



**BLAKELY CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES**

**AUGUST 7, 2012**

**CITY HALL**

**6:00 P.M.**

**I) CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Howard called the meeting to order. Councilman Smith gave the invocation. Mayor Howard led the Council and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance. Let the record show that Mayor Howard, Councilman Mills, Councilman Middleton, Councilman Hutchins and Councilman Smith were all present. Also present were the City Attorney Tommy Coleman, City Clerk Melinda Crook, Utility Director Charles Jenkins and Fire Chief Kenneth Jones.

**II) APPROVE MINUTES**

A motion was made by Councilman Smith and seconded by Councilman Middleton to approve the minutes from the July 3<sup>rd</sup> and July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012 City Council Meeting and Special Called Meeting. The motion carried unanimously

**III) CITIZENS AND DELEGATIONS**

**BARBARA REDDICK – SOUTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION** - Ms. Reddick was not present, however, Steve O'Neil discussed with the Council updating the zoning map. Mr. O'Neil reaffirmed that if the Council wanted to make changes this would be the time to do it because those changes could be made in just one public hearing instead of having hearings for each individual change. Once these changes are made and submitted to the RDC they would create a draft, submit it to the Council for review and if approved then there would need to be two public hearings, one with the Planning Commission and the other with the Council for final adoption. Mr. O'Neil informed the Council that to proceed this way was a cleaner, less tedious process to follow. The Fire Chief then explained to the Council that he had been going back through minutes and has found numerous areas that have been rezoned by Council which have not been corrected on the current zoning map. Mr. O'Neil informed the Council that the map could also be made available on CD in PDF format.

**MERIDITH WHITEHEAD – REZONING REDBUD ST** - Ms. Whitehead came before the Council to ask that she not have to wait one year, per the Ordinance, to again try to rezone the old stockyard. She informed the Council that she would be trying to rezone to an R1. A motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to approve waiving the one year waiting period and to allow Ms. Whitehead to apply to rezone the old stockyard from Agriculture to R1. The motion carried unanimously

**IV) ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**PLANNING COMMISSION - EMMA & SAMUEL LEE – ZONING HARDSHIP REQUEST** - Fire Chief addressed the Council to explain the hardship request of Emma & Samuel Lee. MR. SAMUEL Lee made a request on behalf of Ms. Emma Lee to replace her burned house

with a manufactured home in an R1 zone. Chief stated that Mr. Lee's request for hardship is to allow her daughter to care for her. The daughter presently resides in a manufactured home presently on this lot. The Chief informed the Council that the Planning Commission had approve the request, at their July meeting, if it met the hardship requirements. The City Attorney informed the Mayor and Council that because the Planning Commission had approved the request no action was required on their part. The Mayor informed the Council that Ms. Emma Lee has purchased another home on Lee St. The Chief also informed the Council that Mr. Lee is aware of the requirements that need to be met for hardship. It was also stated that if hardship is granted the hardship request for have to be applied for every year.

**PLANNING COMMISSION - ZONING – CONDITIONAL USE – HOME DAY CARES IN RESIDENTIAL**

**AREA** - The Fire Chief explained to the Mayor and Council that there were two locations which were operating daycares at their homes which was not zoned commercial. He informed the Council that neither of these daycares had City Occupational Tax Certificates. Chief then informed the Council that the Planning Commission had approve the conditional use at their meeting on Aug. 6, 2012. He informed the Council that both locations would need to pass an inspection. The Council then question what was involved in the inspection and the Chief briefly explained. A motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to approve the conditional use pending the passing of the inspection. The motion carried unanimously

