

JANUARY 6, 2015
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – ROOM 120

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

Mayor Hubbard called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

SPEAKER APPEARANCE:

1. Henry Mathis distributed information (copy on file) and discussed an article in *The Albany Herald* regarding the Commission voting to loan MEAG funds. Reading from his information concerning WG&L, rate-payers money, etc., he suggested use of MEAG/MCT credits and asked the Commission if rate-payers will benefit from the credits. He referred to circumstances when he was a Commissioner and again asked if rate-payers can receive money/credits as addressed in his information.

In reply to Commissioner Coleman, Mr. Mathis discussed the feasibility of this by looking at the demographics and census data in each ward to phase in programs, i.e., replacing energy efficient bulbs, etc., that result in cost savings. Commissioner Coleman stated that this came up before, which was opposed and asked the reason for the opposition. Mr. Mathis stated that this was during Mayors Keenan, Bays and Coleman's administration and when WG&L was discussed, it was suggested to refund money back to the rate-payers.

Commissioner Marietta stated that this is a good topic since average citizens are concerned about WG&L's billing. He mentioned the many renters whose landlords are not interested in upgrading appliances/lighting and suggested this be addressed to WG&L Commissioners/Utility Board. Mr. Mathis stated that the Chairman of the Board is the Mayor and any changes have to be blessed by the City Commission, who is held accountable to taxpayers. He asked if there is a joint partnership with landlords to have assistance through community and economic development. Using the Box Bottom area, he said he feels they [residents] would be grateful for any assistance. Regarding upgrading the WG&L building, he suggested that a cost benefit analysis should be conducted.

Commissioner Postell mentioned providing light bulbs to WG&L customers, and commented on a study was done by William Wright which determined that it did not assist all segments of WG&L [customers]. He added that purchasing light bulbs is not the issue; we cannot help one without helping everyone and all rate-payers need help. Regarding upgrading the building, he said he feels it is fair because the bank building that was discussed is now out of the picture. Research was conducted and plans were prepared, along with bringing in people to implement change at WG&L. The LTFPC voted to loan funds for renovation and the Commission will vote today on whether or not to do this. Mr. Mathis corrected Commissioner Postell's numbers he mentioned, adding that each ward is unique and need their own type services. He said there is a

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need for this and the bank building was just a reference, adding that the phase-in he mentioned does not discriminate against anyone; he asked that the Mayor, as Chairman of WG&L, to take this information for review.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that we are about to vote on the \$3.5 million for WG&L and asked the Commission to consider that the WG&L building is downtown with all fiber optics running from there and this should not be dropped.

Mayor Hubbard thanked Mr. Mathis for his information, adding that concerns will be discussed as we move forward. Mr. Mathis said he supports the LTFPC economic development efforts.

2. Beth English discussed information pertaining to the economic impact that Easter Seals has in Albany. She referenced the handout (copy on file) and said that they serve 60 counties in Georgia and 14 counties in Florida, adding that she has been with Easter Seals for 21 years. She thanked the Commission for their support, discussed the economic impact and shared the types of services they offer.

Mayor Hubbard thanked Ms. English for the information.

CAREHERE ANNUAL REPORT

Shane Tucker, Risk Management Services Director, stated that the annual brief/cost analysis will be given by Bernie Livers, who introduced his staff – Mr. Crenshaw, Director, Brandy Taylor, Dawn P. Hall, A. Whiddon and Nichole. Mr. Livers thanked city staff for their help and support and discussed the summary (copy on file), adding that Blue Cross/Blue Shield data was used in compiling and comparing information. He explained the process to develop the summary, which includes cost of medications, number of visits, co-pays and use of the clinic, medication disbursed, etc.

