bids for 4, 6, and 8 yard Dumpsters for the Public Works Department (Bid No. 19-20-21).

Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, stated that this bid is for 4, 6, and 8 yard dumpster's that are placed at commercial customer sites throughout the City by the Public Works Department. It is a two-year contract with renewal options. Sealed bids were received on December 1, 2020 with the low bid submitted by Lewis Steel as follows: (1) 4 Yard - \$495, (2) 6 Yard - \$605, and (3) 8 Yard - \$705. The total for all three was \$1,805. The numbers represent what it would cost to purchase one of each size dumpster totaled together. This price is \$50.00 less than the contract three years ago. Greg Brown, Purchasing Agent, recommended that Council approve the low bid submitted by Lewis Steel in the amount of \$1,805.00 for all three sizes of dumpsters.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by Lewis Steel in the amount of \$1,805.00 for all three sizes of dumpsters and allow the Public Works Department to proceed with the purchase.

Consideration of bids for the upgrade of a water main and the resurfacing of the roadway on McArthur Drive.

Darryl Muse, Utilities Director, stated that the City has approximately 44,000 feet of two-inch galvanized water main within its system that needs upgrading. The Utilities Department initiated a Water Main Replacement Program to identify and replace the worst of these mains over the next five to seven years. Staff designated 11 high priority locations based on their history of recurring leaks and repairs. Crawford Lane, one of the 11, was completed last year. The next area is McArthur Drive. This aging undersized main has a long history of leaks and repairs, which have increased in frequency in recent years. Each repair results in an excavation of the roadway and service interruptions to area residents. Staff determined that the best course of action is to replace the 1,850 feet of brittle two-inch water main with a new six-inch PVC main. Staff will also install isolation valves, 13 new water services, and 1 fire hydrant. The newly upsized and looped water system will enhance fire protection capabilities and significantly improve water quality for residents in the area. Additionally, as part of this Project, the entire stretch of asphalt roadway on McArthur Drive will be resurfaced. On October 26, 2020, the Utilities Department advertised for bids for the Project to upgrade the water system and resurface the roadway on McArthur Drive. A pre-bid conference was held on November 17, 2020, with four potential bidders attending. Bids were received from three bidders and opened on November 25, 2020. The lowest responsive and eligible bidder was RPI Underground, Inc. in the amount of \$184,112.50. A 20% contingency is requested for this Project due to the possibility of conflicts and uncertainties in the Project area. Darryl Muse, Utilities Director, recommended that Council approve the low bid submitted by RPI Underground, Inc. in the amount of \$184,112.50 with a 20% contingency (\$36,822.50) for a total amount of \$220,935 for the upgrade of a water main and the resurfacing of the roadway on McArthur Drive.

A MOTION by Councilman Norton, seconded by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the low bid submitted by RPI Underground, Inc. in the amount of \$184,112.50 plus a 20% contingency (\$36,822.50) to handle any unforeseen circumstances for a total amount of \$220,935 for the upgrade of a water main and the resurfacing of the roadway on McArthur Drive.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-1, AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH QUALIFYING FEES AND DATES AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS FOR THE 2021 CITY OF VALDOSTA MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Consideration of an Ordinance to establish qualifying fees and dates and enter into a contract with the Lowndes County Board of Elections for the 2021 City of Valdosta Municipal Election.

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that according to Georgia Code 21-2-131(a)(1)(A), the governing authority of any county or municipality shall fix and publish a qualifying fee for each county or municipal office to be filled in the upcoming primary or election no later than February 1st of any year in which a general primary, non-partisan election, or general election is to be held, and at least 35 days prior to the special primary or election. An advertisement will run in the Valdosta Daily Times. The Districts to be considered for election as well as the qualifying fees are as follows: (1) District 2 (Sandra Tooley) - \$474, (2) District 4 (Eric Howard) - \$474, and (3) District 6 (Andy Gibbs) - \$474. Additionally, a contract requesting the services of the Lowndes County Board of Elections will be sent to the City upon approval of the qualifying fees by the Mayor and Council. These services include qualifying of candidates, training poll workers, placing required ads, and other duties as may be required to conduct the November 2, 2021 Municipal Election. The Budget amount to be requested in the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget is \$28,000. If a Run-Off Election is necessary, it will be conducted November 30, 2021. Mark Barber, City Manager, recommended that Council approve an Ordinance for the qualifying fees and date for the 2021 Municipal Election and authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with the Lowndes County Board of Elections to conduct the 2021 City of Valdosta Municipal Election.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2021-1, an Ordinance to establish qualifying fees and dates and enter into a contract with the Lowndes County Board of Elections for the 2021 City of Valdosta Municipal Election, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of a request to approve a Recommendation Committee Structure for the appointment of a new Municipal Court Judge for the City of Valdosta.

