

SEPTEMBER 25, 2018

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF
ALBANY, GEORGIA
GOVT. CENTER – RM 100

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

Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff called the meeting to order at 8:12 p.m., and called for a moment of silence, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. He then instructed the audience on the policy to address the Commission, whether through Citizen's Comments or Speaker's Appearance Forms.

Commissioner Howard moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, seconded by Commissioner Fuller; the motion unanimously carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

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.

Using a power point presentation, Paul Forgey, Planning Director, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the request for special approval to utilize a single family structure for office use at the location as noted, which, is an auxiliary service of Sherwood Baptist Church. He showed an aerial map of the location and discussed traffic considerations, planning considerations, land use and future land use maps and advised that the Planning Commission recommended **conditional approval** as follows: **The property, including the front elevation of 2127 Whispering Pines Road, will retain its residential appearance; no off-street parking is allowed in the front yard or between the principal building and the street (Whispering Pines Road).**

Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff advised that no one had signed to speak in support of or opposition to this application.

2. Solar Energy Systems Text Amendments

Using a power point presentation, Mr. Forgey discussed information as noted (copy on file) advising that this applies to the City's portion of solar regulations; Dougherty County made revisions in March 2018 and usually the City and County ordinances are the same. He briefly discussed the criteria and process, adding that state and federal regulations were reviewed in amending the ordinance and explained specific amendments on pages 6, 7, 8, 9, adding that the Planning Commission recommended approval.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Forgey clarified fencing around the solar panels; discussion followed on wild life being able to access the panels, with Mr. Forgey agreeing that some animal habitats will be disturbed.

Commissioner Marietta mentioned the Historic Preservation Commission issuance of certificates of appropriateness and asked if this will apply to the historic district. Mr. Forgey stated that solar panels could be allowed and explained what is/is not currently allowed in the present ordinance and how paneling can be integrated into roofing.

A brief discussion followed on a citizen who had signed the Speaker's Comment Form to speak on this item in error and, hearing no other comments from citizens supporting or opposing this item, Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff closed the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff stated that he received a call from Mayor Hubbard asking to be excused from the meeting tonight due to being out of town on city related business in Washington, DC with Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia (MGAG). Commissioner Howard

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moved to excuse the absence of Mayor Hubbard, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher; the motion unanimously carried.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Commissioner Fletcher moved to approve the following special approval application [**conditional**], seconded by Commissioner Howard; the motion unanimously carried.

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.

Commissioner Howard moved to approve the following purchase, seconded by Commissioner Marietta; the motion unanimously carried.

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

Commissioner Fuller moved to approve the following purchase, seconded by Commissioner Howard.

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

Discussion followed on the city's portion, which is \$12,860.00. Hearing no further comments, the motion unanimously carried.

Commissioner Marietta moved to approve the following purchase, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher.

3. Janitorial & Custodial Services Janitorial Services (alternative bidders)
Total annual exp. \$240,866.06

Reading from the agenda item, Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff stated that the following vendors were awarded the bid:

LRL Ventures, Albany, GA (Airport)	\$47,000.00
Roberts Janitorial, Albany, GA (Golf Course)	\$11,510.00
Bishop Clean Care, Leesburg, GA (LEC)	\$96,329.00
Executive Cleaning, Milledgeville, GA (Call Center, 401 Pine Ave., Lily Pond and Public Works)	\$86,027.06

A brief discussion followed with Commissioner Howard questioning the out of town vendor with Yvette Fields, Central Services Director, stating that the vendor in question has an in-town person on staff. Facilities Maintenance Director Don Gray agreed and said he will be monitoring.

Hearing no additional comments, the motion unanimously carried.

Commissioner Fletcher moved to approve the following Alcohol License Application – Transfer of Ownership, seconded by Commissioner Fuller; the motion carried 4-1 with Commissioner Howard voting no.

4. 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

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APPOINTMENTS

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

Commissioner Marietta nominated Emmanuel Konde; Commissioner Fuller moved to reappoint the four incumbents (R. Hamburger, G. Fullerton, V. Buchanan and D. Riley). Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff stated that the vote will be taken on each name as follows:

Mr. Konde – received one vote (Commissioner Marietta)
Ms. Hamburger – received four votes (Commissioner Marietta voted no)
Mr. Fullerton, Ms. Buchanan and Ms. Riley – received unanimous vote

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff declared Ms. Hamburger, Mr. Fullerton, Ms. Buchanan and Ms. Riley to be duly reappointed.

