

AUGUST 13, 2019  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100

PRESENT: Mayor Dorothy Hubbard  
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, Matt Fuller, BJ Fletcher, Roger Marietta and Bob  
Langstaff, Jr.  
City Manager: Sharon Subadan  
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Hubbard called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m., and reminded the audience of the process to address the Commission (Citizen Comments/Speaker Appearance Forms).

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

Using a power point presentation (copy on file), Sherrell Byrd discussed SOWEGA Rising (a 501(c)3 non-profit), introduced the board of directors, discussed the mission and vision to create healthy communities in Southwest Georgia, initiatives and priorities, including economic injustice (utility crisis, housing issues, food access), criminal justice reform, rural health, etc. She introduced Dedrick Thomas, who discussed Albany/Dougherty County's economics, poverty; lack of healthy food choices, utilities, crime, housing crisis, and recreation. Ms. Byrd discussed partnerships, including ASU, Sanford Institute of Philanthropy (awarded a scholarship), fellowships, coalition partners, etc., and accomplishments since inception, including forums on utility bills, saving the Ritz/Harlem, a new Harlem Street Market, which will bring fresh produce to areas, holding a business fair, etc. In closing Ms. Byrd asked the Commission to be partners in helping to address issues.

Commissioner Marietta asked for a mailing address to contribute to the cause.

Commissioner Howard commented on an article in *The Biz* magazine regarding food insecurity and children going home to no food, with a high food shortage in Dougherty County. He urged the Commission to become stakeholders and include other elected officials throughout the City/County and commented on poverty, rural counties that are affected, etc. Ms. Byrd commented on using Albany as a model as they move forward with other areas. Commissioner Howard discussed the process of educating people and mentioned Albany/Dougherty County being #2 statewide with HIV, 85% of people on dialysis are those of color, the high rates of diabetics, etc.

Mayor Hubbard thanked Ms. Byrd for the group's efforts in making the community better and the education of citizens on the needs and how to make things better and solve these issues.

APPOINTMENTS

1. One appointment to the Animal Control Board for two-year term ending June 2021
2. Two joint City/County appointments to the Joint Board of Adjustments and Appeals

There were no questions/comments on this item.

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### TRAVEL

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

1. Mayor D. Hubbard; Georgia Chamber Congressional Luncheon; Macon, GA; August 13, 2019; \$124.12
2. Mayor D. Hubbard; Reconciliation Project - IACP, GACP, & John Jay College; LaGrange, GA; August 16-18, 2019; \$503.84
3. Commissioner B. J. Fletcher; Reconciliation Project - IACP, GACP, & John Jay College; LaGrange, GA; August 16-19, 2019; \$808.98
4. City Manager S. Subadan; 2019 Georgia Smart Fall Workshop; Atlanta, GA; September 4-5, 2019; \$602.04

### SUNDAY PACKAGE SALES BY RETAILERS

Mr. Davis discussed information as noted (copy on file) regarding the request for the Board of Elections to place a referendum on the ballot for the November 5, 2019 election for Sunday package sales by retailers of malt beverages, wine and distilled spirits between the hours of 12:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Mr. Davis explained the process and differences of this item and the next.

### SUNDAY ALCOHOL SALES – BRUNCH (for consumption on premises)

In reply to Commissioner Fletcher, Mr. Davis advised that the two items are separate. Commissioner Langstaff advised that Dougherty County has already voted to put both of these items on their referendum.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS**

### ALCOHOL LICENSE APPLICATIONS

1. Twisted Timber LLC; d/b/a Twisted Timber; 2302 N. Slappey Blvd; C. Kirbo/Agent; Beer and Wine Consumption; WARD 2
2. Southeastern Restaurant Group LLC; d/b/a My Pie; 2700 Dawson Road Suite 14; M. Carter/Agent; Beer and Wine Consumption; WARD 5

There were no questions/comments on this item.

## **PUBLIC WORKS MATTERS**

### AUTHORITY TO ADVERTISE PROPOSED R/O/W CLOSURE

Asst. Engineering Director Robert Griffin discussed information as noted (copy on file) requesting approval to advertise the closure of unopened city street and alley re: Radium Springs Road Development.

