

**MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL  
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2025  
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: Thomas McIntyre, Eric Howard, Sandra Tooley, Andy Gibbs, Tim Carroll, and Nick Harden. Councilwoman Vivian Miller-Cody was absent. The invocation was given by Councilman Nick Harden, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the March 20, 2025 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (6-0).

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Mayor Matheson asked for a Point of Personal Privilege and introduced Tristen Steward, the new Ms. Valdosta High School.

Mayor Matheson also recognized Jason Barnes, Utilities Director, for 30 years of service to the City of Valdosta.

Presentation by Staff on recommendations for revisions to Land Development Regulations, Chapter 328 - Landscape, Buffers, and Screening of the Land Development Regulations for the City of Valdosta.

Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, stated that he presented information to the Mayor and Council at the Work Session on Tuesday, April 8, 2025, and action will be taken at the Council Meeting on April 24, 2025.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-6, AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE 0.84 ACRES FROM NEIGHBORHOOD-COMMERCIAL (C-N) TO MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-M) ZONING**

Consideration of an Ordinance to rezone 0.84 acres from Neighborhood-Commercial (C-N) to Multi-Family Residential (R-M) Zoning as requested by Justin Nijem (File No. VA-2025-04). The property is located at 1604 Lankford Drive. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 31, 2025 Regular Meeting and recommended approval (7-0 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning Director, stated that Justin Nijem is requesting to rezone 0.84 acres from Neighborhood-Commercial (C-N) to Multi-Family Residential (R-M). The property is a triangular-shaped parcel located at 1604 Lankford Drive which is along the north side of the road about 400 feet east of North St. Augustine Road. This is also between the Westside Baptist Church and the Circle K convenience store. The property is currently vacant and the applicant is proposing to develop it with a 15-unit two-story apartment building in accordance with a submitted site plan. Each dwelling unit will consist of one (1) bedroom and one (1) bath, and total about 850 square feet of heated floor area. Because C-N Zoning does not allow multi-family development, the applicant is seeking the downzoning to R-M. 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 R-M Zoning. The property is one of the last remaining vacant properties along the Lankford Drive corridor which is dominated by mainly institutional and high-density residential uses with limited commercial uses at either end. The existing zoning pattern along this corridor is dominated by R-10 and R-M. Most of the R-10 portion is misleading in that it is mostly developed with institutional uses such as the adjacent Westside Baptist Church and the Parker Mathis Learning Center (alternative school) just beyond. There are seemingly increasing levels of traffic along this corridor, and this will probably increase dramatically if/when Lankford's planned connection to Norman Drive is completed. The subject property is definitely not conducive for R-10 Single-Family Residential development due to its irregular shape, and its location along this four-lane arterial roadway. Although the uses allowed in the

existing C-N Zoning or even in an R-P or O-P alternative would be deemed acceptable here, there is some merit in choosing Multi-Family development for this property --- given the large apartment complex across the street and the adjacent non-residential uses. This would make a choice of either R-P or R-M Zoning interchangeable here; however, given the current lack of actual R-P Zoning along this corridor, R-M would seem the better choice for now. Staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommend approval. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 31, 2025 Regular Meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP), and recommended approval (7-0 Vote).

Jimmy Cone, Architect, 1804 Plum Street, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Cone stated that he had some photos of a similar project that they developed several years ago on Baytree Road and Springhill Drive. This project will be very similar to that one. These will be one bedroom, one bath apartments. Their projects have all looked very nice. They did go by and spoke with the Pastor at the Church nearby and he did not have any objections to the apartments.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

**A MOTION** by Councilman McIntyre, seconded by Councilman Harden, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2025-6, an Ordinance to rezone 0.84 acres from Neighborhood-Commercial (C-N) to Multi-Family Residential (R-M) Zoning for property located at 1604 Lankford Drive as requested by Justin Nijem, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XV.