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that the last time that Mayor and Council appointed a Municipal Judge was in September of 2006. It was at this time that the sitting Mayor and Council appointed Judge Vernita Lee Bender to the position. Due to the untimely death of Judge Bender, Mayor and Council must appoint a successor Municipal Court Judge. Although the definitive selection of the Municipal Judge is that of Mayor and Council, in 2006, Council created a Recommendation Committee to review remitted resumes for the Municipal Judge position. After the review of the submitted responses, the Committee voted to bring forth the most qualified candidates for Mayor and Council consideration. The 2006 Recommendation Committee included the Mayor, the City Manager, two Council members (selected by Council), the City Attorney, and the Human Resources Director. The Human Resources Director served in a solely advisory Ex-Officio capacity with no voting rights. The above described progression led to an appointment in approximately 90 days. The Recommendation Committee Structure leading to the appointment of the Municipal Court Judge provides transparency, equity, and efficiency. Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that one thing that was not discussed at the Work Session but has since been discussed with the City Attorney is the placement of the City Attorney on this Committee. There is a high probability that there will be some people from his firm who will apply for the Municipal Court Judge position and we feel that it would not be in our best interest to have the City Attorney sitting on the Committee. We would like to keep it a legal person such as a current Judge or Attorney and we have a lot of choices of people who have been in both positions in our community. Councilwoman Miller-Cody inquired as to who the City Manager would recommend. Mark Barber stated that he would recommend Jim Tunison because he and Judge Bender worked very well together; however, the decision would be up to the Council. Councilman Norton inquired as to whether they should wait to see if someone from Coleman Talley applies or if they should they proceed with the selection now. Mark Barber stated that they should go ahead and make that decision now because it is a very high probability there will be responses from Coleman Talley. Tim Tanner, City Attorney, stated that he would still serve as the legal Counsel; however, he would not make any votes. Mark Barber stated that the first thing Council would need to do tonight is to approve the Committee Structure if that is the method in which Council would like to proceed with the appointment of a new Municipal Judge. There would also need to be two other motions made tonight with one being the selection of two City Council Members to serve on the Recommendation Committee and the other being the selection of the legal professional.

Councilman Vickers stated that the Committee would be bringing back a recommendation and then it is up to the Council to make a decision. Mark Barber stated that was correct and if the Mayor and Council so choose to utilize a similar process as in 2006, the following timetable is suggested: (1) Committee structure approved - January 7, 2021, (2) Disbursement of letter and job description to Bar Association - January 8, 2021, (3) Last day for resumes to be remitted - February 5, 2021, (4) Committee begins review process - February 8, 2021, (5) Committee completes review process - February 18, 2021, (6) Committee presents recommendations to the Council in Executive Session - February 25, 2021, (7) Fourteen-day public disclosure period begins - February 26, 2021, and (8) Mayor and Council appointment - March 11, 2021. This is about a 62-day process and in 2006 it was slightly over 90 days. This is an aggressive timeframe, but we can manage it. If we veer off schedule, we can always have a Special Called Meeting to catch up. Councilwoman Tooley inquired as to how many voting members are on the Committee. Mayor Matheson stated that there are five voting members on the Committee. Councilman Vickers inquired as to how they determined the salary scale. Mark Barber stated that the Municipal Court Judge position is included in our payroll matrix; however, since it is an appointed position, the salary can be negotiated. Councilman Vickers stated that we usually put out a pay grade for other positions that are advertised. Mark Barber stated that we would show more of a salary range than a pay grade to give the applicants an idea of what it might be.

A MOTION by Councilman Gibbs, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve a Recommendation Committee Structure for the appointment of a new Municipal Court Judge.

