

SEPTEMBER 25, 2018
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100

PRESENT: Mayor Pro Tem Bob Langstaff, Jr.
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, Matt Fuller, BJ Fletcher, Roger Marietta and
Tommie Postell
Asst. City Manager: Phil Roberson
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m., and reminded the audience of the process to address the Commission (Citizen Comments/Speaker Appearance Forms).

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

1. Robert Morris introduced himself and said he is a developer/investor from Tampa Florida; he introduced James Farrell, another developer from Miami and stated that he has been in Albany for three months. He discussed opportunities in Albany, including information regarding the growth happening in Tampa and said he feels that LED lighting, Smart Meters and the Trail are great accomplishments being considered by the City of Albany. He advised that he has bought two properties in Albany and asked to meet individually with the Commissioners to share his vision for Albany and help remove barriers to its advancement/growth. In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Morris said he does not know City Manager Sharon Subadan. In reply to Commissioner Fuller, he stated that he mainly does business development.

2. Gwendolyn Rhenwick stated that she is here today regarding the question of why she should move to Albany. She gave a history of her residency adding that she is a native Albanian, has been gone for 30 years and is now back. She said the city is in a horrible shape and that she has met hostility since she has been back to Albany and is extremely disappointed in the ‘time warp’ that is prevalent. She suggested that Albany is tough and if she leaves to begin a business, she will be successful after the ‘training’ in Albany. She compared Albany to a hospice, a place for the sick to die; however, she said she will not sacrifice children and senior citizens and that she is committed to the excellence to both. She said she want services, to be heard and to do something by committing to this city, adding that her grandmother and mother worked as domestic help in Albany. She stated that she now lives in Rawson Circle, where there is a big divide and spoke in support of now deceased Willie Ross, adding that she will commit to doing what he did to help with the City. She read from an article by a writer who grew up in Albany and related how this article expresses her feelings as well, i.e., growing up in segregation, etc., adding that she felt the article written by the person was speaking for her. She asked that a committee be established to discuss making Albany better and being part of the history and thanked Commissioners Howard, Fletcher and Marietta for assisting her.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that she agrees with some of the things that were said and that they are trying to change things one city at a time. She addressed negative comments and expressed thoughts on the positive things that are being done in the City of Albany. She thanked Ms. Rhenwick for what she does with children and seniors, and explained that that informational meetings have been scheduled with minimal citizen attendance/involvement. She asked Ms. Rhenwick to return to the Commission to let them know what is being done wrong and what needs are not being met and reminded her that the intent of government is to provide safety, jobs, etc., for all citizens.

APPOINTMENTS

1. Four appointments to the Historic Preservation Commission for two-year terms ending August, 2020

Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff stated that appointments will be made at the next meeting and asked for any comments. In reply to Commissioner Postell, he explained the process. There were no other comments on this item.

PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS

ALCOHOL LICENSE APPLICATION – TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP

1. Little Whiskey River LLC, d/b/a Little Whiskey River, 2900 Sylvester Road; S. Bowman/Agent; Liquor, Beer and Wine Consumption; Transfer of Ownership from D. Murray; WARD 1

Commissioner Postell questioned alcohol licenses being transferred; Chief Deputy Anthony Donaldson explained the process of ownership transfers. Mr. Donaldson advised that Ms. Bowman is the current licensee and the license is being transferred from D. Murray. There were no additional comments on this item.

PUBLIC WORKS MATTERS

ACCEPTANCE OF EASEMENTS & R/W Re: Palmyra RD SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Roberson advised that this item will be brought back in October for discussion.

PUBLIC FUNCTION MATTERS

ZONING APPLICATION: (There were no questions/comments on this item.)

1. Special Approval Case #18-048 - Steve Cox/Applicant; Sherwood Baptist Church/Owner; request Special Approval for property located at 2127 Whispering Pines Rd; to utilize an existing single family dwelling for office use to support an auxiliary ministry (Alpha Pregnancy Center) of Sherwood Baptist Church in the R-1 (Single-Family Residential) District. PC approved 8-0 **conditional**.

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SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS TEXT AMENDMENTS

Paul Forgey, Planning Director, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the request for Commission approval to amend the Albany/Dougherty Zoning Ordinance re: solar energy Facilities and systems. There were no questions/comments on this item.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS

PURCHASES:

Yvette Fields, Central Services Director, deferred to Steven Carter, CIO to discuss the following (copy on file):

1. Utility Billing System - CIS - Tyler Technologies, Plano, Texas
Est. total 3-year exp. \$1,260,404.00

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Carter explained the reason and benefits for purchasing the new system.