#### **ORDINANCE NO. 2025-7, AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE 0.51 ACRES FROM SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-10) TO HIGHWAY-COMMERCIAL (C-H) ZONING**

Consideration of an Ordinance to rezone 0.51 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Highway-Commercial (C-H) Zoning as requested by Samuel Straka (File No. VA-2025-05). The property is located at 107 Jordan Street. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 31, 2025 Regular Meeting and recommended approval (7-0 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning Director, stated that Samuel Straka is requesting to rezone 0.51 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Highway-Commercial (C-H). The property is located at 107 Jordan Street which is along the east side of the road between Maude Street and West Hill Avenue. It is the northern portion of an existing parcel (0.94 acres total) that is currently split-zoned R-10 and C-H. The property currently contains a vacant Single-Family residence as well as a small accessory building. There are currently no immediate plans for redevelopment and no conceptual site plan has been provided; however, the applicant is simply requesting to have all the property zoned C-H so that it can be better marketed for future commercial development. 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-H Zoning. The property is one of the last remnants of what was likely a rural residential area more than 60 years ago before the construction of I-75 and the widening of West Hill Avenue (U.S. 84). This former neighborhood has long since transitioned to an area dominated by commercial development on nearby arterial roadways. The surrounding Zoning pattern is a mixture of C-H and R-10 with commercial development encroaching inward along the local streets. Although there are no immediate plans for redevelopment and the request is therefore speculative in nature, it should be recognized that the subject property is currently split-zoned with C-H Zoning already along its frontage with West Hill Avenue. With continued residential use of the property being no longer considered viable for the long term, making all of this property zoned C-H will increase its marketability and help facilitate its future redevelopment as a commercial use under the City's current development standards. 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 March 31, 2025 Regular Meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP), and recommended approval (7-0 Vote).

Sam Straka, Registered Agent for the owner, spoke in favor of the request.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A **MOTION** by Councilman McIntyre, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2025-7, an Ordinance to rezone 0.51 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) to Highway-Commercial (C-H) Zoning for property located at 107 Jordan Street as requested by Samuel Straka, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XV.

**ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTIONS****RESOLUTION NO. 2025-2, A RESOLUTION TO UPDATE THE GEORGIA FUND 1 ACCOUNT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Consideration of a Resolution to update the Georgia Fund 1 Account Contact Information.

Chuck Dinkins, Finance Director, stated that the City of Valdosta utilizes Georgia Fund 1 (the Local Government Investment Pool) to invest surplus cash in order to earn a return until the funds are needed. The City's existing Account needs to be updated to add additional authorized users as well as a "view only contact." O.C.G.A. Section 36-83-3 sets out the criteria to participate in the Local Government Investment Pool. The attached Resolution authorizes the Mayor to electronically sign the authorization for the State Local Government Investment Pool to update the contact information on the Account in accordance with O.C.G.A. Section 36-83-3. Chuck Dinkins, Finance Director, recommended that Council approve the Resolution to update the contract information on the Georgia Fund 1 Account.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Harden, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution No. 2025-2, a Resolution to update the Georgia Fund 1 Account Contact Information, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book VII.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2025-3, A RESOLUTION TO OPEN A NEW ACCOUNT WITH THE GEORGIA FUND 1**

Consideration of a Resolution to open a new Account with the Georgia Fund 1.

Chuck Dinkins, Finance Director, stated that the City utilizes Georgia Fund 1 (the Local Government Investment Pool) to invest surplus cash and earn a return until the funds are needed. The City recently issued Revenue Bonds for its Water-Sewer Infrastructure Improvement Plan. The Plan will take significant time to complete and fiscal prudence dictates that the idle funds be invested safely to earn some return until they are expended. The City currently utilizes Georgia Fund 1 to invest Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) proceeds until needed. Because the funds in question need to remain sequestered, the City is requesting authorization to open a second Account in the Local Government Investment Pool. This will allow the idle Bond proceeds to be safely invested while remaining segregated from other funds invested in the Fund. Chuck Dinkins, Finance Director, recommended that Council approve the Resolution to open a new Account with the Georgia Fund 1.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Gibbs, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution No. 2025-3, a Resolution to open a new Account with the Georgia Fund 1, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book VII.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2025-4, A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS (BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW GRANT) FROM THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION TO PROCEED WITH CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW GENERAL AVIATION TERMINAL AT THE VALDOSTA REGIONAL AIRPORT**

Consideration of a request from the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority to approve a Resolution authorizing acceptance of Grant Funds (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grant) from the Federal Aviation Administration to proceed with construction of a new General Aviation Terminal at the Valdosta Regional Airport.