Discussion followed on the exact location of the property, with Ms. Subadan stating that it is an unopen street.

## **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS**

### FORMAL BID AND BOND THRESHOLDS

Yvette Fields, Central Services Director, discussed information as noted (copy on file) regarding the approval to increase the formal bid threshold and the bonding limit threshold from \$40,000 to \$100,000, adding that this is a practice of the state.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Ms. Subadan explained the process, including helping minority/small businesses to bid on City projects, expanding the ability to contract with local and minority contractors, etc. She explained that currently a bid bond is required, which is often cost prohibitive for the minority/small businesses, preventing them from participating. She reminded the Commission that last year, the spending threshold was increased; this is the other part to that, which allows engagement of the community, especially in relation to small City projects. Commissioner Howard asked if a small business office will be established, with Ms. Subadan explaining that outreach and support will be provided to minority businesses; however, certifications are mandatory for Federal contracts. She advised that the Procurement office directs individuals how to become certified, however, it seems that only a small number are willing to undergo the process to become certified and make themselves eligible for bids requiring certification.

Commissioner Fuller clarified that the \$100,000 threshold means that bids coming in at \$99,999.00 would not have to be bid nor be required to have a bond. Ms. Fields agreed regarding bids, but explained that she will have the flexibility to require a bond from contractors, if she felt it necessary. Commissioner Fuller noted that approximately 70% of contractors would not be affected by this change and asked if there is a need to take this action., Ms. Fields stated that even though it may only be a small number affected, the bid threshold is an obstacle. Having flexibility allows smaller projects to not be held up since she would not have to go through the formal bid process of advertising, etc. Ms. Subadan stated that bids will still be taken as required by state law and City ordinance to allow for bid quotes; this proposal only serves to expedite the bidding process.

Commissioner Fletcher asked if there is a way to reach out to local businesses so they know of future City projects and be prepared to bid, adding that she reaches out to businesses to bid on items. Some are not financially able to be bonded, why many will not bid including not knowing the procedure, etc.

Commissioner Langstaff asked the average cost of bonds on a \$50,000 job with Ms. Fields stating that it varies because of the contractor's credit rating, assets, etc. Commissioner Langstaff noted the two things being asked to bid on and what other cities are doing, adding that the state agrees with a \$100,000 bond

threshold and other cities within Georgia, however, the formal bid threshold is higher than other cities in Georgia, adding that he does not feel comfortable in raising the bid threshold at this time. He asked for additional information to convince him, with Steven Collier, Asst. City Manager, adding that most cities have the threshold low to ensure the competitive process works, however, he said he feels that staff should be held accountable and that this item will shorten the process in approvals. Commissioner Langstaff countered that it is the perception of fairness in the business community, which has not happened recently, adding that he has had people to complain that the process was not fair. Ms. Subadan stated that there is an informal bidding process and explained the difference, adding that, i.e., fencing downtown at Front Street Market has been an issue, which has taken a long time and has created other issues. This process will expedite projects, streamlining processes and will work well with other decisions that the Commission made in the past. She said she feels this will make staff more effective. Ms. Fields added that the City bids items that are no longer required to be bid, but to be fair, they have continued to put out bids on those items.

Kimberly Allen, Buyer, discussed the following (copy on file):

1. Storm Damaged Roof Repairs, LE Schwartz & Son, Inc., Macon, GA  
Total exp. \$555,000.00

Commissioner Howard asked for a list of City properties damaged in 2017 and commented on properties at the old Turner gym with animals taking over the property. Ms. Subadan explained that it will be checked on and that there are other damages, etc., at Turner Gym, adding that she can bring back proposals. Don Gray, Facilities Maintenance Director, stated that he is aware of the challenges and that it will be taken care of this week.

