



**April 7, 2015**

**City Hall**

**6:00 P.M.**

**I) Public Hearing – Rezoning Redbud Street**

The City Attorney opened the Public Hearing at 6:05. The City Attorney explained how the hearing was going to proceed and stated that each side would be given 15 minutes.

Mr. Billy Glass, the Chairperson for the Planning Commission, addressed the Council and public regarding the Planning Commission meeting. He stated that he called for a motion of approval and upon receiving none he called for motion of denial. He stated that a motion to deny was made but died due to a lack of second.

The City Attorney asked Ms. Meredith Whitehead to come before the Council to speak regarding her request. Meredith stated that she had been before the Council three years ago for the same request. She reminded the Council and public that the developer was going to do the project in stages and that the developer had commented that she would help with water/sewer issues if necessary and traffic issues had been addressed. Meredith stated that she has been around the City of Blakely and has seen some of the houses that people are living in. She commented that she has lived in Blakely all her life and that she feels strongly that this development would be a good thing. She commented on the fact that she has seen the developers other projects and that they are managed well and that she feels that this development would be as well, regardless of how other developments in Blakely are managed. Meredith then introduced Dan Queen, Ms. Barr's assistant. Mr. Queen touched base on items that had been presented previously and at the Planning Commission meeting. He start with crime, stating that he could not address other developments and their crime issues but that this development would be owner managed. He stated that they work very close with law enforcement and that they do not stand for disruptions in their developments. He briefly addressed the facades and floor plans of the homes and addressed some of the issues of the rent. He briefly touched on the tax issue and stated that they plan on paying taxes according to the assessment. He stated that they would pay all the tap fees and any other fees related to water/sewer/gas/electric. Mr. Queen then talked briefly about the water pressure issue and the pumping station that had previously been discussed. He stated they want PUD zoning because of building 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes and that cannot be done in an R1 zone. Alice Hutchins spoke regarding how it bothered her that people are against this. She stated that there are homeless citizens and that decent housing is needed. She stated that a majority of the homes on Redbud are dilapidated presently. Pastor Milton spoke about Blakely concerns and the need for housing. Wendy Mells also spoke regarding how she felt that the development was a good thing due to the current housing market in Blakely.

Karen Everson, on McDowell St., addressed the Council stating that she had a petition of 289 names of people against the development. She spoke of her mother living in this area and how people are constantly walking through her property at the present time and that she feels it would be worse. Ms. Marsha Livingston, who lives on River St. spoke of the public housing units presently in Blakely. She briefly talked about how many units were in each development. She questioned what the City would get out of this development, such as taxes, and then questioned if they would actually pay those taxes because of another development possibly suing Early County due to taxes. She briefly spoke of road widening. She questioned why the City would want another project. Tripp Bridges spoke, stating that he agrees we need housing but is this the kind of housing that the City needs? He briefly spoke of the housing qualifications and the fact that the City does not need restrictive housing. He stated that he felt if the City could get a developer who built housing that was not restrictive that it would probably fill up. Dwight Evans stated that he opposed section 8 housing. He spoke of the possible cost of a new well if the City had to go that far to help water supply.

Mr. Dan Queen readdressed the Council stating that he felt that there were some misunderstandings about this development. He stated that per their engineer the water pressure is good but the water is weak and again stated that they were willing to help address this issue. He restated that each property would have an on sight manager. He also stated that the bushes and trees would be kept to help buffer the development to Redbud St. He then discussed a few issues regarding traffic. He stated that they

would have speed breaks in the development to keep speeding down. He stated that there would be one way in and one way out and that cars not tagged or running would be allowed to be in the complex.

The City Attorney then questioned Mr. Queen on whether this is a tax credit deal to which Mr. Queen stated that it was. The City Attorney then briefly explained tax credit projects to the Mayor and Council.

The public hearing was closed at 6:38pm

**II) Call To Order, Roll Call, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance**

The Mayor, Anthony Howard, called the meeting to order. Let the record show that the Mayor, Anthony Howard, Councilman Al Hutchins, Councilman Charles Middleton, and Councilman Smith were all present. One Councilman seat is open. Reverend Williams gave the invocation. Mayor Howard lead the Council and public in the Pledge of Allegiance. Also let the record show that the City Attorney, Tommy Coleman and the City Clerk, Melinda Crook were also present.

**III) Approve Minutes**

A motion was made by Councilman Hutchins and seconded by Councilman Middleton to approve the March 3rd, March 17th and March 26 minutes. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

**IV) Citizens And Delegations**

**Karen Everson** - Mrs. Everson, who had spoken during the public hearing, was asked by the Mayor if she would like to address the Council since she had previously filled out the necessary paperwork to do so. Mrs. Everson informed the Mayor that she did not need to readdress the Council.

