

OCTOBER 7, 2014
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – ROOM 120

PRESENT Mayor Dorothy Hubbard
Mayor Pro Tem Jon Howard
City Commissioner: 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 8:30 a.m.

EDC UPDATE

Using a power point presentation (copy on file), Justin Strickland, Director of Economic Development Commission, presented information regarding EDC's efforts on economic development and job creation. Showing a two-minute video showcasing the quality of life, great assets and people of Albany, he discussed EDC's rebranding of Albany and showed an industry celebration week video, which focused on products made in Albany. Using the videos to recruit new industry, he referred to the rebranding effort with the logo 'There's only One Albany', and stated that the new banners focus on 'Unite, Enjoy, Restore, Rebuild and Rediscover', key words that were a focus of the rebranding. He shared a brief commercial filmed locally by local people, stating that the campaign will run through the end of the year.

Commissioner Marietta asked about the deal closing fund with Mr. Strickland stating that it is not on onlyonealbany.com, but is on the economic development website – choosealbany.com. Commissioner Marietta asked to see the choosealbany.com website; Mr. Strickland navigated to the area where the Albany Job Investment Fund is featured. Discussion followed on the link being more visible and used for recruiting. Commissioner Marietta remarked that the Investment Fund should have an elevated presence on the website. Mr. Strickland said this will be featured more in their marketing efforts.

In reply to Mr. Berry, Mr. Strickland referred to an event in the planning stage, set in November to recognize community heroes.

Mayor Hubbard thanked Mr. Strickland for the information and EDC's strides in marketing Albany and furthering economic development.

THRUSH AIRCRAFT

Mr. Davis stated that this item ties in with EDC, as funding from the Albany Job Investment Funds is initiated with that office through application; he briefly discussed the process. He explained that once approved, funds are transferred to Payroll Development Authority (PDA), adding that there should be a contract with PDA and Thrush regarding the use of funds. He discussed the intergovernmental agreement (copy on file) regarding Thrush/PDA, adding that reports should be provided to the Commission from PDA.

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Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked for information with Mr. Davis advising that he will provide copies again to the Commission.

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Mr. Davis suggested quarterly reports from PDA to the Commission can be added. Discussion followed on this being a good idea for the Commission to supervise. Mr. Davis added that he will put in 'claw-back provisions', and provide the final contract between Thrush and PDA. Mayor Hubbard asked about the salaries of those who will be employed. Mr. Strickland said they did not get this information from the company since it was a job creating incentive and Thrush met the 100-job threshold; that information was not requested because of that.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard agreed with Mayor Hubbard and asked to see the salary of employees, since the funds come from ratepayers. He asked that quarterly reports be provided as well. Mr. Berry interjected that there is a draft available of the PDA/Thrush agreement with claw-backs. Mr. Strickland agreed, adding that it was not part of the agreement or original guidelines approved by the Commission, but if they provide the information there could be more points awarded. In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Howard regarding the salaries, Mr. Strickland said he will attempt to get the information. Discussion followed on the type of jobs to be created, i.e., not custodial; Mayor Pro Tem Howard said he would like a ball-park range of salaries to be provided. Mr. Strickland stated that job titles were submitted, i.e., painters, assemblers, welders, within the manufacturing process.

Commissioner Postell discussed the start of the incentive in which those type issues were not stipulated, adding that this project has been lingering for a few years. He mentioned a previous work session in which this was discussed, with the consensus to move forward due to the deadline. In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Strickland said he is not sure of the deadline; guidelines were given to the company and they feel they met the criteria; he is ready to move forward. Additional discussion followed on the types of jobs that will be created, with Commissioner Postell stating that it may include custodial; everyone will not make executive salaries; salaries will be broad and cover all aspects.

Mayor Hubbard agreed with moving the project forward, however, she said her concern pertains to this being the first amount of funds being awarded and a precedent being set; the Commission needs to know that they met the threshold, procedures for draw-downs, etc., so that the Commission will be comfortable with future applications.

Commissioner Marietta moved to approve option 1, seconded by Commissioner Langstaff; the motion unanimously carried.

APPOINTMENT

1. Mayor's appointment to Aviation Commission to fill an unexpired term ending January, 2015

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Mayor Hubbard stated that she will have a name at the night meeting.

