

NOVEMBER 4, 2014  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
GOVT. CTR – RM 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 8:34 a.m.

PURCHASE OF PROPERTY FOR RELOCATION OF FIRE STATION #7

Mr. Davis discussed information (copy on file) pertaining to the purchase of property and advised that the cost is approximately \$25,000.

In response to Mayor Pro Tem Howard, Fire Chief James Carswell discussed ingress/egress on Leonard Avenue, adding that variables were considered (school schedules, time of day, traffic flow), but the safest route is always used.

Commissioner Postell mentioned the tax record of \$14,300 and asked why the purchase price is higher. Chief Carswell explained the process of going through a realtor in order to keep the owner from knowing the City was the buyer and possibly increasing the asking price. The realtor indicated that it was fair market value. Commissioner Postell questioned the location and asked how far Leonard Ave., is from Broad Ave. Chief Carswell said one block over and explained why the old fire station could not be used, i.e., structural damage, outdated station built in the 1970's, insufficient lot size, etc.

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

ALBANY TRANSIT COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS (CNG)

David Hamilton, Transit Director, discussed information (copy on file) pertaining to CNG fleet conversion.

Commissioner Postell asked if this was presented to WG&L. Phil Roberson, Asst. City Manager, replied in the affirmative. Commissioner Postell asked about the future purchase of buses; Mr. Hamilton replied that of the 11 buses six are smaller, para-transit type and were out for bid; depending on today's vote the others will be larger buses on fixed routes. Commissioner Postell asked if what is being brought today is hypothetical; Mr. Hamilton agreed. Mr. Berry interjected that the buses cannot be ordered until the fuel is determined. In reply to Commissioner Postell on WG&L's position, Mr. Berry stated that it will be follow-on and will be just for transit, with a station at Public Works; this information will come back for the Commission to review. In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Hamilton stated that Athens is not running CNG; the City is piggybacking on their contractor to purchase the buses. Discussion

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followed on buses running on gas or CNG, with Mr. Hamilton and Stephen Collier, Asst. City Manager, explaining the process pertaining to Athens putting CNG on their bid as an alternate. In reply to Commissioner Postell, the response was that the station will be at Transit. Mr. Collier stated that a future option will be at Public Works for easy access.

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

KADB ANNUAL UPDATE

Judy Bowles, Executive Director, noted a copy of the report (copy on file) and discussed the number of volunteers, hours volunteered, cash value of volunteer help, amount of debris collected, and events held throughout the year.

Commissioner Postell thanked Ms. Bowles for her efforts in keeping Albany beautiful. In reply to Commissioner Postell, Ms. Bowles advised that there are no funds from the City; her salary comes through Dougherty County's Landfill Enterprise Fund, adding that funds are raised in support of projects. Commissioner Postell questioned upkeep of the gateways, with Ms. Bowles explaining that they are divided by Public Work and other entities. She stated that yesterday she received a call asking to adopt a gateway on Slappey, adding that her hope is to get others to adopt and mitigate City expenses. Mr. Roberson mentioned the utility merging and vegetative management that can assist with the other gateways.

Commissioner Marietta thanked Ms. Bowles for her efforts in bringing all aspects of Albany together, e.g., cultural phenomena as well as a cleanup in which all segments of Albany's population come together for a common good.

Commissioner Fletcher said there is a church that will approach the Commission about adopting a gateway and plans are to reach out to other churches to help.

Mayor Hubbard stated this is community pride at its best and thanked Ms. Bowles for her efforts. She asked if graffiti at Veterans Park was removed. Ms. Bowles explained that all of it was not removed; it will take professionals, adding that there is a new chemical that can coat memorials to keep paint from being absorbed.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard thanked the Commission for appointing him to the KADB Board, adding that he has worked with Ms. Bowles for over 20 years. He mentioned the executive board not delegating work, but rolling up its sleeves and being involved; he discussed other areas, which are also dealing with graffiti (Tallahassee, FL). Ms. Bowles stated that all accolades and awards belong to Albany's constituents. She added that the City's 311 Department has no graffiti abatement issues – all of the graffiti that has been reported has been addressed and removed.

APPOINTMENTS:

1. Two appointments to Board of Ethics for two year term expiring October, 2016, (One City appointment and one Dougherty County Bar Association)

The Clerk advised that Kowana McKinney requested to be considered for reappointment and the Bar Association requested to reappoint Blake Brantley.

Discussion followed on Kowana McKinney's original date of appointment; the Clerk advised that she was appointed in 2012.

