

NOVEMBER 8, 2016
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100

PRESENT Mayor Dorothy Hubbard
Mayor Pro Tem BJ Fletcher (8:38 am)
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, Bobby Coleman, Roger Marietta, Bob
Langstaff, Jr., and Tommie Postell (8:41 am)
City Manager: Sharon Subadan
City Attorney: CN Davis

Mayor Hubbard called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. and advised that citizens desiring to address the Commission regarding items listed on this agenda must fill out the Citizen Comment form and turn in to the City Clerk.

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

Velma Robinson stated her concerns regarding her utility bill and fees, adding that she appeared before the Utility Board on September 29th. She detailed the way she was unfairly treated by employees of the Utility Department and suggested that she would file a report. She mentioned that she had called to speak with the City Manager, who did not return her call.

Mayor Hubbard thanked Ms. Robinson for her comments and said that the Utility Board and the City Commission have heard her concerns.

APPOINTMENT

1. Two city appointments to the Flood Plain Management Review Board for three-year term ending October, 2019

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, the Clerk (Triquenski Hicks/Adm. Specialist) stated that Bill Swan and Tommy Padgett asked to be considered for reappointment.

TRAVEL

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

1. Mayor D. Hubbard – 2016 CARE Award Ceremony; Atlanta, GA; Oct. 13-14, 2016 - \$516.10

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS

PURCHASES

Joshua Williams, Buyer, discussed the following (copy on file):

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1. CAD/AVL Software – RouteMatch – Total exp. \$144,033.00

There was no discussion on this item.

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

2. Credit Card Services – Western Union – Est. annual exp. \$175,000.00

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Mr. Williams advised that once the Commission approves, the contract is effective, adding that the contract is for one year with a renewable option.

Commissioner Langstaff questioned whether fees are passed on to the user; Ms. Subadan explained that they could be, but it was decided to not pass the fees onto customers since the City wants to encourage citizens to pay online. Replying to Commissioner Langstaff, Ms. Subadan spoke in support of the contract, which is an investment.

Commissioner Postell asked for clarification regarding staff who were on the evaluation committee. Mr. Williams and Ms. Subadan stated that Finance, Business/License, Customer Service, IT and Central Services Departments comprised the committee.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Stephen Collier, Asst. City Manager, explained the process adding that Western Union also has outlets (Walgreens and Fred's) where citizens can pay bills by cash or check. In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher, Mr. Collier explained that the information will reach customers through an education process i.e., having press interviews, posting information online, etc.

Commissioner Postell asked the number of employees who will be eliminated due to this service with Mr. Collier stating none; employees will be moved into other positions and there will be no layoffs.

There were no additional discussion on this item.

Mike Trotter, Procurement Manager, discussed the following (copy on file):

3. Well #25 Rehab – Donald Smith Co. – Total exp. \$48,950.00

Commissioner Marietta asked the location of Well #25. Phil Roberson, Asst. City Manager, advised that it is located on US HWY 82 near 5 Points. Commissioner Marietta asked the reason for the rehab, with Mr. Roberson explaining that it was needed for shaft repairs. Commissioner Marietta asked will this well serve the Lily Pond area; Mr. Roberson replied in the negative and explained areas served by the well/water treatment plants, etc. In reply to Mayor Hubbard, he stated that repairs/rehabs are needed approximately every 20 years.

There were no additional discussion on this item.

The Clerk (Mr. Hicks) advised that the following was removed from the agenda at the request of the City Manager:

4. Thornton Gym Entrance Roof Installation

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

5. Firewalls – Network Technology Solutions – Total exp. \$61,362.00

There were no comments on this item.

DISPARITY STUDY

Mr. Collier discussed information as noted (copy on file), pertaining to the request of a disparity study. He mentioned prior studies and the costs in which other entities (School Board, Dougherty County) participated. He then asked for direction from the Commission.

Detailed discussion followed with Commissioner Coleman asking the last time a study was conducted, with Mr. Collier advising that it was in August 2008. Commissioner Coleman asked the definition of ‘passive’ participation in a disparity study. Mr. Collier explained that during the study, no group was actively looked at regarding discrimination, instead the normal procurement process was used. No training was set up for groups to be actively brought in to teach them how to receive bids. He discussed the process explaining how this is handle within the small business office.

Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher referred to the cost of prior studies and asked if the cost of the last one was \$300,000. Mr. Collier said that he is not sure of the cost. Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher stated that the cost was too much and was unsuccessful. She said she has spoken with Dr. Mosley, Superintendent, DCSS, who advised that the School Board is not interested in participating this time. She suggested producing a simple manual in an effort to educate the public about the system. Commissioner Howard disagreed with Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher and stated that we need a program that include minorities and women for contracting services, adding that everyone should be treated fairly.

Additional discussion followed with Commissioner Langstaff asking if Dougherty County would participate in the study. Mr. Collier replied that he was told by County Administrator Richard Crowdis that the County had discussed this two-three months ago, but a vote was not taken. Commissioner Langstaff stated that the prior study included WG&L and the School System; he asked that staff discuss this with the other entities to ascertain their interest in participating. Mr. Collier said that his research could not determine the amount of participation or shared cost of the other entities; however, he is aware that they helped fund the cost to operate the office. Commissioner Langstaff mentioned the study being race conscious and asked if the money would be better spent by having staff research to find a better approach to the problem. Mr.

Collier said that he will look to see what other cities do and what's available; however, he advised that federal and state contracts are handled differently, which require certification.

Commissioner Coleman said he is concerned with the comments being made and asked that the study be conducted and to not be selective on spending taxpayer's money. He suggested that prior studies did not receive support in order to succeed. Commissioner Postell cautioned the Commissioners to be selective and asked who will conduct the study and who runs the small business office. He voiced support to have the study conducted and asked who conducted the last one. Mr. Collier stated that it was conducted by BBC; Georgia Tech established an office well after the study was conducted.

Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher stated that nothing productive was implemented after the last three studies; she suggested drafting a simple 'how to' booklet, establish a panel and help empower the public through knowledge.

Commissioner Howard said that the 2008 study included DOCO School, WG&L, the City of Albany and the former ATI, which was abolished. He briefly discussed set-asides, BBC, court cases and defined 'disparity study', adding that a program should be created for minorities and women.

Commissioner Marietta asked if the Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) can do the study. Mr. Collier said that he had been in contact with them and is awaiting confirmation from Dr. Baggett. Additional comments included clarifying whether Dougherty County had voted to proceed with the disparity study and whether the School System will participate.

Commissioner Coleman said it is about equality and fairness and asked to proceed with the study. Commissioner Howard said there is discrimination in Albany and mentioned other disparity studies done by other companies within the city, including the healthcare profession.

Commissioner Marietta asked if a vote will be taken, Mayor Hubbard advised that it is listed on the next agenda for vote.

CITY MANAGER UPDATE

Ms. Subadan reminded the Commission of the groundbreaking of the Microbrewery at 11 am today.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

William Wright distributed information (copy on file) and said his comments regard the disparity study. He spoke in support of the study and said that discrimination still exists, adding that in 1995-2000 MTG did a disparity study and found discrimination. He suggested that in 2008 when BBC was hired, they were not ready for the job, etc. He mentioned information that he shared with the Commission on October 11th that shows only 2% participation.

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In reply to Commissioner Howard on court cases, i.e., passive vs. active, etc., Mr. Davis advised that set-asides are not legal, but goals can be established. He commented on prior disparity studies as it pertains to court cases.

Commissioner Marietta reminded the Commission that minority participation has been included in downtown bids, including the renovation of the utility building, Albany Heights, etc., but, he is not against having a disparity study.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher asked to look at transit routes to increase coverage to possibly include MCLB. She also mentioned problems with landlords accepting GRAFA and suggested that GRAFA guidelines should be followed as it pertains to inspections at Albany Homes and other areas. Since guidelines are not being followed, she stated that this adds to the problem of having blighted properties and someone should be held accountable.

Commissioner Marietta mentioned construction traffic due to Sabal Trail trucks and asked staff to look at the road damage on Lockett Station Road, etc. He said he filed a complaint with Sabal Trail about this.

Commissioner Howard mentioned panhandling and asked that laws be enforced. Mr. Davis said he will provide information.

Regarding comments made by Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher pertaining to code enforcement/Albany Homes, Commissioner Coleman stated that he was assured the Albany Homes case will be in court by the first of the year.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:51 am.

SONJA TOLBERT
CITY CLERK