**BIDS FOR GAS MAPPING** - The Mayor handed out the bids that had been received to the Council. Councilman Hutchins opened the bid from the RDC. The RDC submitted a bid in the amount of \$6,500 to provide GIS/GPS mapping and software input of natural gas valves, regulator stations, rectifiers, and natural gas mains and \$8,500 to provide GIS/GPS mapping and software input of natural gas, natural gas service lines and meters for a grand total of \$15,000. Both bids stated that work was to start within 30 days if awarded and completed within 90 days. Councilman Mills opened the bid from Polyengineering . Polyengineerings bid for the GIS/GPS mapping and software input of natural gas valves, regulator stations, and rectifiers and natural gas mains was \$22,000 and \$9,750 to provide GIS/GPS mapping and software input of natural gas natural gas service lines and meters for a grand total of \$31,750. Both bids stated that work was to start within 15 days and completed within 75 days. Mayor Howard opened the bid from the City of Americus. The bid from Americus for the valves, regulator stations, rectifiers and mains was \$2,100, the service lines and meters \$3,000, there were additional amounts of \$600 for post-processing and printed map creation, \$7,000 for ESRI ArcMap Standard software single user license and \$200 for software installation for a grand total of \$12,900. The Americus bid stated that work would begin within one month of award and be completed within 90 days. Councilman Middleton opened the bid from Holman Land Surveying. Holman's bid for natural gas valves, regulator stations, rectifiers and natural gas mains was \$38,025 and for natural gas natural gas service lines and meters was \$48,975 for a grant total of \$87,000 with the work to begin in seven days and complete in 90 days if awarded. There was then some discussion between the Mayor and Council as to the large bid differences. Mr. Holman addressed the Council in regards to some items that he felt he would be doing different than the other companies and the exactness of his mapping. The Council questioned Danny Williams, Department Head of the Gas Department, if there was a time table on completion of the project. Mr. Williams informed them that there was not a time table. The Council then discussed getting references because of the variations in the bids and asked the representatives who were present (Polyengineering and Holman Land Surveying) if they would hold their price for 30 days for the City to be able to check on references and they agreed. A motion

was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to table awarding a bid until references had been checked. The motion carried unanimously

**V) CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

**SECOND READING AND ADOPTION OF ANIMAL CONTROL** - A motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Middleton to approve the Amended Animal Control Ordinance. The motion carried unanimously

**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT AN UPDATED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SHORT TERM WORK PROGRAM** - A motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Middleton to approve the Resolution to Adopt an Updated Comprehensive Plan Short Term Work Program. The motion carried unanimously

**VI) CITY CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk provided financial reports. She informed the Council that the City had finished the month with \$60,541.80 in the General Fund but had not been able, as of yet, to put anything back toward the \$100,000 that has been used out the Combined accounts. The Clerk then informed the Council that the August bond payments had been made which brought the balance of the City's cash on hand to \$623,897.12 (this amount made up from the Combined Savings, Combined Utility and DOT Reimb accounts). The Clerk informed the Council that the new cameras had been installed, however, the microphone for the Council chambers has not come in as of yet so that room was not complete. Councilman Mills questioned the Clerk on how much the City has made up, looking at the Yearly Comparison report, from the difference the City had in March. The Clerk informed Councilman Mills that she did not know the exact figures but that she would get that information to him. Councilman Mills questioned an article that had been forward to him regarding pension and asked the Clerk to get information on how many are collecting a City pension at the present time.

**2012 MILLAGE RATE** - The Clerk provide to the Council three reports of The Tax Digest and 5yr History of Levy. One report show leaving the millage rate at 3.25 with a loss of (\$5,769), another report showing a millage rate of 3.30 with a loss of (\$859) and another report showing a millage rate of 3.35 with an increase on collections of \$4,052. A motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to leave the millage rate at 3.25. The motion carried unanimously

**VII) NEW ITEMS PROPOSED BY MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

**COUNTY REQUEST TO PAY THE CITY'S % OF AIR CONDITIONER REPLACEMENT AT THE JAIL OUT OF THE JAIL FUND FOR COURT COSTS** - A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Smith to approve the County request to pay for the City portion of the A/C replacement at the jail out of the jail fund. The motion carried unanimously