Commissioner Postell moved to reappoint Kowana McKinney, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher; the motion unanimously carried.

Commissioner Langstaff moved to reappoint Blake Brantley, seconded by Commissioner Marietta; the motion unanimously carried.

ITEM FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked if a committee has been appointed to search for a City Manager since the 90 days are up. Mr. Berry stated that he has not heard any information, but this can be done at the wishes of the Commission. Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked if this can be placed on the agenda for the next work session.

Commissioner Postell asked Mr. Berry if he is interested in serving beyond December and if there will be an advertisement for City Manager - will he continue to be involved. Mr. Berry stated that he works at the pleasure of the Board and he did not start this as a full time career; however, there are a lot of things he would like to see done. He said he will give plenty of notice and will assist in finding a city manager. Discussion followed on the search for a city manager, with Mr. Berry stating that he has started making a list of people who may be interested; he will put this information together for the Commission to review.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that she feels the Commission has come a long way and now has someone moving the city in a good direction. Some employees could retire, but are continuing to remain due to the way things are going. She asked Mr. Berry to apply for the job if the Commission decides to search for a city manager and commented on future [city] elections, adding that it is her hope that the current Commissioners remain on the Board.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard mentioned political changes and encouraged Democrats to go to the polls.

Mayor Hubbard stated that we are clear where we are and Mr. Berry will assist in future endeavors.

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## **PUBLIC WORKS MATTERS**

### RIGHT-OF-WAY DEDICATION ON S. WESTOVER BLVD., AND LOGAN CT.

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

### TWO ADDITIONAL STOP SIGNS RE: WEBSTER AVE., @ ROSEBRIER AVE.

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

### ITEM FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Discussion followed with Commissioner Marietta stating that the new Walmart Neighborhood Market on Gillionville will be opening December 2 and Mayor Hubbard advising that the grand opening is on December 10<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Maples stated that Maple Street is expected to be completed today and opened back at 4-5:00 p.m.; it has gone very well at the railroad crossing.

## **COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS**

### SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENTS TO FY 2013 & 2014 ACTION PLANS AND 2011-2015 CONSOLIDATED PLAN

Shelena Hawkins, Director, discussed information (copy on file) as it pertains to amendments. She commented on public hearings and advised that staff recommends approval.

Commissioner Langstaff moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Postell.

Commissioner Marietta referred to page 20 regarding the commercial development program and questioned funding; Ms. Hawkins explained Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSA), with the City having two; they are designated areas with high concentration of poverty and/or low income persons. She added that an E. Albany area is a targeted area with HOME and CDBG funds directed to those areas.

Commissioner Postell referred to funding for the Ritz Cultural Center, with Ms. Hawkins explaining the funds allocated for the Ritz rehab, but funding is no longer available and alternative funding is being looked at to rehab what they can. Funding for the Ritz will be

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reallocated now that they are ready to move forward. Discussion followed on management of the project and if funding has anything to do with the multimodal. Ms. Hawkins stated that the Ritz annex portion is included in the multimodal design. Mr. Berry advised that a presentation will be made within the next month or two.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked for clarification on funds for renters/homeowners. Ms. Hawkins explained the process regarding emergency repairs, the warranty period (12 months as it pertains to roofing), etc., and who is responsible for repairs as it pertains to HUD funds. She advised that her office is now using certified roofers as opposed to general contractors to ensure lasting quality.

Commissioner Postell asked about roofing companies being liable for at least five years. Ms. Hawkins replied that the warranty period is 24 months and that is the extent to which they are liable.

Hearing no further comments, the motion unanimously carried.

## **PUBLIC FUNCTIONS MATTERS**

### GEORGIA DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES GRANT APPLICATION

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

## **PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS**

### ORDINANCE CHANGING THE PARKING REGULATIONS ON CERTAIN STREETS IN DOWNTOWN TO FOUR HOUR PARKING - 8 AM TO 6 PM

Mr. Berry discussed the draft ordinance, which suspends fines – not necessarily enforcement - for 180 days until a program is in place; he added that the County agreed to assist with removal of parking booths located in the two parking garages. He commented on changing signs, having the two enforcement employees wear vests saying ‘Ambassadors’, etc., and explained that instead of issuing tickets after four hours, a note will be left on the vehicle stating that the space is not meant for all-day parking and ask that the space be reserved for downtown shoppers.

