

MAY 3, 2016  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 120

PRESENT Mayor Dorothy Hubbard  
Mayor Pro Tem BJ Fletcher  
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, Bobby Coleman, Roger Marietta, and Bob  
Langstaff, Jr., and Tommie Postell  
City Manager: Sharon Subadan  
City Attorney: CN Davis

Mayor Hubbard called the meeting to order at 9:25 a.m.

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

1. Staff Sgt Robert Giddeons stated that Robert Byrd is out of town and briefly discussed the Army National Guard move to MCLB. He mentioned the equipment, i.e., 36 trucks, five generators, etc., and said they will remain a unit supporting Albany/Dougherty County when the move is made.

Commissioner Marietta asked what will happen to the old facility with Sgt. Giddeons stating that they are not aware of what will happen to the facility.

2. Yolanda Harris, representing Gregory Harris (Harris One Trucking and Wrecker Service), distributed information (copy on file) and discussed trucking and wrecker services, as noted.

Discussion followed with Commissioner Coleman questioning AFD Chief Ron Rowe regarding the 11 wrecker services in rotation and how many have heavy duty capabilities; Chief Rowe replied that seven of the 11 have heavy-duty capabilities. Commissioner Coleman asked the possibility of having two classes – heavy and standard and suggested that those who do this type work are qualified and certified and should only have to compete with each other within their class. He asked if it is a State requirement to have the heavy-duty capability. Chief Rowe stated that the policy has not been adopted and it can be changed before the final vote, adding that the policy varies among cities. He stated that the recommendation is based on research; however, the Commission sets policy. Discussion followed on the policy with Commissioner Coleman stating that the draft policy, as written, is not fair to all as it pertains to heavy duty capabilities.

Commissioner Marietta suggested having two lists - heavy duty and regular vehicles. Ms. Subadan stated that numbers will be pulled regarding calls involving heavy duty trucks; however, she cautioned that there is the potential for delays and explained that there is often confusion when 911 does not have full details about all vehicles involved. She agreed that a two-tier approach can be looked at and brought back for consideration.

Commissioner Howard said he spoke with a few wrecker services and separate tiers would be advantageous.

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Ms. Harris stated that they are on the rotation list, but want equal opportunity as the larger companies have.

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Commissioner Postell asked how the tiers will be classified pertaining to tonnage, size, etc. Discussion followed with Commissioner Postell asking Ms. Harris if their company has heavy duty capabilities, etc. Mr. Rowe stated that additional research will be brought back to include a tier classification. In response to Commissioner Postell, Ms. Harris explained that the number of heavy-duty calls in Albany is not enough to justify having to purchase wreckers to accommodate those type calls.

Mayor Hubbard stated that additional information will be brought back.

#### GMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE VOTING DELEGATE/FLAG BEARER

The Clerk advised that Mayor Hubbard, Commissioners Howard, Coleman, Marietta and Postell are registered to attend the conference. Commissioner Coleman nominated Commissioner Howard as flag bearer. Discussion followed on having the same person as the flag bearer and voting delegate with Commissioner Postell moving to close nominations on said name. Hearing no further comments the motion unanimously carried.

## **PUBLIC WORKS MATTERS**

#### 2016 LMIG SAFETY ACTION FUNDING

Bruce Maples, Engineering Director, discussed information (copy on file) and asked for authorization to apply for funding. Commissioner Langstaff moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Postell; the motion unanimously carried.

## **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS**

#### UTILITY RATE CHANGE

Ms. Subadan discussed information and advised that the utility board made a recommendation, as noted, to increase the rate to \$3.49 per month, adding that some commercial businesses will see higher amounts. She stated that the rates are connected to the budget presentation scheduled for May 17.

Derrick Brown, Finance Director, discussed information (copy on file) pertaining to the rate increase, which includes the breakdown of the following: Solid Waste, Storm Water and Water.

Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Postell.

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Commissioner Postell asked the current rate; Mr. Brown replied that current rates are: Solid Waste - \$31.46 with an increase of \$0.62 (\$32.08/month); Storm Water - \$3.00 with an increase of \$1.75 (\$4.75/month); Water - \$22.35 with an increase of \$1.12 (\$23.47/month). Commissioner Postell mentioned disconnect/reconnect/late fees. Mr. Brown stated that this was discussed and proceeded to outline the disconnect/reconnect fees.

