

JUNE 13, 2017
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100

PRESENT: Mayor Dorothy Hubbard
Mayor Pro Tem Roger Marietta
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, Bobby Coleman, BJ Fletcher, Bob Langstaff,
Jr., and Tommie Postell (arrived at 8:42 am)
City Manager: Sharon D. Subadan
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Hubbard called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m., and reminded those in attendance of the process to address the Commission (Citizen Comments/Speaker Appearance Forms).

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

LaTonya Moore said that on January 2006, her family was attacked by police officers; she's tried to file reports, was black listed, went to the Senate in DC, wrote letters and filed petitions. She was told to wait on God; she has been a Jehovah's Witness for 22 years; her bank account was robbed and, she and her children have been physically assaulted. There was an investigation, and she was told to call internal affairs, she gave names of those she spoke with, including City Attorney Nathan Davis and former Asst. City Attorney Kathy Strang. She said her car was destroyed inside/outside, as were her children's personal items and that she has contacted people and has witnesses, who are her neighbors. She distributed information (copy on file) and said that she is from Columbia, Maryland and that she moved to Albany when she was 31 years old. She briefly discussed being sent to Thomasville, and was told to go on with her life; however, she was locked up/incarcerated and charged with terroristic threats.

2017 GMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE VOTING DELEGATE AND FLAG BEARER

Mayor Pro Tem Marietta volunteered to be both at the convention. Commissioner Langstaff moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Howard; the motion unanimously carried.

EXTENDING DEADLINE FOR SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

Mr. Davis discussed information as noted, (copy on file) and advised that the extension will be through the end of October, 2017. Commissioner Langstaff moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher; the motion unanimously carried.

PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS

ALCOHOL LICENSE APPLICATIONS – TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP

1. Prayosha 101 LLC, d/b/a Exxon Food Mart; 1817 N. Slappey Blvd.; V. Patel/Agent; Beer Package; Transfer Ownership from N. Patel; WARD 3

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2. One Pramukh LLC, d/b/a Shell Food Mart; 2824 Old Dawson Road; Beer Package and Wine Package; Transfer Ownership from N. Patel; WARD 5

Chief Deputy Anthony Donaldson discussed the above applications; there were no comments on this item.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN MCLB AND THE CITY OF ALBANY RE: CANINE SUPPORT

APD Chief Michael Persley discussed this item and the next three (copy on file) as it pertains to all three agreements.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN MCLB AND THE CITY OF ALBANY RE: TRAINING OF OFFICERS

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN MCLB AND THE CITY OF ALBANY RE: RIFLE RANGE USE

There were no comments on these items (Commissioner Postell arrived at this time - 8:42 am).

PUBLIC WORKS MATTERS

FOREST PARK S/D (West Pointe Ct) UTILITY EASEMENT

Bruce Maples, Director of Engineering, discussed the information as noted (copy on file) and asked for approval. There were no comments on this item.

UTILITY EASEMENT - 132 5th STREET, LEESBURG, GA

Mr. Maples discussed information (copy on file) and asked for approval. There were no comments on this item

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

CHDO AWARD OF FUNDS TO NEW VISIONS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Ciceli Brown, Community Development Manager, discussed information (copy on file) as it pertains to the new CHDO.

In reply to Commissioner Postell, Ms. Brown directed him to the list of board members, as noted in the agenda packet. Mayor Hubbard stated that the names are listed on page 66.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Ms. Brown stated that the award is for acquisition of property and that two properties have been identified, one on 604 Cotton and the other in central Albany, is under contract.

Commissioner Postell asked if these are for homeless people; Ms. Brown stated that they are for low-mid income individuals.

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN/AMENDMENTS RE: 2017-2018 ACTION PLAN

Shelena Hawkins, Community Development Director, discussed information as noted (copy on file) and asked for approval of the plan. There were no comments on this item.