Mayor Matheson entertained a motion to change from the current City Attorney to the recommendation of former Judge Jim Tunison to serve on the Recommendation Committee.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve Attorney Jim Tunison to serve on the Recommendation Committee in place of City Attorney Tim Tanner.

Mayor Matheson asked for nominations for two Council Members to serve on the Recommendation Committee. Councilwoman Tooley placed her name into consideration to serve on the Recommendation Committee. Councilman Vickers placed the name of Councilman Gibbs into consideration to serve on the Committee. There being no other nominations, Mayor Matheson closed nominations. Councilwoman Tooley and Councilman Gibbs were unanimously appointed (6-0) to serve on the Recommendation Committee for a new Municipal Court Judge.

Consideration of a request to purchase a new screening system for the Mud Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Darryl Muse, Utilities Director, stated that the Mud Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant utilizes a Vanguard Belt Screen system in its pre-treatment process. Designed and manufactured by Nuove Energie USA, Inc., this mechanical bar screen, installed at the influent to the Treatment Plant, removes large objects, such as rags, plastics, and other debris from wastewater. The current system has a designed screening capture ration of approximately 33%, which results in unscreened debris passing through its system. This debris clogs up pumps and basins further along in the Treatment Plant increasing maintenance costs and undermining the treatment process. Plant Operators spend a lot of time clearing debris from the aeration basins, clarifiers, and pumps. Given the low removal ratio of debris and the related maintenance issues, Staff researched alternative solutions for the Treatment Plant's screening system. After exploring several options, they determined that the best opportunity to increase screening efficiency would be to upgrade the current Vanguard 6mm bar screening system to a more useful 3mm Vanguard bar screening system. The upgraded system will increase the screening capture ratio from 33% to 53%, significantly reducing the pass-through larger debris. The result will be much less debris clogging up the aeration basins, clarifiers, and pumps. Staff is confident that this upgrade will lower maintenance and operational, and overall Treatment Plant efficiency will increase. Nuove Energie USA, Inc. is the sole authorized distributor of Nuove Energie factory replacement parts for the entire State of Georgia. The cost of purchasing the new higher efficiency bar screen system will be \$64,400 including shipping. Darryl Muse, Utilities Director, recommended that Council approve a new screening system from Nuove Energie USA, Inc. in the amount of \$64,400 for the Mud Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant and allow the Utilities Department to proceed with the purchase.

A **MOTION** by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve a new screening system from Nuove Energie USA, Inc. in the amount of \$64,400 for the Mud Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant and allow the Utilities Department to proceed with the purchase.

Consideration of a request to purchase 30 sets of structural firefighting gear for the Fire Department.

Fire Chief Brian Boutwell stated that the goal of the Valdosta Fire Department for many years has been to provide members of the Operations Division with two sets of structural firefighting gear. Structural firefighting gear is the heavy, protective clothing worn by Firefighters while working on incident scenes. This gear provides members with protection against moisture, flames, and heat. Each set is custom fit to each Firefighter and must adhere to National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1971. The Standard requires that structural firefighting gear be removed from service when it exceeds ten years of life. After typical use, the gear is thoroughly cleaned to remove smoke, debris, and other carcinogens. The gear is then dried with special machines at the Fire Station before being placed back in service. If another call for service is received before the gear is properly cleaned, Firefighters are forced to wear the soiled, wet gear to answer the emergency call. Having clean gear is not only important for the health of our personnel, but also to the customers we serve. This is the reason for purchasing gear as a progressive step in providing two sets for each member in the Operations Division. This purchase will not fulfill the goal, but it is the next step in reaching our goal. The Fire Department currently has \$60,000 in their current year Budget to purchase structural firefighting gear. The Fire Department tested certain brands last year that meet the current NFPA standards in the field under real working conditions. Globe was selected as the gear that met our Firefighters' needs while providing a top tier ten-year warranty. The Fire Department would like to request the purchase of 30 sets (pants are \$850.82 each and coats are \$1,096.39 each) of gear from Ten-8 Fire & Safety Equipment of GA in the amount of \$58,416.30 utilizing the NPP.GOV National Contract that is utilized by government agencies across the nation. The Purchasing Ordinance allows this type of purchase and the pricing offered in the contract is both competitive and fair in the opinion of the Fire Department. Chief Boutwell recommended that Council approve the purchase of 30 sets of gear from Ten-8 Fire & Safety Equipment of GA in the amount of \$58,416.30 utilizing the NPP.GOV National Contract.