**Sharon George** - Ms. George stated that she was representing Pokey, to ask that closing hours be changed back to 1:45am closing on Saturday's and 2:45am on Thursdays and Fridays. She also stated that the event center would not allow teenage parties. A motion was made by Councilman Hutchins and seconded by Councilman Middleton to readdress this issue after Pokey's three month probation was completed. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

**V) Administrative Committee Reports**

**Bids For Fire Dept Air Compressor** - Chief McDonald informed the Council that the grant, which was applied for in December 2013, had been approved in May 2014. He informed the Council that after the slow paperwork process bids had been solicited and two were received: Fortline in the amount of \$40,866.76 and Nafeco in the amount of \$40,979.00. Chief McDonald asked the Council to consider approving the bid from Nafeco, which was a slight bit higher, due to previous working history. He then informed the Council that he had been approached by the Arlington Volunteer Fire Dept. regarding purchasing the compressor that is being used presently. He stated that the current machine is 23yrs old and if found to be working sufficiently after an inspection Arlington was willing to pay \$2,050.00 for it, which is the City and County portion of the grant. A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Smith to approve the Nafeco bid in the amount of \$40,979.00. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present

**Grant for Fire Truck**

The Mayor questioned Chief McDonald about the grant for a new fire truck. Chief McDonald informed the Mayor and Council that he had spoken to the grant writer and that there was no response, yet, as to whether the grant was awarded.

**Pioneer Hospital**

Kenneth Jones spoke in regards to Pioneer Hospital purchasing a 16x24 mobile home for additional office space, and the placement of this trailer. He felt that the location they chose to place it would not be a good idea. He stated a better location next to another doublewide, would be the best choice. Mr. Gamble spoke stating that the location was for convenience and he is okay with relocation. Councilman Middleton questioned if the trailer would be for conditional use. Mr. Jones stated that it would not be due to present zoning. The city Attorney stated that Council approval would be needed for a variance request. A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and was seconded by Councilman Smith to approve variance request to Pioneer Hospital to set up a mobile home trailer according to the location deemed to be more suitable by the building official. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

**Alcohol License The 4<sup>th</sup> Out**

Kenneth Jones stated that everything checked out okay with the background check and that the advertisement had run in the EC News. He then stated that Jim Woods is ready to move forward. Councilman Middleton made a motion and was seconded by Councilman Smith to approve liquor by drink license for the 4<sup>th</sup> out. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

**Rezoning Redbud Street** - Councilman Hutchins made a motion to table the decision until a new Council person is elected. The City Attorney stated there is a time limit on the tax credit. The motion died due to the lack of a second. A motion was made by Councilman Smith and was seconded by Councilman Middleton to deny the rezoning of Redbud from R1 to PUD. Councilman Hutchins then

stated it might come to a tie, and question the other Councilmen if they are against developments like this it in their district. The motion did not pass with Councilman Smith and Councilman Middleton voting 'YEH' and Councilman Hutchins voting 'NAY'.

**VI) City Attorney's Report**

**Resolution Cell Phone / Social Media Policy** - The City Attorney explained items regarding the new cell phone and social media policy for employees. A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and was seconded by Councilman Smith to approve the Resolution on the new cell phone/social media policy. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

**Resolution Amending Personnel Policy** - The City Attorney explained items being changed in the personnel policy regarding immediate family, which was the addition of Step family members. A motion was made by Councilman Hutchins and seconded by Councilman Middleton to approve the Resolution amending the immediate family classification. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

**VII) City Clerk's Report**

The City Clerk presented the Council with financial reports. She informed the Council that the City finished the month of March with \$446,348.60 in the bank. She informed the Council that the City has continued to move \$2,500 into each, the Combined Utility Sinking Fund and the Combined Savings Accounts. The balance in the General Fund increased from February to March in the amount of \$161,658.72. The Clerk informed the Council for March the balance at First State Bank; Combined Savings is \$547,343.59. Commercial State Bank; Combined Utility Sinking Fund is \$508,978.12 and the DOT State Reimbursement is \$102,176.37 for a Total at Commercial State of \$611,154.49. She stated that the LMIG account is \$69,742.27. The Clerk informed the Council and public that the total cash on hand (not including General Fund) is \$1,158,498.08. The City Clerk informed the Council that sidewalk repairs were being looked into due to a time frame on the LMIG account. She then informed the Council The clerk then informed the Council that because of continued issues with the audit firm there had been a parting of the ways which was determined to be best for both sides. She then informed the Council that due to the time frame for submittal of the City audit Geer and Associates had been hired to do the 2014 audit. The clerk then asked for Council approval to submit an RFP for audit services to start in 2015. A motion was made by Councilman Hutchins and was seconded by Councilman Middleton to approve the RFP process for audit services. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

**VIII) New Items Proposed By Mayor and City Council**

**EPD Noncompliance Documentation Letter / Treatment Plant**

Water Treatment Supervisor, Adam Askew, spoke in regards to the EPD letter and issues that occurred in April 2014. He stated that he has sent communication to the EPD, but they have requested further explanation. He briefly went over the issues at Willow Glen and the ammonia issues. He informed the Council that the ammonia issues were operator error and that he has gone over, with the operator, the best way to handle to situation if it was to arise again. Mayor Howard stated that a response has been sent to the EPD and we are awaiting their response, and that the Council will be updated.

**Employee Health Fair** - Tabled until next Council meeting

**Bond Validation** - Mayor Howard informed the Council on the bond validation stating that he had thought it needed Council approval, however, the City Attorney had informed him it did not.

Mayor Howard informed the Council and Public the paving of Southside drive was to begin on April 8, 2015 with Oxford Construction.

Councilman Hutchins requested repainting of the walls at the Blakely Civic Center. He stated that it could be done on days when the weather does not permit outside work, such as rainy days.

**IX) Public Comments**

No public Comments

**X) Executive Session**

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

**XI) Adjournment**

A motion was made by Councilman Middleton and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to adjourn the April 7th, 2015. The motion carried unanimously by Councilman present.

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Anthony Howard, Mayor