TRAVEL:

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

1. Mayor D. Hubbard – GMA Municipal Training Board Meeting, Forsyth, GA; September 19, 2014 - \$137.03
2. City Clerk S. Tolbert – IIMC Region III Conference, Jacksonville, FL January 21-23, 2015
3. City Attorney N. Davis – Annual Institute for City/County Attorneys; Athens, GA, Sept. 10-12, 2014 - \$633.00
4. Asst. City Attorney C. Trimble – Annual Institute for City/County Attorneys; Athens, GA, Sept. 10-12, 2014 - \$633.00
5. Asst. City Attorney C. Trimble – Mediation, Macon, GA; Sept. 19, 2014 – \$46.00

CHANGING DATE OF DECEMBER MEETINGS

The Clerk discussed the Commission’s practice of holding only two meetings in the month of December; the recommendation is to schedule the only work session on December 9 and the regular meeting December 16. Commissioner Postell moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Langstaff, the motion unanimously carried.

PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS

PARKING ENFORCEMENT

Commissioner Fletcher referenced past discussion regarding two hour parking and suggested doing away with that. She mentioned concerns of downtown business owners and the two downtown parking garages and suggested signs indicating ‘free parking’. When court is in session, she said during the course of discussion with business owners, it was suggested to place cones stating that parking is reserved for customers. She mentioned that during rainy days, notices could be put up reminding employees to not take advantage of the removal of two-hour parking and to be mindful of people coming downtown to shop and conduct business.

Commissioner Postell agreed with Commissioner Fletcher; however, he suggested that we see how much money has been collected in parking fees. He mentioned talking to a judge who feels parking fees should be done away with, but employees must be made aware of parking areas to leave open and available to the public. The judge also mentioned parking violations which are

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thrown out because someone other than the owner receives a parking ticket on the vehicle. This is a waste of energy, time and resources to issue tickets.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that the City spends \$116,000 to collect \$40,000. Commissioner Postell discussed transferring the two parking employees to another area and asked to look at doing away with parking tickets.

Mr. Berry asked to get feedback from downtown merchants, and provide it by the night meeting, adding that there is no action needed on the part of the Commission other than removing the signs in an effort to make parking downtown friendlier. Mayor Hubbard asked the cost to take down signs as she feels it will be quite an expense; Mr. Berry stated that it is possible to merely add the phrase 'Free Parking' on signs that are already up, but there will be a recommended plan to address this issue.

ITEM FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Commissioner Postell mentioned a nationwide issue – the accelerated criminal activity; it has gotten so bad in Albany, business owners are afraid to even open their doors. He asked for measures to be implemented to help curtail criminal activity and give merchants peace of mind. In reply to Mayor Hubbard he asked for an agenda item that addresses crime prevention here in Albany.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that security companies make money in fees and suggested reaching out to local businesses/companies to see the possibility of them purchasing security cameras in bulk or at cost. Mayor Hubbard stated that she and the City Attorney had discussed hosting a session with merchants to discuss the importance of having cameras as a way to combat crime/robberies. She asked to continue communicating with businesses and letting them know that cameras are not as expensive as they used to be. Commissioner Fletcher added that companies selling cameras receive the bulk of their income from monitoring. She agreed that meetings are needed to educate merchants of ways to protect their businesses.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard mentioned his concern of juveniles roaming the streets at night. Another issue is passing ordinances/resolutions and the ability to enforce them. For instance in spite of the saggy pants ordinance, it is evident the public pays no heed. Mayor Hubbard clarified that the discussion would be juvenile curfew and saggy pants enforcement at the next meeting.

Commissioner Postell asked for an update on how the Gang Task Force is operating as well as a distribution of Gang Task Force funds. If those funds are not being used for what it was allocated for, the money can be reallocated to another area.

Mr. Berry stated that there will be time to go over these items on the next agenda.

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PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS

SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM

Yvette Fields, Central Services Director, introduced Teresa Jackson, Manager of the Small Business program, to present the item. Ms. Jackson discussed information (copy on file) pertaining to a small business program.

Mr. Berry stated that the Department of Community and Economic Affairs will be incorporated to identify resources.