A **MOTION** by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the purchase of 30 sets (pants - \$850.82 each and coats - \$1,096.39 each) of gear from Ten-8 Fire & Safety Equipment of GA in the amount of \$58,416.30 utilizing the NPP.GOV National Contract.

Consideration of request to purchase a Hemp Analyzer for the Valdosta-Lowndes County Regional Crime Laboratory.

Police Chief Leslie Manahan stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Regional Crime Laboratory provides analysis of dangerous drugs and narcotics to over 20 agencies. To satisfy the new Georgia Law requiring testing to differentiate Cannabis and Hemp, the laboratory must analyze suspected narcotics through quantitation of the purity, concentration, and/or potency. Currently, only the GBI laboratory is performing this analysis for all Georgia Law Enforcement Agencies and they have a nine-month backlog which is delaying the prosecution of narcotics cases. Current instrumentation at the Valdosta-Lowndes County Regional Crime laboratory is not well suited for this analysis. In order to accurately derive the THC levels of suspected narcotics, the equipment must reach high boiling points for the cannabinoid separation. The Hemp Analyzer uses a high-performance liquid chromatograph (HPLC), which is specifically designed for analysis and resolution of 11 cannabinoid compounds. Due to the specifics of the equipment, Shimadzu is the sole manufacturer of the Hemp Analyzer and services. The cost to purchase the Hemp Analyzer is \$63,322; however, the laboratory has received a discount so the total price for the equipment, set up, and training, along with a one-year warranty is \$49,761.60. This equipment is in the current approved Fiscal Year Budget (Item CP-21.66) as a Capital expense in the amount of \$49,800. Chief Manahan recommended that Council approve the purchase of a Hemp Analyzer from Shimadzu in the amount of \$49,761.60 for the Valdosta-Lowndes County Regional Crime Lab.

A **MOTION** by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the purchase of a Hemp Analyzer from Shimadzu in the amount of \$49,761.60 for the Valdosta-Lowndes County Regional Crime Lab.

Consideration of a request for emergency repairs to a Corrugated Metal Pipe (CMP) located at 2220 East Hill Avenue near Blanchard Street.

Pat Collins, City Engineer, stated that after a normal rain event on October 12, 2020, the Engineering Department received a call from South Georgia Pecan Company in regard to a clogged storm pipe on Blanchard Street. The Stormwater Division found that a 24-inch corrugated metal pipe (CMP) located at 2220 East Hill Avenue on the Blanchard Street side had collapsed and rusted out from the bottom. CMP is no longer used nor recommended by the City. The existing rusted pipe had retained water due to the rigid shape and was beyond repair. A second rain event during inspection caused stormwater to enter South Georgia Pecan's new facility and loading dock, rendering it as an emergency repair. Due to the emergency situation and the proximity of Radney Plumbing, Inc. to the location of the pipe, a quote for the repairs was requested via E-mail. A quote in the amount of \$87,178 was received from RPI Underground, Inc. on October 28, 2020. Pat Collins, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve the quote submitted by RPI Underground, Inc. in the amount of \$87,178 for emergency repairs to the CMP located at 2220 East Hill Avenue near Blanchard Street.

A MOTION by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the quote submitted by RPI Underground, Inc. in the amount of \$87,178 for emergency repairs to the CMP located at 2220 East Hill Avenue near Blanchard Street.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There were no citizens to be heard.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that he wanted to thank the Mayor and Council for their support in locking down the City of Valdosta's buildings to the public. We had been watching the COVID-19 numbers rise and when we received the numbers from the Department of Public Health, we felt that it was necessary to do that. We did this at the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic and we were fairly successful in keeping our numbers down. Our employee base is really suffering right now from COVID-19 and there are a lot of Departments that have been significantly impacted at this time.

There will be no Bird Supper in Atlanta this year due to COVID-19; however, we have decided to prepare some small gift baskets filled with items from our area which will be distributed to various offices in Atlanta. Mayor Matheson and Chairman Slaughter will be assisting with the distribution.

