



**BLAKELY CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES**

MAY 7, 2019

CITY HALL

6:00 P.M.

I) Public Hearing Zoning Change Cedar Springs Road

The Mayor informed the Council and the Public that the hearing would be postponed until the next month due to the Planning Commission being unable to meet before the hearing.

II) CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Let the record show that Mayor Anthony Howard call the meeting to order. Mayor, Anthony Howard, Councilman Al Hutchins, Councilman Charles Middleton, Councilman Frank Thornton and Councilman James Crozier were all present. Also present was the City Attorney, Tommy Coleman and City Clerk, Melinda Crook. James Martin gave the invocation. The Mayor and Council led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III) APPROVE MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilman Hutchins and seconded by Councilman Middleton to approve the April 2nd minutes. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

IV) CITIZENS AND DELEGATIONS

Melissa Pullen – Saving Early Animal Refuge

Melissa Pullen spoke to the Council about the need for a “No Kill” animal shelter. She stated that she had set up a non-profit corp with a board of directors. She also informed the Council that she had been offered a space at small cost and was looking into grant funds for this shelter. She asked the Mayor and Council to waive the business license fee so that the funds could be used elsewhere. The Mayor questioned if she would be extending the space offered due to the size. Ms. Pullen stated that she wasn’t sure about needing extended space due to dealing less with dogs presently. Ms. Pullen briefly explained her plans and stated that she would be state licensed before taking in animals. Ms. Pullen was asked if the State required a license fee to which she stated that they do and that there was no waiver for those fees. City Attorney, Tommy Coleman stated that the Council may need to looking into another form of assistance since the business license is a tax but that he would get with the Mayor about looking into another way to waive fees.

Benjamin Wiley – mobile home park on Howell St

Tekevia Leath – request variance for mobile home

A motion was made by Councilman Crozier and seconded by Councilman Middleton to table items 3 and 4 due to the Public Hearing not taking place. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

Todd Barnes – Bond Refinancing Update

Todd Barnes, from Raymond James, informed the Council that the refinancing had come through and that Pinnacle had won the proposal. He stated that the refinancing would be done at an interest rate of 2.81% which was better than initially thought. He stated that the total savings would be around \$246,000, which was better that the \$216,000 initially proposed. He then stated that the payment

structure would be level and that in Pinnacles proposal the bonds could be paid off after 4 years with no penalty. A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Crozier to approve the refinancing Ordinance, documents to allow the Mayor, City Clerk and Tommy Coleman to sign and to dispense with the second reading of the Ordinance. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

V) ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Planning Commission – Zone Change on Cedar Springs Road

Building Official, Mark Hawkins, informed the Council that the Planning Commission meeting had not been held due to illness which left the meeting with no quorum. He then informed the Council that that the documents that were missing for the bail bondsman license had been submitted and that the license could now be issued. The Mayor questioned when the building across from the Cannon station would be torn down. Mr. Hawkins stated that the owner had 30 days to comply.

Police Chief, Will Caudill, presented the activity report to the Council and public. He then informed the Council of a program, Work Source GA, that will pay the salary expense of new hires while in training, academy and field. He stated that he was hoping to have the representative at the next meeting to better inform the Council of the program.

Chief Caudill informed the Council that they were starting the process of a grant for bullet proof vests. He stated that this grant would reimburse up to 50% of the cost-plus accessories. He then briefly explained how the grant works.

Chief Caudill then went through the need for police cars due to the wear and tear on the current fleet combined with the age of the vehicles. He presented bids to the Council and stated that he would prefer to go with the Fords over the Dodge. He stated that Ford makes an interceptor sedan. He presented two quotes. He stated that purchasing two sedans with SCI equipping would be around \$88,000 (\$25,400 for cars and \$32,430 for equipment) and if two Explorers were added the cost would be around \$122,300. The Mayor recommended going with the two Sedans and put the Explorers into the next quarter. A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Thornton to approve the purchase of two Ford Sedans for around \$88,000. Councilman Crozier questioned the in-car camera system, to which Chief Caudill stated that they would be going with Watchguard for that system. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

Chief Caudill cited two incidents in the restrooms at the Jeanette King Memorial Park. He stated that items had been set on fire and that feces had been spread in the restroom. He questioned if this was payback for stopping the older kids in the park due to them making the younger kids uncomfortable. He questioned the possibility of bringing back the port-a-johns and closing the bathrooms. He mentioned a camera system to which the Mayor stated was in the works. Councilman Crozier spoke of the possibility of volunteer assistance. The Mayor stated to try more patrols and to continue to monitor the situation.