Mayor Hubbard stated that it is difficult for her get a clear picture of issues regarding personnel, and asked how/who will monitor the program, where it will be housed, etc. Ms. Fields stated that it will be housed in the Central Services Department with two additional staff people; she explained the process of identifying needs, connecting businesses, etc. Mr. Berry added that this will be an outreach effort for small businesses rather than waiting for small business owners to take advantage of the program; there is a lot of potential. In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Ms. Fields stated that there will be no additional funding required.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked the difference between this concept and previous ones. Mr. Berry said this will help provide assistance to not only small businesses in Albany, but all of SW Georgia as well, and will be an advantage by giving a push to build small businesses. Mayor Pro Tem Howard referenced the last two Commission Retreats, in which the concept was changed due to court rulings, but now we are moving away from small/disadvantage and women-owned companies; his hope is to look at establishing this type program. Mr. Berry stated that the last program did not work, but he will make sure this program works to address the needs of small businesses by implementing ‘one stop shopping’ for owners regarding permitting, business licenses, focus of CED, etc. Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked Mr. Davis if other cities can implement a small disadvantaged and women’s owned program what prevents Albany from implementing that concept. Mr. Davis replied that approximately a year ago, he circulated a rough draft document in which it could be tied only to construction projects and not across the board, as presented. His rough draft recommended a floor for projects of \$300,000 or more, with a set goal, but he never received any feedback, adding that he feels it would be sustainable to a court challenge and is not as broad as what is presented. He said he will circulate this again if there is interest.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that she understands that this program sees no color or gender and will assist everyone. Ms. Fields and Ms. Jackson agreed.

Commissioner Postell referred to the program with Georgia Tech and the problems it presented, adding that we will not have a discriminatory process here. He questioned the ‘not a substitute for sound, legal, tax, insurance advice’. Ms. Fields explained that on those issues, people will be directed to professionals in these areas. Commissioner Postell asked that this it be added that they will be referred to those professionals. Mr. Berry stated that resources, such as SBA, will

be used and it will be more than a disclaimer. Commissioner Postell asked the number of employees assigned to this endeavor; Ms. Fields replied three. Commissioner Postell moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher; the motion carried 5-1 with Mayor Pro Tem Howard voting no.

CURRENT BIDS:

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

1. ESRI Software Maintenance, Environmental Systems Research Institute, Redlands, CA
Annual expenditure \$51,000.00

Commissioner Langstaff moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Postell.

In reply to Commissioner Marietta, Mr. Williams explained the software with Paul Forgey, Planning Director, adding that there is no increase in cost now, but will be in the next contract. In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Mr. Forgey stated that the County contributes to the funding of the [Planning] department and GIS, but not directly paying for this. Commissioner Marietta asked if this will be rebid, with Mr. Forgey stating that this is the software that the City uses.

Commissioner Postell asked how often the company changes their software, causing the City to have to upgrade. Mr. Forgey explained that it is upgraded once a year, which is included in the contract; every time they change their software it is included in the three-year contract. Discussion followed on the renewal of the contract (Commissioner Postell).

Hearing no further comments, the motion unanimously carried.

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

2. Janitorial Supplies, Copaco, Columbus, GA
Estimated expenditure \$47,580.90

Commissioner Marietta stated that he was under the impression that the City has a local preference policy if another bid was within 2%. He referred to the bid sheet and noted that Piedmont National was close to the 2%; he recommended going with the local company. Ms. Fields stated that the next bid is not within the 2%; it is just above that. Discussion followed with Commissioner Marietta moving to award the bid to Piedmont National, seconded by Commissioner Postell. Mr. Berry asked if the Commission wants him to go back and request that they match the lowest bid. Discussion followed on whether the 2% is a factor; Ms. Fields stated that she will recalculate the figures.

Stephen Collier, Asst. City Manager, discussed a report on the 2% criteria and asked if this should be raised, with Mr. Berry suggesting 5%. Additional discussion ensued with Mr. Davis

advising that as the local vendor they can be selected as the best qualified and Commissioner Marietta stating that he wants to amend his motion requesting that they match the low bid. Discussion followed on matching the bid by the local bidder with Ms. Fields stating that there is an option to reject the bid and go with the local bidder. Mayor Hubbard clarified the original motion by Commissioner Marietta to go with Piedmont, seconded by Commissioner Postell; the motion carried 5-1 with Commissioner Langstaff voting no.