Discussion followed with Commissioner Marietta questioning the satisfaction survey (as noted on pages 13-14) regarding many employees not wanting to use the clinic and asked how customer dissatisfaction is handled. Mr. Livers explained the process as it pertains to expanding hours, getting appointments, etc., to assist with those who expressed dissatisfaction. In reply to Commissioner Marietta, he advised that the survey is a year old and a new survey would no doubt change the stats. Commissioner Marietta questioned their fiscal year beginning in August; Mr. Livers stated that they can do a 12 month run and the survey would still be consistent. Discussion followed regarding other means to address employee concerns, with HR Director Henry Cohen explaining the appointment process and changes that were made to be more accommodating to employees. Commissioner Marietta suggested looking at the data differently if it is being conducted daily. Mr. Tucker stated that the level of satisfaction of employees and spouses are high, which now includes appointments every other Saturday. Mr. Crenshaw stated that the first six months were challenging, but he feels that the next survey will reflect satisfaction.

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Commissioner Postell mentioned the need for employees to be educated on the clinic's importance. Mr. Tucker reviewed the various methods for getting information to employees, who now know those to contact for answers. In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Cohen stated that CareHere came in 2013 and the data was collected under their management; he discussed the clinic's cost savings and education of employees regarding their health care.

Albany Fire Chief James Carswell discussed the differences in the prior company and CareHere, with no employee data being passed on during the changeover, which could be the reason for some of the dissatisfaction.

Commissioner Postell asked the status of the evaluation for where we are now and where we expect to be in the next 12 months. Mr. Cohen explained the health risk assessments, which include all employees and spouses that are scheduled for this year with data being available at the end of 2015 to compare with data at the end of 2014. He stated that there is a surcharge/cost to those employees not complying.

Mayor Hubbard stated that we were under market place loss with Mr. Cohen and Tucker agreeing.

CONCERT SERIES PROPOSAL – THREEFORTY CREATIVE GROUP

Joel Holmes, Recreation Director, discussed information (copy on file) regarding concert series proposal by ThreeForty Creative Group, adding that this could have an economic impact on Albany.

In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Holmes stated that the first concert will be country music, adding that the proposal is still in the works due to the budget not being finalized. Discussion followed with Commissioner Postell questioning the history of other programs that came to Albany and Wes Smith, Asst. City Manager, advising that the City has never promoted events at the Civic Center and this is the first time a company has requested partnering with the City. He said the request is to try something different in operating the Civic Center. In reply to Commissioner Postell, he advised that the arena is used more than most people realize, adding that this group has expertise in marketing. Commissioner Postell asked the City's cost in the project. Justin Andrews, ThreeForty rep, stated that the numbers provided are what they have experienced and can share with the City. Discussion followed on the \$100,000 being paid, with Mr. Smith explaining the proposed agreement. Mr. Andrews stated that the City will team up with ThreeForty and the partnership allows the price to be reduced; the \$100,000 will also have money put up by ThreeForty. In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Andrews stated that they are not at the point of knowing exactly who will be brought to Albany and the request is to determine the possibility of a partnership.

Commissioner Coleman stated that it appears ThreeForty wants the City to put up \$100,000, while they dictate who comes to the Civic Center. He cautioned against micromanaging which shows are brought to Albany and suggested catering to those who attend events.

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Mayor Hubbard asked if this is done show by show with Mr. Berry explaining that one show is suggested first and based on performance, take what happens and roll it over to the second. He said his proposal is to do one. Mr. Andrews said he is working with the City about who to bring to the Civic Center and explained the concept of doing the concert series rather than only one show.

Commissioner Coleman again expressed concern on the economics in Albany and money being used to give relief to taxpayers. Mr. Berry said taxpayers are currently paying for the Civic Center and this is an attempt to curtail the loss it has been experiencing. Commissioner Coleman suggested cutting utilities at the civic center when there is no use; Mr. Berry stated that it is currently operated in the most efficient manner as possible.