ORDINANCES

Commissioner Howard introduced the following:

AN ORDINANCE NO. 18-115

Amending Title III, Article 1, Sec. 1.44: Solar energy systems of the Albany Dougherty Zoning Ordinance

Commissioner Howard then offered the ordinance and asked for unanimous consent to dispense with the second reading and asked for adoption, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher; the motion unanimously carried.

RESOLUTIONS

Commissioner Marietta moved to adopt the following resolution, seconded by Commissioner Howard.

A RESOLUTION NO. 18-R163

Authorizing use of SPLOST VII funds for purchase of utility billing system

Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff stated that a few citizens completed the Citizen Comment form to speak on this topic. He reminded those who signed up to speak that they needed to speak on this topic only; if there are questions regarding their utility bills, they should use the speaker appearance form to appear at a future meeting.

Carol Bishop – was not present

Valerie Fleming stated that her concern is if the new system will show data on the billing cycle and be easier to read for clarification of the cycle.

Stephen Collier, Assistant City Manager, explained that there are currently 20 cycles and that the AMI (Automatic Meter Readers) will perhaps give more options in working through the details to customize billing. Mr. Roberson added that this an improvement to the current billing software system in place and encouraged citizens to come back once the contract is up for vote in October. He explained that this system provides real time usage, which allows customers to go online to see the number of kilowatts they are using and hopefully help them regulate their usage.

Commissioner Fletcher commented on the benefits of the AMI system in conjunction with the new billing system, adding that other communities already have this in place.

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Delinda Bryant stated that her concern is in regards to high utilities adding, that she is seldom home and she is trying to control costs. She asked if this new system will assist and mentioned that all new programs have glitches and that she worries about ratepayers having to bear the cost of those glitches until they are corrected. Mr. Roberson stated that the software only looks at billing; the AMI portion will give controlling options.

Commissioner Fletcher explained that employees are being trained and, even though there will be breakdowns, the City will be ready to repair promptly, adding that bills were increased by 5.5% earlier this year to improve City services. Mr. Collier explained that both systems will run together/simultaneously at first to make a comparison in order to discover and correct any glitches.

Mrs. Fredrick Spradley (Terry) stated that she lives on the corner of the 200 blocks of Joshua and McCray and asked if the new utility billing system will lower utilities bill. She advised that her bill went from \$265.00 to \$812.00 for the last few months.

Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff asked Ms. Spradley to speak with Mr. Collier after the meeting to get more information regarding her bill.

Gwen Latson stated that she lives on Rosser and Patrol Lane; her bill is also high as well as having to pay a \$35.00 overdraft fee. She said she has cancelled her life insurance and cable, had her hot water heater changed, pays no rent or mortgage on her home and, from 2015, she has been paying \$3,000-\$4,000 per year on utilities with an annual income of \$14,000. She commented on paying for street sweepers and not seeing any on her street and calling 311 to have the ditch cleaned and employees taking one-two hours to get the job done. She stated that something needs to be done and that citizens need help – street signs are down and lights are out, etc.

Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff stated that Mr. Roberson will meet with her to get additional information after the meeting. He then suggested amending the proposed resolution to bring the contract for review before it is approved. Commissioner Howard agreed with the amendment and, as the seconder to the motion, Commissioner Marietta stated that he will accept this amendment. Hearing no further comments, the motion unanimously carried.

The following was taken off the agenda at the work session:

A RESOLUTION

Approving easements and right-of-way re: Palmyra Road sidewalk improvements "Project"; Authorizing use of SPLOST VII funds for the project; accepting (1) Temporary Construction Easements, (2) Sidewalk, Utility and Grading Easements, (3) Utility and Grading Easements, and (4) Right-of-Way Acquisition Agreements

OTHER BUSINESS

In reply to Commissioner Howard who encouraged citizens to attend the next Utility Board meeting, Mr. Collier stated that the next Utility Board meeting is scheduled for October 11, 2018, at 8:30 a.m., in the conference room at 401 Pine Avenue. A brief discussion followed on completing speaker appearance forms to speak at this meeting.

Commissioner Howard recognized former Dougherty High School classmates Ms. Carol Corbett and Ms. Mary Williams who are present.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

MAYOR PRO TEM

ATTEST

CITY CLERK