Chief Caudill, the Mayor and Council recognized achievements made by several of the officers such as completing mandated training, completing radar & taser training, completing Supervisor training, post certified instructor training, Supervisor 1 and several others. He spoke of years in law enforcement for several of the officers. He also spoke of the possibility of being able to have other areas come to the new building for training.

VI) CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Resolution permitting the extension of the term of employment for temporary workers

A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Thornton to approve the resolution extending the term of temporary employment an additional six months. Councilman Crozier commented on this being full and part time. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

First reading of ordinance amendment to code 13-3 change from 21 to 18
City Attorney, Tommy Coleman had the first reading of an Ordinance amending code 13-3 to change the hiring age of Police Officers from 21 to 18. It was questioned if it would match State law to which Mr. Coleman stated he didn't know if there was any law to that affect.

Agreement Headstart Building

City Attorney, Tommy Coleman reminded the Council that the Headstart building had been constructed by a CDBG grant and that some changes were needed in the agreement with Headstart. A motion was made to authorize Mr. Coleman to redo the agreement and allow the Mayor to sign once completed. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

Closing of McDonald Street

City Attorney, Tommy Coleman, informed the Council of the steps to be taken to close McDonald St. from RC Singletary to Bay St. He explained the purpose of the closure. He then stated that once the notification to property owners involved had been made he would complete the Ordinance to present to the Council.

VII) CITY CLERK'S REPORT

The City Clerk presented financial reports to the Council. She informed the Council that the audit had started and that the auditor believed that it could be completed in time. Craig Hughes then gave a power point presentation of the financials to the public and an update of the ongoing projects stating that everything was still moving forward at a good pace. Craig then went through a slide presentation of the City employees working on the multiple project going on around the City.

VIII) NEW ITEMS PROPOSED BY MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

Purchase of vehicles at Alabama DOT auction

The Mayor informed the Council of the an Alabama DOT auction at which the City was going to possibly purchase several pick up trucks. He stated that purchasing through the auction would help to stretch the City funds. A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Thornton to approve the purchase of pickup trucks from the JW Woods Alabama DOT auction. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

Freezer Locker Rental to DA Office

The Mayor informed the Council that the DA's office was looking at moving from Cuthbert to Blakely into the Freezer Locker building once remodeling was complete. He asked the Council to agree to a rental agreement of around \$1,500 to \$1,600 which, over time, would pay back the approximate \$150,000 remodel. He stated that the DA's office would be in this location for a long time and that this move will employ around 12 to 14 people. He informed the Council that once everything was agreed upon it would be reported back. The Council was in agreement

The Mayor asked the Council to consider the approval of a Resolution for REDLG. He stated that this was for Early Trucking company and that they had a solid ownership. He stated that the Development Authority was talking with Early Trucking regarding a spot in the Industrial Park. He informed the Council that this REDLG project was for two million and is interest free to Early Trucking. He stated that the entire cost would be around a 2.2 to 2.5-million-dollar project and that it would bring jobs to Blakely. A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Crozier to approve the REDLG Resolution. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

Councilman Hutchins questioned the faucet for the new sink at the Civic Center. The Mayor informed the Council that the new faucet was ordered and had just been received and that Lane would be installing it this week.

IX) PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Council and employees, of the City, were thanked for wearing blue on Friday's, in April, for the recognition of child abuse. The Council was informed that due to the shirts being worn several cases had been brought forward.

Commissioner Sol spoke of the Work Source GA program stating that he was glad to see the City looking into the program.

X) EXECUTIVE SESSION – Employee Matters

A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to enter into Executive Session for employee matters and possible litigation matters. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

Upon returning to Regular Session a motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Crozier to approve the employee contract agreement. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

XI) ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman by Councilman Hutchins to adjourn the May 7th City Council Meeting. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

Anthony Howard, Mayor