Commissioner Marietta mentioned discussions to demolish the Civic Center and said he opposes spending operating funds to demolish anything. Mayor Hubbard stated that we have not been given any proposal other than this one; the likelihood of tearing down the Civic Center has not been discussed at this table. Commissioner Marietta said he supports the idea of giving the Civic Center a chance to operate and asked for an itemization of spending the \$100,000. Mr. Andrews said they are not at the point of being able to provide an itemization; it is physically impossible because of what each artist requires for their performance. The \$100,000 is a base number with the difference being made up by his company. Commissioner Marietta asked if this is fair to the competition for the City to get involved. Mr. Berry stated that it would be great if other promoters came to the table, with the city providing seed money; he added that this will be done at his approval level or the level of the Commission and said he will try to do some at his approval level and explained the process to generate more revenue. Discussion followed on the standards with Mr. Berry stating that this will be brought back to the Commission with the names of artists, etc. Commissioner Marietta suggested tabling for more information on standards, etc. Mr. Berry gave statistics/information on attendance on all events (commercial/non-commercial) with attendance at ticket price being a minimum return on the money (\$100,000); however, if the return is more, this could be a model on which to build.

Commissioner Langstaff asked to have something in writing, including the track record of successes/failures of ThreeForty and events done in Albany. He mentioned the dismal attendance of Elton John's performance; Darton's problem and Mr. Shuggart's problem – all which were challenges, adding that he would rather the City take a calculated risk rather than a gamble. He asked what exactly ThreeForty is proposing to put in – cash/in-kind services, i.e., the investment and if partners will be brought in. He asked for a specific proposal and commented on other artists who have done well and/or cancelled. Mr. Andrews said he can provide information, but reiterated that each step will be different.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard agreed with Commissioner Langstaff and said in looking at demographics, each area is different; Albany is considered rural with a high poverty rate. He asked to see a proposal and to open the playing field for others and expressed concern regarding use of \$100,000, which he suggested could be used in a better way. Turning his attention to Joel Holmes, new Recreation Director, he asked Mr. Holmes to give a brief comment on his work

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experience. Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked Mr. Andrews to provide information on the success of the company and whether concerts were sellouts, etc.

Commissioner Fletcher said she would like to see letters of references in addition to the other information and mentioned the Civic Center's debt, adding that taxpayers will ask for this type information and Commissioners needs to have to answer questions.

Commissioner Langstaff suggested Mr. Berry be given 'x' amount of dollars for marketing to use at his discretion to ascertain if this is a worthwhile gamble.

Commissioner Coleman commented on the amount that is being lost at the Civic Center and asked where/how the money is being lost and again suggested cutting utilities to save money. Discussion followed on employees/salaries, what is being done at the Civic Center, etc., with Mr. Berry commenting on not recovering costs/no one pays freight to use it, i.e., community events, etc. Mayor Hubbard stated that utilities have to be turned on the night before for heat/air, etc., Mr. Berry agreed.

Commissioner Fletcher suggested that some events can be held at other venues.

Mayor Hubbard agreed, adding that she is not a gambler and needs more information - a proposal outlining all the information discussed. She asked if time is an issue. Mr. Andrews stated that he can provide the information as soon as possible, with Mr. Berry adding that he will provide cost information on the Civic Center.

Commissioner Postell moved to table until additional information is provided, seconded by Commissioner Coleman; the motion unanimously carried.

2015 APPOINTMENTS

The Clerk answered questions pertaining to ADICA appointments (Commissioners Postell and Fletcher); Joint Electrical Board citizen appointment (Commissioner Postell); Regional Commissioner Appointment (Commissioner Fletcher not able to continue serving) and the need to have citizen/joint appointment (Mayor Hubbard). Commissioner Postell volunteered to be on the Regional Commission Board. The consensus was to vote on all appointments at the night meeting.

ITEM FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Commissioner Coleman said he asked Mr. Davis to email information regarding employees and asked that this be on the agenda as it relates to hiring and promotion policy. Discussion followed regarding Mr. Davis providing information to all Commissioners. Commissioner Postell stated that there are concerns with hiring practices within the City, which should be discussed. Mayor Hubbard suggested Commissioner Coleman get with Mr. Davis on an agenda item.

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Commissioner Coleman said he requested information about the City's hiring and promotions between January 2013 and the end of 2014 and the City's hiring/promotion policy.