FYs 2014, 2015, AND 2016 ACTION PLAN SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS

Phyllis Brown, Deputy Director, discussed information (copy on file) pertaining to projects that have been identified.

In reply to Commissioner Postell's concern about low-moderate income housing, Ms. Brown clarified that the homeless will be addressed with over 30 families being identified.

Commissioner Langstaff mentioned the set-asides going from \$175,000 to zero with Ms. Brown explaining the effect of the storms and petitioning HUD to issue a waiver.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS

PURCHASE(s):

Joshua Williams, Buyer, discussed the following two purchases:

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|----|---|--------------|-------------|
| 1. | Asbestos Abatement - AHERA Response Services | | |
| | | Total amount | \$70,000.00 |
| 2. | Asbestos Abatement - American Logistics International, Inc. | | |
| | | Total amount | \$70,000.00 |

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Scott Tennison, Code Enforcement Supervisor, explained removal of asbestos, sampling and testing to abate, etc., as it pertains to conducting surveys. In reply to Commissioner Postell, he stated that this past year the average cost has been \$5,000 per structure, but some are lower based on materials used in the structure. Commissioner Howard mentioned property in E. Albany with Mr. Tennison stating that it has been removed.

Mayor Hubbard questioned using two companies with Mr. Tennison explaining that using two companies expedites the process, adding that there are 25 days to complete abatement.

Mr. Williams discussed the following (copy on file):

- 3. Software Maintenance - Oracle USA Inc.
Total expenditure \$80,432.68

There were no comments on this item.

Mr. Williams discussed the following (copy on file)

- 4. Methane Remediation - Advance One Development, LLC.
Total expenditure \$269,000.00

Commissioner Howard, stated that this is in his Ward and asked if residents in the area were notified. Phil Roberson, Asst. City Manager, replied in the affirmative and explained permitting to close the landfill and briefly discussed the process of methane remediation. In reply to Commissioner Howard, he explained the timeframe for monitoring, etc. In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Mr. Roberson stated that it will be monitored for however long the City owns the property.

In reply to Commissioner Langstaff on having only one bid, Mr. Roberson explained staff's reason for recommending to move forward.

Commissioner Howard questioned future use of the land/property with Mr. Roberson explaining that the property may be able to be used in the future as a ballfield, etc., by citizens in the neighborhood. He stated that the City owns the 26 acres.

Commissioner Postell questioned methane seepage on the land and asked the warranty that the company will give. Mr. Roberson stated that the company is bonded, etc., and as they go through the process, including well monitors, this will provide precautionary measures for people in the area. In reply to Commissioner Postell, he explained EPA's role in the City complying with the law.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Using a power point presentation (copy on file), Commissioner Langstaff discussed the proposed budget and compared 15 of the largest cities in Georgia, with Albany being #10 (adding that he obtained the information from the census and the internet). His observations are as follows: 1) increasing demand for general fund dollars and how much; 2) police protection, which is expensive for other cities as well; 3) population, land area, income and poverty (in reply to Commissioner Postell he said he does not have demographics for Roswell on race, however, he noted poverty levels, which is lower than Albany); 4) Millage rate with Albany's being the highest; 5)

Albany/Dougherty property taxes; 6) Other cities relying on different revenue sources [included detailed explanation on each line item]; 6a) cities relying on one type of revenue including percentages; 7a) (his) Albany's Electric Rates vs. Georgia Public Service Commission Georgia Power rate; 7b) (his neighbor's) electric rates vs. Georgia Power. Commissioner Marietta said he called Georgia Power yesterday and was told that rates were frozen for the rest of the year, but in 2018, rates will be increased between 0.5-1 percent. 7c) Albany electric rates compared to other cities; 8) Water rates of other cities, with areas outside corporate limits having higher rates; 9) Sewer Rates compared – in reply to Mayor Hubbard he explained why he left Lawrenceville comparisons off some of the slides but suggested the Finance Director can look up any city to ascertain additional information. 10) Conclusions – specifically the cost of good government continues to increase, but governments continually look for ways to reduce costs; look at what needs to be outsourced/insourced, look at technology, Albany's property taxes comparatively high; Albany's utility charges comparatively low; good governments continue to evaluate its revenue stream.