In reply to Commissioner Fuller, Ms. Allen stated that the entire amount is covered by insurance. Ms. Subadan interjected that there is a deductible, adding that anything not insured will be filed for FEMA reimbursement. Commissioner Marietta questioned the bids, especially not going with the lowest bidder, but going with Alternate 1. Tripp Swilley, Facilities Maintenance Superintendent, explained issues they had with properties, including the roof age, etc., as it pertains to Alternate 1 and Alternate 2 as noted for the LEC, i.e., upper/lower roof. He discussed information regarding the two-year life expectancy of both roofs and stated that not doing both results in having a new upper roof with an older lower roof attached to it, which will have to be replaced in two years. Commissioner Marietta commented on issues we had in the past with roofers, etc., and said he would feel more comfortable with the lowest bid/contractor and asked if the consultant is present. Mr. Gray discussed additional information regarding inspection of the properties, including information regarding the alternatives that were discussed and decided that it was more cost effective with the higher bid. In reply to Commissioner Marietta, Ms. Fields gave information regarding the consultants who work with the City and County on roofing. Additional discussion followed with Commissioner Marietta expressing his concerns. Ms. Fields stated that the contractor is currently handling the roofing at 207 Pine Ave.

Commissioner Fuller said he has worked with the company and is impressed with them adding that inspections are done before payments are made, etc.

Ms. Allen discussed the following (copy on file):

2. Storm Damaged Roof Repairs at DCED Properties; Roof Services, Albany, GA  
Total exp. \$278,000.00

There were no questions/comments on this item.

#### ACCEPTANCE OF FAA AND GDOT GRANT AWARDS

Hunter Hines, Superintendent of Operations, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the request to accept grant awards from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in the amount of \$2,577,716 and Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) in the amount of \$143,206. He advised that the grant awards will be used to rehab 975' of the South Apron Taxiway and 30,000 sq. yds., of the South Apron at the SWGA Airport.

There were no questions/comments on this item.

#### **CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE**

Ms. Subadan discussed: \$8.0 million EDA Grant for underground fiber and utilities, with the City's match of \$2.6 million from SPLOST VII; Shadowlawn sewers 30% complete; Phase II SPLOST VII paving projects 61% complete; crushed asphalt alley application, with 18 of over 100 alleys complete; damaged signs (as mentioned by Commissioner Marietta); signal replacement project, two complete with 13 left; connector trail 65% complete; runway 22 paving 25% complete; Gillionville/Westover Notice to Proceed issued, with poles delivered; LED street project 99% complete; notification from FEMA \$3.4 million obligated, with funding due to Hurricane Michael forthcoming; Eastside/Westside interceptor update (Eastside substantially complete, Westside 35% complete; information meetings by Constantine will begin in September on sewer, stormwater, etc.; (Mayor Hubbard stated that the Coalition will be hosting a forum and encouraged all to attend). AMI pilot will begin in 90 days; GDOT authorized closing of 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. crossing; clean-up project and inmate litter detail is moving forward with trash pickup on the bypass.

Commissioner Howard mentioned numerous houses lacking street addresses in east and south Albany and asked that this be looked into. This is a safety issue for public safety officers responding to calls, adding that they need to be reflective and visible at night. He also asked for a list of City buildings damaged in 2017 storms. Ms. Subadan said she will provide the information.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA**

Commissioner Fletcher mentioned businesses with darkened windows and asked that this be looked at; it increases criminal activities and presents a danger to shoppers who cannot see inside. Ms. Subadan stated that the sign ordinance has this covered and enforcement is the key.

Commissioner Marietta mentioned the Board of Health meeting yesterday where it was said that there is no State law governing mold. He asked if a local ordinance to govern this would be in order.

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Commissioner Fletcher commented on the large number of renters, cracking down on landlords and holding them accountable, letting tenants know the services the City offers, etc.

Commissioner Howard commented on Planning/Code Dept., and asked what can be done to expedite matters, i.e., demolitions, etc. Ms. Subadan stated that the legal process is what holds up some of the processes. Mr. Davis agreed that the delays are due to the process, which is labor intensive. Commissioner Howard gave a brief history of property that has been an eyesore for the last five years (301 Flint Ave). He mentioned that FOX News reporter, Katie McCarthen, is moving on and this is her last meeting; he wished her well.

Commissioner Fletcher commented on cases that go through the court system, which cost taxpayers a lot of money, with the judge fining the person only \$10. She asked that we do better with the fines.

Commissioner Fuller asked Mr. Davis if temporary would help to bring the backlog current, with Mr. Davis stating that this will assist.

There being no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 9:47 a.m.

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SONJA TOLBERT