Commissioner Marietta asked about the sign ordinance and tree ordinance, with Mr. Berry stating that the tree ordinance and sign ordinance should be on the agenda in February.

Commissioner Fletcher discussed issues she and her constituents faced during December because of the heavy rains. Dealing with these issues, she said she had the opportunity to meet some great department heads during that time; however, she encountered some employees who need customer service training, which is a personnel issue. Referring to Albany's aging infrastructure, she mentioned dangerous issues on Oglethorpe when it rains and asked where the City is going with these problems. She said she realizes it is the responsibility of homeowners to take precaution to protect their property, but the City needs to focus on situations when these type calls are received and be ready to address them.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCE MATTERS

MERGING CITY OF ALBANY AND WG&L VALIC 457(b) Plans

Mr. Cohen discussed information regarding the merging of the 457 plan (copy on file).

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

WG&L BUILDING RENOVATION - 207 PINE AVE.

Stephen Collier, Asst. City Manager, discussed information as noted (copy on file) pertaining to renovation of 207 Pine Ave., and the LTFPC meeting held on December 10, 2014 regarding the request for a \$3.5 million loan.

Commissioner Postell, as Chair of LTFPC, stated that this was a good effort that was voted to bring before the City Commission. He said it is vital to upgrade the WG&L building as it relates to revitalization of downtown Albany and suggested that this will be a worthwhile project, adding that the money will be paid back.

Commissioner Coleman said it has been his policy to be guided by four votes; however, he said he would have liked to have seen an analysis for the \$3.5 million to repair the building and to be able to compare those costs versus building a new structure. He said for this reason, he cannot support this without having other options to review.

Referring to the agenda item, Commissioner Marietta asked if there is a reason for confidentiality regarding the architectural firm not being disclosed. Mr. Berry stated that there is

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no firm yet; there is an estimate, but that firm will not necessarily be used. In reply to Commissioner Marietta about the \$3.5 million, Mr. Collier said S&P Architectural firm from Macon assisted with the estimated cost to renovate. Commissioner Marietta asked to see the paperwork regarding the estimate and suggested merit in having other options. He asked if there is another option or do we need a new government building, which will save rent paid to Dougherty County? Referring to the MEAG funds, he mentioned that the City is not getting a good return on those funds; Mr. Berry agreed that there is not a good return at this time. Commissioner Marietta asked if competitive bids will be accepted with Mr. Collier stating that there will be an RFP process. Discussion followed on soliciting other architectural firms to rehab the building. Mr. Collier agreed; however, he advised that it is not uncommon to find someone else adding that professional services allow this expense. He explained that at this point, no money was paid to the architect as they are waiting to see if they want to participate in the process, but their expense is at \$30,000. Commissioner Marietta asked to see additional options/comparison sheet and suggested tabling for one month certain, seconded by Commissioner Langstaff. Hearing no further comments, the motion carried 6-1 with Commissioner Postell voting no.

Mayor Hubbard asked Mr. Berry if he is aware of what the Commission is asking for; Mr. Berry discussed information that can be provided.

Commissioner Coleman stated that his priority is being able to explain to constituents the taking of \$3.5 million from MEAG funds while at the same time sending the message that 2018 will be here soon which is the end of receiving those funds. Mr. Berry said other locations can be brought back, adding that a component is what will be done with the building since it is a downtown anchor.

Commissioner Marietta stated that it will be easier to evaluate if comparisons can be made. Mr. Berry stated that additional information can be provided; however, he cautioned that real estate purchases need to be discussed in executive session. Mayor Hubbard asked the age of the building; Mr. Berry replied that it was built in the 1920's. Mayor Hubbard said the proposal addresses only four floors, leaving two out of the rehab, adding that there may be unknown issues when renovating. Mr. Berry stated the process has been addressed and that things may be found, but due diligence was done.

Mr. Collier asked Commissioner Coleman for clarification on whether he is looking for a new building or any building. Commissioner Coleman said he wants to explore other options, which might reveal a cheaper way with other options.