Richard Hardy, City Manager, stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority desires to proceed with the construction of a new General Aviation Terminal at the Valdosta Regional Airport. There are various sources of funding for this Project which includes the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST),

the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (FAA), the Airport Improvement Program (FAA), the Airport Authority, and Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) funds. The FAA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grant is up to \$4,000,000. There will be no City of Valdosta funds required for this Project. The FAA is preparing a Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grant for up to \$4,000,000 to partially fund the construction of the General Aviation Terminal. The Grant will be sent via E-mail to City Hall. A Resolution has been prepared authorizing Mayor Scott James Matheson to accept the Grant in order to process the document. Richard Hardy, City Manager, recommended that Council approve the Resolution authorizing the Mayor to accept the FAA Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grant for up to \$4,000,000 to partially fund the construction of the General Aviation Terminal at the Valdosta Regional Airport.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution No. 2025-4, a Resolution authorizing acceptance of Grant Funds (Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Grant) from the Federal Aviation Administration to proceed with construction of a new General Aviation Terminal at the Valdosta Regional Airport, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book VII.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2025-5, A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDS (AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT GRANT) FROM THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION TO PROCEED WITH CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW GENERAL AVIAATION TERMINAL AT THE VALDOSTA REGIONAL AIRPORT**

Consideration of a request from the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority to approve a Resolution authorizing acceptance of Grant Funds (Airport Improvement Project Grant) from the Federal Aviation Administration to proceed with construction of a new General Aviation Terminal at the Valdosta Regional Airport.

Richard Hardy, City Manager, stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority desires to proceed with the construction of a new General Aviation Terminal at the Valdosta Regional Airport. There are various sources of funding for this project that include Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (FAA), Airport Improvement Program (FAA), Airport Authority and GDOT funds. This FAA Airport Improvement Project Grant is for up to \$4,200,000. There will be no City of Valdosta funds required for this Project. The FAA is preparing an Airport Improvement Project Grant for up to \$4,200,000 to partially fund the construction of the General Aviation Terminal. The Grant will be sent via E-mail to City Hall. A Resolution has been prepared authorizing Mayor Scott James Matheson to accept the Grant in order to process the document. Richard Hardy, City Manager, recommended that Council approve the Resolution authorizing the Mayor to accept the FAA Airport Improvement Project Grant for up to \$4,200,000 to partially fund the construction of the General Aviation Terminal at the Valdosta Regional Airport.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Howard, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution No. 2025-5, a Resolution authorizing acceptance of Grant Funds (Airport Improvement Project Grant) from the Federal Aviation Administration to proceed with construction of a new General Aviation Terminal at the Valdosta Regional Airport, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book VII.

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

Mayor Matheson stated that if there was no objection from Council, Agenda Items 6(a) through 6(f) would be considered under a Consent Agenda. There were no objections from Council.

John Burton, Motor Pool Superintendent, stated that all of the items up for bid were approved by Council in the current year Budget and asked Council's consideration in following his recommendation if all of the following bids were accepted at one time: (1) Item 6(a) Consideration of bids for a one-ton Regular Cab Service Truck with a Lift Gate for the Engineering Department (Bid No. 10-25) - the low bid was submitted by Langdale Ford in the amount of \$69,062, (2) Item 6(b) - Consideration of bids for a one-ton Regular Cab Service Truck with a Lift Gate and Crane for the Utilities Department (Bid No. 9-25) - the low bid was submitted by Langdale Ford in the amount of \$111,276, (3) Item 6(c) - Consideration of bids for a Skid Steer Loader with a Bucket and Grapple for the Public Works Department (Bid No. 2-25) - the low bid was submitted by Bobcat of Valdosta in the amount of \$77,372.58, (4) Item 6(d) Consideration of bids for a two-ton Crew Cab Service Truck with a Lift Gate for the Engineering Department (Bid No. 11-25) - the low bid meeting specifications was submitted by Langdale Ford in the amount of

\$75,611, (5) Item 6(e) - Consideration of bids for a Skid Steer Loader with a Combination Bucket for the Engineering Department (Bid No. 12-25) - the low bid was submitted by Bobcat of Valdosta in the amount of \$71,366.84, and (6) Item 6(f) - Consideration of bids for a Dump Truck for the Utilities Department (Bid No. 3-25) - the low bid was submitted by Peterbilt of Atlanta in the amount of \$133,444.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman Gibbs to follow the recommendation of the Motor Pool Superintendent and approve the low bids under a Consent Agenda for Agenda Items 6(a) through 6(f). Councilman Howard seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously adopted (6-0).

Consideration of a request to approve a Professional Design Services Proposal for Utility Rehabilitation and Improvements for the Lakeland Highway Lift Station and the Sanitary Sewer Main Outfall.

Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, stated that the Lakeland Highway Lift Station serves a large basin covering the northwestern area of the City. Given the continuing development in this part of the City along with the aging and deteriorating conditions of this Lift Station and downstream force main and gravity main, rehabilitation and upgrade improvements are needed to serve the citizens and the development of the City. Maintaining our infrastructure assets in efficient functional condition is a key function of the City and of our Utility Department. The City Engineering Staff has completed a conceptual layout for rehabilitating these sewer trunk lines. The next step is design and a Professional Engineering Consultant is required for this work. On an annual basis, the City Engineering Department has developed a list of qualified Professional Services Firms through solicitation of Statements of Qualification for the design of water distribution, sanitary sewer, wastewater collection and treatment, stormwater, sidewalk construction, street revisions, transportation studies, land surveying, and other miscellaneous tasks. The firms in the library can provide Professional Services to the City when the need arises and the firm is available and qualified. LEA is in our 2024/2025 library and is qualified to perform this scope of Design Services. The scope of work includes an evaluation of the Lakeland Highway Lift Station and the contributing basin. The capacity of this Lift Station will be upgraded to handle anticipated flows from new developments that are proposed and under construction. Also, Lift Station components will be raised to meet flood prevention minimum standards. The scope will also include ±6,640 Linear Feet (LF) of new High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) force main and ±6,900 LF of 24", 12", 10", and 8" gravity sewer. Detailed costs are summarized as follows: Lakeland Highway Lift Station Rehab and Outfall Improvements Design (BOND 1) - Survey - \$162,000, Engineering - \$215,000, Environmental - \$108,000, Bidding Support - \$10,000, and the Grand Total - \$485,010. The LEA Design Services Proposal is attached and totals \$485,010. Upon Council approval, the Design Consultant will be engaged, and upon completion of their work, the Construction Project will be advertised for competitive bidding. Those bids will be presented to the Council for consideration to complete this Sewer Utility Project. Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve the Design Services Proposal submitted by LEA in the amount of \$485,010.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Gibbs, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the Design Services Proposal submitted by LEA in the amount of \$485,010 for Utility Rehabilitation and Improvements for the Lakeland Highway Lift Station and the Sanitary Sewer Main Outfall.

Consideration of a request to approve a Professional Design Services Proposal for Evaluation of the Knights Creek Sanitary Sewer Trunk Line.

Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, stated that the Knights Creek Sanitary Sewer Trunk Line serves a very large basin covering the western area of the City that flows to the Mud Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant. Given the continuing development in this part of the City and the age of this large-diameter Sanitary Sewer Gravity Main, evaluation of the condition of this portion of the Sanitary Sewer Gravity Main is needed to develop an appropriate rehabilitation and upgrade program. Maintaining our infrastructure assets in an efficient functional condition is a key function of the City and our Utilities Department. To develop an appropriate rehabilitation and upgrade program for these sewer trunklines, a Professional Engineering Consultant is required for this work. On an annual basis, the City Engineering Department has developed a list of qualified Professional Services Firms through solicitation of Statements of Qualification for designs of water distribution, sanitary sewer, wastewater collection and treatment, stormwater, sidewalk construction, street revisions, transportation studies, land surveying, and other miscellaneous tasks. The Firms in the library can provide professional services to the City when the need arises, and the Firm is available and qualified. LEA is in our 2024/2025 library and is qualified to perform this scope of

design services. The scope of work includes evaluating a portion of the Knights Creek Trunk Line from manhole M196 to the Mud Creek Treatment Plant. The evaluation will include Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) inspection with Sonar of 14,200 Linear Feet (LF) of 21" Ductile Iron Pipe (DIP) and 50 level two manhole inspections. LEA and subcontractor(s) will provide the following deliverables for this Project as follows: (1) Pipeline Assessment Certification Program (PACP) database with CCTV inspection videos (PACP Coded), (2) Manhole Assessment Certification Program (MACP) database with photographs, (3) PACP pipe rating index & PACP/MACP coding information, (4) Inspection reports in PDF format and organized by line segment. The LEA Design Services Proposal totals \$167,000. Upon Council approval, the Design Consultant will be engaged, and once their work is completed, an appropriate Rehabilitation and Improvement Program will be developed. Proposal(s) for Design Services for that work will be solicited and the Proposal(s) will be presented to Council for consideration for this Sewer Utility Project. Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve the Design Services Proposal submitted by LEA in the amount of \$167,000.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Howard, seconded by Councilman McIntyre, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the Design Services Proposal submitted by LEA in the amount of \$167,000 for Evaluation of the Knights Creek Sanitary Sewer Trunk Line.

Consideration of a request to approve a Relocation Agreement for payment to Georgia Power for the Jerry Jones Drive and Eager Road Street Widening Project.

Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, stated that Georgia Power Company placed power poles along Eager Road around 1929 and on Jerry Jones Road before 1970. While some facilities are covered by specific easements, many poles were placed under a Franchise Agreement with the City of Valdosta which creates a compensable property interest for the utility. The estimated cost for relocating the distribution facilities associated with the Jerry Jones Drive/Eager Road Widening Project from Baytree Road to Oak Street (PI # 0014134, CR 784) will be \$2,660,431. According to the Franchise Agreement and any amendments between Georgia Power Company and the City of Valdosta, the City is responsible for 47.85% payment amount. The estimated cost is \$1,272,897 for the relocation of distribution facilities not located within the City's streets, alleys, and/or public places. The final cost depends upon the actual relocation cost but will not exceed \$1,272,897. The work will be anticipated to be completed within 120 days, and therefore, payment within Fiscal Year 2026. Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve the Georgia Power Relocation Agreement and associated payment.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Gibbs, seconded by Councilman Howard, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve a Relocation Agreement for payment to Georgia Power for the Jerry Jones Drive and Eager Road Street Widening Project.

## LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of a request to approve a Broker to provide Supplemental Benefit Services for City of Valdosta Employees Ancillary/Voluntary Benefit Plans.

Jennie Boyer, Human Resources Director, stated that the Request for Proposal (RFP) process was conducted to secure a Broker for the City of Valdosta's Supplemental Benefits. The awarded contract will be for one year with two optional one-year renewals. The chosen Broker will work with City Staff to determine the best carrier for each benefit offered. The City received sealed RFPs from six vendors. One vendor was disqualified due to non-compliance with RFP requirements. The remaining five vendor Proposals were independently reviewed by a Committee which was comprised of the Human Resources Director Jennie Boyer, Finance Director Chuck Dinkins, Assistant City Manager Catherine Ammons, Councilman Tim Carroll, and Councilman Eric Howard. Upon completion of the independent evaluations, the Committee scores were tabulated and OneDigital received the highest Committee rating. After reviewing the RFPs and scoring results, the Committee selected OneDigital as the preferred Broker to provide supplemental benefits to City employees. Jennie Boyer, Human Resources Director, recommended that Council approve the recommendation for OneDigital as the preferred Broker to provide Supplemental Benefit Services to City of Valdosta employees.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Harden, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve OneDigital as the preferred Broker to provide Supplemental Benefits Services to City of Valdosta employees.

Consideration of a request to approve the Valdosta On Demand Safety Plan.

Larry Ogden, Public Works Director, stated that the City of Valdosta's Safety Program is governed by the City's General Self Inspection Program and the City of Valdosta Safety Committee Manual which was revised on October 19, 2018. The Valdosta On-Demand Safety Plan assigns responsibilities, provides guidance, establishes policies and procedures, and outlines safety procedures required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) when expending 5307 Grant Funds. This Plan is applicable to all transit employees directly engaged in operations of FTA Federally-funded vehicles and equipment. The City was approved for a 5307 Transit Grant and needs to ensure this Plan is re-adopted to continue to provide transit services. The FTA administers 5307 Grants. GDOT receives these and passes them through to the cities and counties in the State that provide transit services to urbanized areas. The FTA has specific safety-related requirements that the City needs to adhere to for expending 5307 Federal dollars. The proposed Plan will allow the City to adhere to GDOT's and FTA's safety requirements while retaining current practices for non-Federal dollars. Larry Ogden, Public Works Director, recommended that Council approve the Valdosta On-Demand Safety Plan

A **MOTION** by Councilman Howard, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the Valdosta On Demand Safety Plan.

Consideration of a request to purchase a new Micro Bar Screen for the Mud Creek Water Pollution Control Plant.