On November 7, 2020, we had a clean-up week in District 3 and it was a highly successful event. We collected 35 tires, 70 bags of litter, and 7.4 tons of debris during that week. This was a team effort with Public Works, the City Marshals, and many volunteers. We also added street sweeping to the event and we will continue to do this in other Districts.

During a recent rain event over the weekend, the Withlacoochee Wastewater Treatment performed exactly as it was supposed to and there were no spills. The Equalization Basin was filled almost to the top and it did its job. The only issue we had was a manhole in the 400 block of Mildred Street that was submerged in water and some stormwater with a small amount of sewage in it seeped out. The Utilities Staff felt that was more of a blockage issue; however, they have since discovered that there was an elevation problem there. They have begun work to alleviate the problem. There will still be some more major expenditures for I&I; however, now that we have the SCADA System in place, the Utilities Staff can monitor the situation and analyze reports which has been a tremendous help to us.

The Valdosta Main Street was awarded a \$10,000 Grant for marketing purposes and Georgia Power generously matched the Grant with \$10,000. The Main Street will be able to use these funds for an upgraded and sophisticated marketing campaign. We were one of five cities to receive the Grant.

The Strategic Initiatives Summit will be held on March 18-19, 2021 at The Woman's Building. Council will need to start thinking of things that they would like to place on the Agenda for discussion. Gordan Manor, Facilitator with Carl Vinson Institute of Government, will not be with us this year. He is trying to retire for the third time in his career so we will have another person who has come highly recommended.

Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that since our City buildings are currently locked, citizens can submit their items to the City Clerk via E-mail for the Citizens to be Heard portion on our Agenda. We will then read their comments aloud during the next Council Meeting.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Vickers stated that he is very concerned about the increase in COVID-19 numbers and he inquired as to whether the City and County could get with the Health Department to see if there is anything we can do to help get people vaccinated. Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that we have had these discussions with the Health Department; however, the problem is that we have no control over the distribution of the vaccine. Our First Responders are in the first tier and we should see more openings in the near future. Councilman Vickers stated that he did not see how two or three pharmacies will be able to handle the vaccinations. We need a massive effort. Mark Barber stated that the Health Department is also giving vaccinations. Mayor Matheson stated that he will have a conversation as well to see what kind of pace we can achieve. The vaccine only lasts 15 days so if it shows up, we need to be ready to vaccinate some people. There is also no letting up with people wearing masks, washing their hands, social distancing, and sanitizing surfaces.

Councilwoman Tooley stated that they have a plan at South Georgia Medical Center, and they are also working on a Public Service Announcement (PSA). They are also getting out and talking to more people and getting more nurses who are semi-retired to come back and help them give shots at difference places. They are also trying to find some satellite places. There are just not enough Staff to give the vaccinations. She has talked to the Department of Public Health about doing a PSA and she will be speaking as a Nurse and as a Council Member to encourage people to get vaccinated. They have a process for implementation and it is working somewhat. Mark Barber stated that people were not prepared with refrigeration units to store the vaccines. The units they had did not have the temperature that it must stay at for 15 days. Councilwoman Tooley stated that she also likes the acrylic partitions that have been placed at their desk in the Council Chambers. A question has also come up about holding Council Meetings virtually and she inquired as to what was being done. Mayor Matheson stated that we are currently having virtual Council Meetings. Councilwoman Tooley encouraged citizens to send in their comments for Citizens to be Heard.

Councilwoman Miller-Cody stated we have some young Valdosta State University students who have asked several times to participate with the Adopt-A-Street event and they would like to do West Street. They have asked over and over and no one has responded back to them. Mark Barber, City Manager, stated that he has planned to meet with Councilwoman Miller-Cody after the first of the year because he did not know their names or how to get in touch with them; however, the timing is perfect because Richard Hardy, Public Works Director, and Teresa Turner, Sustainability Coordinator, are working on a new event. Councilwoman Miller-Cody stated that we also need to be examples to our citizens in getting vaccinated because they need to see the importance of it. Mark Barber stated that we could do a photo op of the Council Members who are in the first tier getting the shot.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Matheson entertained a motion for adjournment.

A MOTION by Councilman Vickers, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the January 7, 2021 Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:26 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, January 21, 2021.