PUBLIC WORKS MATTERS

GEORGIA ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AUTHORITY LOAN

Phil Roberson, Asst. City Manager, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the request to seek a loan. He discussed demand, flow, locations, valves and increase of pressure, property owned on Kensington Court, etc., as it pertains to securing the loan. He mentioned discussions with Lee County regarding the 1.0 million Oakland tank; however, due to issues surrounding ownership, an intergovernmental agreement, etc., needs to be ironed out, but it will continued to be pursued.

In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Roberson explained that this crosses boundaries not previously crossed, but the Commission has expressed interest in looking at a regional footprint of the City's utility. This means crossing geographic boundaries as the City looks for additional revenues, adding that the City will maintain areas that are crossed. He mentioned Rails to Trails, which will expand the footprint of the utilities and that having a well/tank will be advantageous. He advised that they are unsure that the loan will be secured, but will have an answer by the night meeting. Commissioner Postell stated that Albany/Dougherty County and Lee County intersect each other and mentioned the Kensington Court area, with Mr. Roberson advising that there are seven wells in the area with the need to put a tank in the area.

AFD Chief James Carswell mentioned water pressure in NW Albany and the issue of needing an elevated tank in the area. Commissioner Postell stated that money continues to be spent in W. Albany, but there are available sites in north, south and east Albany. Chief Carswell countered that the issue is water pressure in NW Albany. Jimmy Norman, Director of Utilities/Construction, discussed the effect of elevation on water pressure in South/East Albany and the issue of needing a tank in NW Albany. Commissioner Postell asked that other residential areas of Albany/Dougherty County be taken into consideration as well. Bruce Maples, Engineering Director, discussed monitoring of water and elevation; Commissioner Postell said that he will visit the office for additional information.

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

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Mayor Hubbard clarified that this is contingent on the deadline of December 31.

Hearing no further comments, the motion unanimously carried.

UPDATE ON EAST BROAD UNDERPASS

Commissioner Langstaff asked if this should be tabled until Commissioner Coleman is present.

Mr. Roberson stated that Commissioner Coleman called him yesterday; he told him that a CD will be provided.

Using a power point presentation, Mr. Maples showed photos and discussed. Commissioner Postell asked the number, if any, of accidents on file; Mr. Maples said he can provide this information.

Continuing with the presentation, Mr. Maples stated that they are working to remove paint/repaint, landscape, reinstall a handrail, use SPLOST II streetlight funds, etc. In reply to Commissioner Postell, discussion followed on changing the speed limit at the underpass.

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Mr. Roberson stated that Commissioner Coleman will get the update and they will be making cleanup efforts before the Albany State Homecoming weekend.

Mr. Maples discussed costs, existing utilities, landscaping, and handrails with an estimated cost of \$275,000 for the project.

In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Howard, Mr. Maples discussed lead-based paint, with removal of everything – structure/concrete walls, etc. Discussion followed on the railroad sharing cost (Mayor Pro Tem Howard) with Mayor Hubbard stating that this discussion has been ongoing with the railroad. She explained that this is not one of the things the railroad can do, however, they agreed to do [RR] crossings in the city. Mr. Roberson stated that the railroad looks only at the structural integrity of the bridge, once they are satisfied with that, they have no further interest. He mentioned that the new Board Avenue Bridge, as the E. Albany gateway, will have a new and fresh face when complete and will make a good, first impression.

Commissioner Postell mentioned that the railroad goes over the underpass, not through it; the City is responsible for clearing up the area.

Mayor Hubbard thanked Mr. Maples for gathering information on the underpass.

ITEM FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Mr. Berry stated that a draft was distributed on SGRITA for consideration on the next agenda.

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Mr. Roberson briefly discussed closing Stuart Avenue to Nottingham/Archwood during construction and advised that meetings were held with business owners and residents and a compromise was reached to maintain two lanes of traffic during the entire construction period in order to bring Stuart to city standards. Work will begin next week from 7 pm – 6 am; once reaching the apartment areas, the time will change to day construction. Working with the private sector to accommodate their needs (schools, businesses, residential) and reaching a compromise helped to avoid an adverse impact.

EXECUTIVE SESSION– Workers’ Comp/pending litigation

At 10:19 a.m., Mayor Pro Tem Howard moved to enter into executive session, seconded by Commissioner Postell, the motion unanimously carried as follows:

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

At 11:31 a.m., Commissioner Postell moved to exit executive session, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher; the motion unanimously carried as follows:

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

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

SONJA TOLBERT
CITY CLERK