Jason Barnes, Utilities Director, stated that the Influent wet well has been in service since 1977 with upgrades and replacements made in 1986 and 2011. The influent Micro Bar Screen is a filter that removes big solid objects from the wastewater. It removes rags, plastics, papers, metals, etc., from any flowing water. As the name implies, it usually consists of vertical steel bars one to two millimeters apart. What follows are other screens and treatments to remove other pollutants. By removing the large solids, we can prevent damage and unnecessary wear and tear. This reduces maintenance needs and potential issues for the whole system. The removal of large solids also minimizes interferences in the entire treatment process and prevents clogging, and contamination of the waterways. At this time, there is no Micro Bar Screen in use at the Mud Creek Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP). There are only two Bar Screens with a three to six millimeter spacing which do not adequately remove material from the waste stream for the current treatment and future treatment process as set forth by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) in the cities National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. A sole source quote was submitted by Cornerstone H2O in the amount of \$279,900 for a new Micro Bar Screen at the Mud Creek WPCP. With the addition of this Micro Bar Screen, the City will remove a higher quantity of material that does and would interfere with the downstream treatment processes. Removal rates would increase by 50% over the current screening systems in place at this time. Jason Barnes, Utilities Director, recommended that Council approves the sole source quote submitted by Cornerstone H2O in the amount of \$279,900 for the purchase of the Micro Bar Screen for the Mud Creek Water Pollution Control Plant.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Gibbs, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the sole source quote submitted by Cornerstone H2O in the amount of \$279,900 for the purchase of the Micro Bar Screen for the Mud Creek Water Pollution Control Plant.

Consideration of a request to approve the acquisition of a Payment and Performance Bond for the AMI Contract.

Chuck Dinkins, Finance Director, stated that the City awarded Delta Municipal Supply the Contract to supply and install new endpoints for its existing AMI system. The Project will replace approximately 70% of the existing endpoints. Because of the size of the Project, a Payment and Performance (P&P) Bond under Georgia law will be necessary. The City needs to insure the AMI Endpoint Installation Project. Due to the nature of the Project, Delta Municipal Supply was able to obtain pricing on a Payment and Performance (P&P) Bond of 1.5% as opposed

to the typical 3%. This will result in a cost of \$67,436. Delta would obtain the Bond, and the cost would be rolled into the existing Project. The Bond would provide the City protection for both the performance and the contractor's (Delta) payment to their supplier (Neptune). Chuck Dinkins, Finance Director, recommended that Council approve the acquisition of the Payment and Performance (P&P) Bond.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Howard, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the acquisition of a Payment and Performance Bond for the AMI Contract.

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Bobby McKenzie, 5148 Northwind Boulevard, stated that SeeClickFix reports have fallen on deaf ears. There are 180 SeeClickFixes just from the Fire Station to East Park Avenue down to the Lee Street/North Ashley Street pond that have fallen on deaf ears. There are dumpsters sitting on top of storm drains. A Work Order was put in SeeClickFix and was closed out four times by Public Works and three times by City Marshals as fixed and no action was taken. It took a year before the dumpsters got screened and they need to move them so they do not pollute when it floods over there. The Stormwater Division pays a Contractor \$200,000 for 33 miles of cleaning out canals and ditches; however, they do not pick up trash. The Southside Stormwater pond was full of trash and Angela Bray, Stormwater Manager, said she would get the Contractor to clean it; however, in the March Edition of City Beat, it states that the Cub Scouts went out to pick up. Instead of holding the Contractor accountable, they sent kids out there to pick what adults are getting paid \$200,000 to pick it up. Also, the parking lot near Hobby Lobby has been reported for four years. The Stormwater Management took a paid crew for a Love Your Rivers Event to go out there and clean up private property. There has been multiple SeeClickFix Reports that have been pushed back by City Staff. He has several that were elevated to the EPD. There are several where the Mayor and Councilman Carroll came out.

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Richard Hardy, City Manager, stated that the third Annual Bluesberry Festival will be held on April 11-12, 2025 at Unity Park featuring live music, food vendors, and fun. The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Mayor's/Chairman's Paddle will be held on April 19, 2025 beginning at the Troupville Boat Ramp. City offices will be closed on April 18, 2025 in observance of Good Friday. We will celebrate Georgia Cities Week on April 21-26, 2025 with various events scheduled throughout the week. There will be a Love Where you Live Cleanup from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on April 26, 2025. Volunteers will meet at 1610 Northside Drive in the Dollar General Parking Lot. The area that will be cleaned up will be Northside Drive to Pineview Drive.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Council McIntyre stated that he was pleased with the new audio/visual equipment that was installed in the Council Chambers. He was glad that we finally got something. He also had a meeting regarding AI and it is powerful.

Mayor Matheson thanked Mayor Pro Tem Gibbs for filling in for him on Tuesday at the Work Session. He watched it on-line and he was very impressed.

Councilman Harden thanked everyone who attended the Dancing with the Stars event. They raised over \$60,000 for the Valdosta State University Arts Department.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Matheson entertained a motion for adjournment.



**A MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Howard, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the April 10, 2025 Regular Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:15 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, April 24, 2025.

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City Clerk, City of Valdosta

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Mayor, City of Valdosta