Commissioner Postell commented on those who are tax exempt in Dougherty County with Commissioner Langstaff stating that he feels it could be due to those living in poverty.

Commissioner Coleman suggested that had he had the information in advance, he would have been prepared to ask questions. Commissioner Langstaff distributed the power point for Commission review and thanked the Finance Director and staff for helping him.

Commissioner Fletcher thanked Commissioner Langstaff for his information, adding that it is clear Albany's utility rates are low compared to other cities. She mentioned the tough budget and decisions that have to be made.

Commissioner Coleman said he would have like to have seen unemployment rates and the demographics of the cities that were compared.

Mayor Pro Tem Marietta commented on the average citizen spending more on utilities than on property taxes and suggested that the Commission establish the amount to transfer from utilities, i.e., set a cap on the transfer.

Commissioner Langstaff again showed slide 6a and suggested either transfer more or cut cost.

Mayor Hubbard thanked Commissioner Langstaff for the information and stated that we are trying to move the city forward while balancing the budget.

Commissioner Coleman stated that he agrees with comparing Albany to other cities however, he suggested that our government has to be tabled to fit our people and their needs.

Ms. Subadan advised that outside agencies are present (EDC, Thronateeska and Civil Rights) in response to Commissioner Howard's request.

1. EDC – Commissioner Howard asked Justin Strickland, President to comment on jobs created and asked for additional information. Mr. Strickland explained that they obtain information from announcements made by companies i.e., reporting requirements as it pertains to job creations, etc., and advised that Thrush reported that they are adding more than 100 jobs, Hamilton Relay is hiring 80 new jobs and P&G will be hiring 40 more technicians with a total of 222 new jobs being announced this year. Commissioner Howard mentioned the \$250,000 allocated by the City to EDC and suggested thinking outside the box regarding recruitment/broaden the scope as it pertains to population shift and demographics. He mentioned targeting investments of the many Patel's in the city in broadening the scope. Mr. Strickland stated that Mr. M. Patel is on the EDC and works diligently with the EDC.

Mayor Pro Tem Marietta stated that he feels the EDC is ahead of other counties/cities with a lot of opportunities in Albany and the future is bright.

Commissioner Fletcher said she feels the Commission does not do a good job of telling the EDC what is expected of them/ establishing guidelines. She mentioned losing population and asked why. She also asked the numbers on what we have lost and what can be done to help Coats and Clark, SASCO, etc., and the need to make the community business friendly. Mr. Strickland commented on the partnership with the Chamber and the industry roundtable that is in place to discuss ways the industries can work better together. He mentioned the one-year program at Albany Tech whereby a person can go back to school to get jobs in Albany. Commissioner Fletcher mentioned food processing plants in California and said we have an abundance of water, temperate weather, land, etc., and asked that this be looked at. She stated that Albany cannot afford to continue losing its population and businesses.

Commissioner Coleman mentioned the industry roundtable and giving monies to certain industries to increase employment, the program of job specific training offered at Albany Tech and asked what is being done to get this information out to people. Mr. Strickland explained that fairs were hosted in conjunction with Albany Tech and the EDC continues to assist Albany Tech in promoting the program. In reply to Commissioner Coleman, he stated that P&G has a test that is required and people who went through the program had a 100% pass rate.

Commissioner Howard commented on grocery stores in Albany with Harvey's supermarket in E. Albany closing next month and asked Mr. Strickland if he deals with closures as well. Mr. Strickland explained that when retailers ask, they work with them, adding that this is one of the areas that have revolving trends.

Commissioner Fletcher asked about the 100 students who graduated from Albany Tech and found jobs; Mr. Strickland explained that 40 students graduated from the class, but he does not know where they obtained employment.