In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff, he stated that the current system is 7-8 years old and was in place when the City merged with the former WG&L.

In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Carter said he had no knowledge of what happened before he arrived, but after an evaluation, once he moved to Albany, he helped facilitate this item. Commissioner Postell asked if this pertains to new meter readers with Mr. Carter explaining that this is for billing only. Commissioner Postell asked how many employees will be affected (hired or let go) as a result of this. Stephen Collier, Asst. City Manager, explained the process and the differences in what Commissioner Postell is referring to (AMI), adding that the City Manager will repurpose employees and not lay anyone off. In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Carter stated that this equipment will not require hiring any new personnel; it will be handled by current staff. Mr. Collier stated that personnel will be re-trained to implement the new software.

Commissioner Fuller stated that the new software's cost includes training. Mr. Carter agreed and elaborated on what the company will provide. Commissioner Fuller asked if there are other charges that will be added to the \$1.2 million, with Mr. Carter implying that no additional cost will be incurred. Commissioner Fuller commented on the three-year period and any added expenses, with Mr. Carter advising that the expenditures will begin to decrease, with annual maintenance at approximately \$50-60,000.

Commissioner Postell again asked the number of employees with Mr. Carter advising that employees are in place and will be trained on the new system. Mr. Collier briefly discussed customer service at the Utility department, software that is antiquated, new proposed software to be implemented, the old

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‘banner’ software and training of current employees/no new employees. Mr. Roberson stated that this is a SPLOST VII project.

Commissioner Marietta asked if the software will eliminate problems that occurred in July and August, with Mr. Collier explaining the irregularities, etc., working on weekends, etc., adding that the new system will help with the automating.

Ms. Fields deferred to Mr. Carter to discuss the following (copy on file):

2. Professional Services - Lightspeed Technologies, Inc., Wall, NJ
Total expenditure \$61,502.40

Mr. Carter discussed the 1 gb of the current switches and explained that this will increase bandwidth for customers and will allow services to be upgraded; using the example of the Dougherty County School System, which wants 10gb.

3. Consultant- DARTS 2045; RS&H, Inc., Savannah, GA
Total est. expenditure \$100,000.00

In reply to Commissioner Fuller regarding the grant split, Paul Forgey, Planning Director, discussed the split of the grant by Dougherty/Lee County and City of Albany/Leesburg. In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Forgey stated that the split is based on population, with Albany’s being larger than the other governments.

Ms. Fields discussed the following (copy on file) and commented on the four different vendors, which will be awarded the bid.

4. Janitorial & Custodial Services – RL Commercial Systems, Norcross, GA
Total annual exp. \$240,866.06

Discussion followed on the contract with Commissioner Howard questioning whether local staff will be available for companies based out of town. In reply to Commissioner Postell, Ms. Fields explained the bidding process with Commissioner Postell expressing concern regarding spending money. Don Gray, Facilities Director, stated that staff will be monitoring the janitorial services. Commissioner Fuller asked if anything differently should be done in the bidding process, with Ms. Fields stating that the hard questions were asked and vendors assured that they could come from out of town to do the job, etc. Commissioner Fuller asked if financials are shown, with Ms. Fields stating no, but references were checked.

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

Mr. Roberson commented on the AT&T press release that went out earlier today which announced the possibility of interruptions in the 911 service to Albany's main line and said the problem has been resolved. He stated that next month the crushed asphalt list will be brought back for discussion, the sidewalk improvements [Palmyra Rd] that was pulled at this meeting will be brought back along with additional information, AMI/streetlight will be brought back for consideration with Mr. Davis working on an agreement for review, Commission Retreat is Oct 7-8 with T-SPLOST being discussed and other infrastructure items.

Commissioner Postell asked Mr. Roberson where we are with removing cut trees/tree trunks/leaves, etc., garbage that is in his ward. Mr. Roberson stated that this will be looked at and reported back at the next meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Commissioner Howard asked APD Chief M. Persley to look at 1400 block of Estelle and Elva (streets), adding that there were reports of a juvenile being in the area, knocking on windows after midnight, etc. He asked for more street patrol in the area.

Commissioner Postell asked if drug activities are going on in his area. Chief Persley said there is a drug problem citywide, with specific areas being investigated. Discussion followed on the gang task force/unit.

Commissioner Howard mentioned 200 Thornton Dr., and the Luxury Inn, and asked that enforcement be beefed up in this area.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm.

SONJA TOLBERT
CITY CLERK