In response to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Roberson said that the landfill tipping fee is \$38.21/ton, which will increase to \$38.97. Regarding the storm water proposal, Commissioner Howard asked if large companies are paying their share; Mr. Maples replied in the affirmative. Mr. Roberson discussed when rates were put in place 2014, stating that Albany's terrain is flat, which requires pumping stations, street sweepers, etc. to be used in ways that other cities do not have to use them. Storm water was built into utilities, with this fund paying for maintenance of the existing structure. He mentioned the GEFA (Georgia Environmental) loan the Commission approved, adding that funds from that will be used for projects such as Holloway. He said this is the fairest way to ensure that everyone pays their fair share; it is not like taxes with exemptions. Mr. Maples stated that EPD monitoring is back on track, with specific projects not on-track, but mandates are up-to-date. Commissioner Howard countered that when using data to compare to other cities, the demographics of Albany should be taken into consideration due to the high poverty and unemployment.

Commissioner Coleman asked to be excused and said he is feeling ill. (He left the meeting at 10:04.)

Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher stated that one issue that may be causing people to be late is receiving the bill a day or two before the due date. She relayed an incident her mother experienced and recommended allowing customers to choose a date to receive their bill that is helpful to them as well as instituting a due date. Commissioner Postell stated that the mail now goes to Tallahassee and comes back to Albany, which is a delay. Mr. Roberson stated that the issue is being reviewed for options (i.e. electronic payments) and recommendations will be brought back to the Commission.

Commissioner Langstaff said he also received complaints from people who have never been late are now paying late fees. He suggested a time adjustment since mail goes to Tallahassee and suggested giving an exemption once a year on late fees for those who are not habitually late. Discussion followed regarding the revolving due dates, etc. Mayor Hubbard stated that the Utility Board has heard complaints from citizens about this ongoing issue.

Commissioner Marietta said last year he received complaints because of the \$0.50 increase and mentioned that small businesses will be hurt by this, as well as seniors on limited incomes. He asked that the late fee be removed or have an automatic waiver and look at a way to minimize the impact for those living in poverty. He asked that the Utility Board look at mitigation with late fees, seniors and small businesses, adding that education can be provided as well.

Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher stated that Mr. Maples spoke at her neighborhood watch yesterday and explained the cost pertaining to lack of funds, etc. She said if this is not done, from where and how will the City get the funds.

Bob Hutchinson, Utility Board member, stated that he takes issue with the statement that the Utility Board is not doing a good job, adding that they have spent many hours in meetings to give the City Manager/staff instructions to look at those having hardship. Commissioner Marietta asked about late fees; Mr. Hutchinson replied that there is a plan in place to address this and suggested that this problem is going to get bigger and stated that the City Manager cannot work with her hands tied. Additional discussion followed on mitigation and customer concerns. Ms. Subadan stated that she will provide a report with solutions and options, adding that the City purchases electricity and it is a business decision. She addressed the disconnect/reconnect fees, which are not revenue neutral, adding that she will look at options. Regarding the budget, she advised that this was brought today to assist her in bringing a balanced budget.

Commissioner Marietta offered a friendly amendment to have the Utility Board look into mitigation components, with Mayor Hubbard stating that these things are in place already. Commissioner Marietta mentioned education, storm water mitigation, due dates, etc. Mayor Hubbard stated that this is forthcoming.

Hearing no further discussion, the motion carried 4-2 with Commissioners Howard and Marietta voting no.

At 10:30, Commissioner Marietta stated that he will have to temporarily leave the meeting, but will return.

PURCHASES:

Commissioner Langstaff moved to approve the following, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher; the motion unanimously carried.

1. Right of Way Maintenance – Power Lines, ECG  
Estimated expenditure \$500,000.00

Commissioner Langstaff moved to approve the following, seconded by Commissioner Postell; the motion unanimously carried.

2. Temporary Services, Labor Finders, Albany GA  
Estimated expenditure \$382,800.00

TRANSIT AND TRANSPORTATION STUDY PLANNING FUNDING

Tennasha Gresham, Transit Planner, stated that the request is approval for grant funding for the transit and transportation study.

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Commissioner Langstaff moved to approve, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher; the motion unanimously carried.

UPS LEASE AGREEMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Langstaff; the motion unanimously carried.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Davis advised that executive session is needed to discuss pending litigation and personnel matters. At 10:36 a.m., Commissioner Howard moved to enter into executive session, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher; the motion unanimously carried as follows:

Ward I	yes
Ward II	absent
Ward III	yes
Ward IV	absent
Ward V	yes
Ward VI	yes
Mayor	yes

At 11:36 a.m., Commissioner Howard moved to exit executive session, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher: the motion carried as follows:

Ward I	yes
Ward II	absent
Ward III	yes
Ward IV	absent
Ward V	yes
Ward VI	yes
Mayor	yes

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

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SONJA TOLBERT  
CITY CLERK