Commissioner Fletcher said she understands looking at other options, but it is downtown and we have ten locations of fiber optics with this being a hub; moving this will cost money. Mr. Collier said this will be included in the information that will be provided. Mayor Hubbard expressed concern on finding other issues when renovating. Mr. Collier mentioned that in all construction, contingencies are inclusive.

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Mayor Pro Tem Howard discussed ingress/egress of the current parking lot, adding that if \$3.5 million is used and it is not a complete face lift, we need to look at a state of the art building from the ground up to be in walking distance for citizens. He mentioned other properties that the City owns and suggested having a place suitable for parking, etc., adding that his vote will be to use the \$3.5 to build a building from the ground up.

Commissioner Postell discussed renovation of the building, i.e., putting in steel, etc., adding that the cost to construct another building will cost more than \$3.5 million and parking was considered. He said he opposes the SunTrust building.

LOCAL PREFERENCE PERCENTAGE INCREASE

Mike Trotter, Procurement Manager, discussed information (copy on file) regarding local preference percentage increase from 2% to 5%.

Commissioner Fletcher moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Marietta.

Commissioner Marietta stated that he is in favor even though he feels it probably will not make much of a difference, but if it helps someone, he is in favor.

Commissioner Langstaff discussed his reasons for opposing, which are listed under 'Disadvantages'.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard said he will vote in favor because he feels we need to get with the Chamber and EDC to let them know we are on the same page. He mentioned losing too many local businesses that are moving to Lee County and asked why these businesses are moving within a ten mile radius while maintaining residency in Albany. Mr. Berry agreed.

Mayor Hubbard said she supports giving preference to local businesses.

Hearing no further comments, the motion carried 6-1 with Commissioner Langstaff voting no.

ITEM FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Regarding the WG&L building renovation discussion, Commissioner Marietta also asked if there are alternative funding mechanisms for the WG&L building.

Commissioner Postell mentioned that the street lights on Westover Road stops on Gillionville and asked for an estimate on lighting the additional portion of Westover down to the fairgrounds at Oakridge. He asked that this be corrected ASAP. Mr. Berry said he will provide a proposal before the next meeting.

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Commissioner Marietta referred to the storm water utility, which was approved last year and asked to see how funds are being directed. Mayor Hubbard suggested having an update on Storm Water Utility.

PUBLIC FUNCTIONS MATTERS

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCE TO REGULATE PARKING OF VEHICLES ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY FOR 1700 – 1717 MARBURY LANE

Paul Forgey, Planning Director, discussed information (copy on file) as it pertains to parking on Marbury Lane.

Commissioner Langstaff moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Postell.

Commissioner Marietta commented that this goes along with crime prevention, infrastructure improvements, etc. He suggested that encouraging people to remain in Albany depends on quality of life issues being addressed.

Hearing no further comments, the motion unanimously carried.

CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCE TO REGULATE PARKING OF VEHICLES ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY FOR 2000-2019 LULLWATER ROAD

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

ITEM FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Howard mentioned semi-trucks parking in Ward I on Fridays and not leaving until Monday morning. He said Roses Shopping Center is a problem and poses safety issues.

Commissioner Coleman added that loud music in his ward is a problem and suggested that ordinances on the books should be enforced.

Mayor Hubbard mentioned go-carts as another issue that has to be addressed.

Commissioner Marietta mentioned that it is time to vote on the Mayor Pro Tem at the night meeting. Commissioner Coleman said he is up for the task, but suggested that the process should be reviewed adding that if this was his first year in office, he would not know the ropes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Pending Litigation and personnel matters

At 11:19 a.m., Commissioner Postell moved to enter into executive session to discuss pending litigation and personnel matters, seconded by Commissioner Langstaff; the motion unanimously carried as follows:

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

At 11:56 a.m., Commissioner Marietta moved to exit executive session, seconded by Commissioner Coleman; the motion unanimously carried as follows:

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

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m., followed by a Special Called City Commission meeting.

SONJA TOLBERT
CITY CLERK