Mayor Hubbard asked for information on retention, etc., and asked if this is still in effect. Mr. Strickland advised that they are not working on that at this time, but it is something that can be looked at – strategic planning/development.

Mayor Hubbard thanked Mr. Strickland for the work that they do as it pertains to applying for grants, etc.

Commissioner Coleman asked that students going through the program at Albany Tech be tracked. Mr. Strickland said he will speak with Dr. Parker at Albany Tech to see what kind of stats can be shared with the Commission.

2. Tommy Gregors – Thronateeska/RiverQuarium was present to answer questions and briefly discussed the partnership between the RiverQuarium and Thronateeska and the partnership between Albany State University and the RiverQuarium (RQ). He said they had over 9,000 visitors last year with over 55,000 going through the RQ each year; revenues are up and expenses are down.

Mayor Hubbard asked Mr. Gregors to comment on the Archives Building and maintaining historical records, City departments working with him to preserve records, etc, with Dougherty County and surrounding counties able to utilize the services provided by Thronateeska. Mr. Gregors said they work with the City Clerk and other departments within the City to archive original minutes, ordinances and resolutions, etc., and advised that more citizens gaining access to the records and able to conduct research. He said they have also been working with the School System, Dougherty County and other agencies outside of Dougherty County. To illustrate one benefit of Thronateeska, he briefly discussed a private school (Darcy), which closed. The archive building obtained their records and now former students call them to obtain copies of their transcript; they receive approximately 15 calls each month for a transcript from Darcy. Mayor Hubbard encouraged staff and surrounding cities/counties to continue using the Archive Building for items that must be maintained under climate-controlled conditions.

Mayor Pro Tem Marietta thanked Mr. Gregors for what he does and asked if he is also working with the Museum of Arts as they transition. Mr. Gregors said no facilities were damaged during the January storms; therefore, the Archives building has been used by the Museum of Art in helping them since their building was destroyed in the storm.

3. Following the comments of Commissioner Howard, Ms. Subadan told W. Frank Wilson that he did not have to give an update at this time. Mayor Hubbard thanked Mr. Wilson for the work that he does.

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

Ms. Subadan stated that an update will be given on special services. Mr. Roberson recognized Matt Houser, Peter Haigis, CH2M, and mentioned the City's long-standing relationship with CH2MHill and its current involvement with the City's recovery. Paul Forgey, Planning Director, gave an update on inspection services, adding that they are down a few employees at this time; keeping up with inspections at this point is challenging, but there is no backlog because inspections are scheduled only on the day that they can be performed. He mentioned that Americus loaned

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inspectors during the storm and a lot of cities do not have help that they can send due to storm damages in other areas. Commissioner Howard mentioned that Tracy Hester retired with his last day being last Friday. Mr. Roberson stated that Mr. Hester has another job and decided to retire, adding that the challenges are considered as opportunities to make things better for the public.

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Mr. Roberson agreed that CH2M will assist in evaluating since we have gone from five inspectors to two.

Commissioner Fletcher commented on the retirement of Mr. Hester and stated that many times when a person/employee leaves the City it does not necessarily mean a negative thing.

OTHER BUSINESS

In reply to Commissioner Coleman on the status of a Committee to rename the building in E. Albany, Ms. Subadan stated that Joel Holmes, Recreation Director, will be getting with him on this. Commissioner Coleman said Mr. Holmes called him and that he will have a list by the next meeting.

In reply to Commissioner Howard Ms. Subadan advised that the public hearing for the budget is scheduled for the next meeting immediately following the work session.

Commissioner Howard mentioned public safety and his concern of hiring officers as soon as possible. He commented on black on black crime and asked that once the budget is adopted that boots be put on the ground to suppress the violence. Commissioner Postell stated that officers have not been hired because they were not qualified.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

SONJA TOLBERT
CITY CLERK