Commissioner Fletcher asked the timeline for removing the parking booths. Mr. Roberson stated that they are in conversation with the County on removal and will bring back info to the City

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Manager. Commissioner Fletcher mentioned that when the Federal Courthouse is in session, all parking on Washington is taken; she suggested having the ambassadors directing people where to park. Mr. Berry added that this will be a work in progress.

Commissioner Postell asked if ‘one hour/two hour’ signage will be removed. Mr. Berry stated explained signs will be covered and/or changed to show where free public parking is located. Discussion followed on putting signs with arrows directing to free parking during events.

Commissioner Marietta asked how this will affect employees who enforce parking with Mr. Berry stating that their classification will be changed from ‘enforcement’ to ‘ambassadors’ and that they will assist people with parking.

#### ITEM FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Howard mentioned receiving calls about people being ticketed by GSP at ASU Homecoming with the City being unaware and asked for clarification from Chief Proctor. Chief Proctor stated that he received calls regarding state troopers issuing tickets during homecoming, but APD did not participate in this and did not solicit for the state patrol to come to Albany during this time; the local GSP commander was unaware that they would be patrolling here. He added that Americus and Valdosta also had homecoming that weekend and enforcement was conducted there as well. Discussion followed on the upcoming ASU game in Columbus this weekend. Commissioner Postell stated that this was a state mandate and not a City mandate and they were targeting DUI’s, with troopers coming from other posts. Commissioner Coleman stated that there are 159 counties and over 500 cities in Georgia, but the State has targeted Albany two times in less than a year, which is a concern of his.

## **MANAGER’S UPDATE**

Mr. Berry stated that Mayor Pro Tem Howard and Commissioner Postell will be at the NLC Conference during the next work session and distributed information (copy on file) regarding SGRITA, which will be on the next agenda. He discussed the proposed contract and referenced changes as noted.

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Mr. Davis explained that every time he drafted something, SGRITA requested a revision; therefore, the one year opt-out gives the City flexibility in the event something else pops up, as noted on page 7 of 14; this will protect the city.

Commissioner Postell mentioned manpower and equipment the City will invest, but no funds; Mr. Davis agreed that the City will invest ‘sweat equity’ through staff and equipment/travel, etc. Commissioner Postell commented that the group is \$1.0 million in the hole. Mr. Berry explained that they have RUS debt that is over \$1.0 million; they have debt of approximately \$1.5/1.7 million, with the agreement stating that they will have to have cash flow - get working capital,

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credit, etc., which was inclusive in the agreement. Commissioner Postell asked how many counties are involved; Mr. Berry said ‘seven’. Commissioner Postell stated that he is in agreement with the project.

Mayor Hubbard advised that this will be on the agenda for additional discussion at the work session.

Mr. Berry stated that Sharlene Cannon is prepared to give an ADICA update since they just had a retreat. Ms. Cannon briefly discussed the activity she has been involved in, i.e., building an organization structure since joining the City four months ago. She said she reached out to the community to get her message out about the wonderful possibilities here in order to build a foundation. She discussed visioning sessions she has held and invited everyone to attend the one scheduled for tonight. Additionally, a committee has been put together to look at the Art Park to address issues with the intent being to reduce vandalism there. Regarding the ADICA retreat, she advised that CVIOG facilitated the retreat, with groundwork being laid for future projects. A committee was formed to assist with rehab of the Albany Theatre; an RFP was done for the Albany Heights building, which will be residential for downtown. She reported that three new businesses opened within the last few weeks with two more set to open soon. Adding that there are 1500 people working in the downtown area, with another 500 to be added once the new businesses are open, she said she hopes this will translate into downtown restaurants and businesses noticing an increase in sales. She mentioned that in partnership with CVB, everyone is encouraged to take advantage of brownbag lunches on Fridays, where there will be musical entertainment in the park. She said she is thankful for the support of the community and looks forward to the exciting changes on the horizon.

Mayor Hubbard thanked Ms. Cannon for the work she is doing, which is making a difference and commended her public meetings for citizens to have input.

Mayor Hubbard announced that Chef on the Lawn will be held on Friday in front of the Government Center building from 10 am – 1 pm in partnership with Dougherty County Schools and Phoebe Putney Hospital. There will be screening for diabetes, healthy eating tips, vendors will be on hand, etc.; she invited everyone to take advantage of this event.

Mr. Collier stated that on November 12<sup>th</sup>, the WG&L Board meeting begins at 8:30 a.m., followed by a tour of fiber infrastructure, ending with lunch at Café 230.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:59 a.m.

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SONJA TOLBERT  
CITY CLERK