**DISCUSS BANNERS** - There was some discussion between the Mayor and Council about the City's hanging banners and how there should be a policy and to make sure that it ran in the local newspaper. A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Smith to approve a policy the same as the City electronic sign. The motion carried unanimously

**SEWAGE ISSUE HWY 200 – JOHN CLAYBROOK** - The Mayor explained to the Council that there had been a problem with the septic tank at 683 Damascus St. and that Marc Gibbs, the Health Inspector, had been involved. The Mayor informed the Council that Mr. Claybrook was requesting that if he purchased the parts would

the City connect a sub-pump to City sewer for no charge and no tap fee. He then explained that the request was being made because the City (unknowingly) had charge the tenants for sewer. He also informed the Council that the last tenant had received credit back for the sewer charges and that she had not been charged since. The Chief informed the Council that the septic tank had been cleaned out and that when there had been about seven people residing in the home and that could have helped contribute to the septic issue. There was discussion between the Council as to who would be the one to receive credit if it had to be issued. The City Attorney informed the Council that if they chose to refund they only had to look at the last four years. A motion was made by Councilman Smith and seconded by Councilman Mills not to connect a sub-pump to City sewage free of charge for the legal issues. The motion carried unanimously

**TAKE ACTION ON LOST WITH COUNTY** - The Mayor informed the council that the County had decided to keep the distribution rate as it now was with the City receiving 40% and that they had decided to hire a consultant. There was discussion between the Council regarding the hiring of the consultant, Mr. Michael Brown. The City Attorney then explained to the Council the steps of Mediation and Baseball Arbitration if this was not settled by the end of August. A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Mills to approve the proposal for consulting services submitted by Mr. Michael Brown in the amount of \$7,000. The motion carried unanimously

**ZONING MAP BEING UPDATED** - Discussed previously in the meeting

**UPDATE ON GOLF CART CROSSINGS** - The Utility Director, Charles Jenkins, brought to the Council the letter response he had received from DOT regarding state street crossings for golf carts. Mr. Jenkins informed the Council that DOT did not allow the square to be included. There was some discussion between the Council regarding signs and how many had registered their carts at the point.

**NEON SIGN ORDINANCE** - The Mayor informed the Council that Ms. Haynes, from the Chamber had e-mailed and stated that she had contacted RDC regarding this ordinance. Her e-mail stated that if their work was simple there would be able to submit changes to the City free of charge however if it was more detailed there would be a charge of \$50 per hour. The Mayor then informed the Council that, per her e-mail, she was resigning her position at the Chamber for another position. No further action on this ordinance was taken.

**TRAVEL POLICY** - The Council had been given a copy of the Mayor's travel policy with the per diem amounts being increased by 50%, but Councilman Middleton was still not sure if these amounts would be sufficient even for the employee's. A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Mills to table the travel policy until it was investigated further. The motion carried unanimously

The Mayor questioned needing easements to mow drainage ditches and easements for Elaine Noble's trailer park. The City Attorney told the Mayor and Council he would start looking into the issue.

There was some discussion between the Mayor, Council and Utility Director regarding the vacancy ad for the Waste Water Treatment Plant. It was explained that there was going to be an opening due to Rusty Adams tendering notice after the City paid for him to become certified. An adjustment was made to the ad to state that applicant needs to be able to get to the job within 15 minutes. A motion

was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Smith to approve the vacancy ad with the correction. The motion carried unanimously

**VIII) PUBLIC COMMENTS**

A citizen questioned the cost of her utility bill.

**IX) EXECUTIVE SESSION**

After the executive session was adjourned, a motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Middleton to increase Wallace George's pay by \$2.00 per hour to \$18.17 per hour. The motion carried unanimously

**X) ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Councilman Mills and approved by Councilman Middleton to adjourn the August 7th City Council meeting. The motion carried unanimously

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Anthony Howard, Mayor