



BLAKELY CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES

MAY 5, 2020

CITY HALL

6:00 P.M.

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

Let the record show that Mayor Travis Wimbush called the meeting to order. Mayor, Travis Wimbush, Councilmember Margaret Zachary, Councilmember Al Hutchins and Councilmember Ray Jarrett were all present. Also present was the City Clerk, Melinda Crook and by teleconference the City Attorney, Tommy Coleman. Councilmember Al Hutchins gave the invocation. The Mayor led the Councilmembers and public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II) APPROVE MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve the April 7th and April 21st minutes. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

III) CITIZENS AND DELEGATIONS

John Deere Representative Steve described the backhoes presented for purchase. He spoke on the buyback option and that if work on the backhoes was needed there would be no additional trip charges for them to come over and do the work.

CAT Representative Allan described the backhoes presented for purchase. He also spoke of their warranty, buyback option and that they also would not charge anything additional for trip charges if they had to come over and do work on the backhoes.

Chris McClendon and Lane Davis presented the full cost of purchase for the two backhoes which included the buyback of the 2015 and 2010 backhoes. Chris stated that the Yancey (CAT) total proposal was \$117,158 and the John Deere total proposal was \$113,500. Chris stated that the savings on the purchase was \$3,658 and with the five year buy back at \$55,000 for each backhoe the long-term total savings of \$13,492. Allen questioned where the CAT cost of \$117,158 was coming from and Lane explained that it was the full cost of the two backhoes less the amount for the 2015 and 2010 backhoes that would be bought back. A motion was made by Councilmember Zachary and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to approve the purchase of the John Deere backhoes for a total of \$113,500. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

Redleg Grant – Early Trucking

Mike Newberry came before the Mayor and Council to speak on behalf of the Development Authority. He also stated that Webb Boyd was present to speak on behalf of Early Trucking and Wanda and Ivan Minks were present to speak regarding the REDLEG loan. Mike spoke of the background of the REDLEG and incentives that could be offered by the Development Authority (tax incentives, land etc..) Webb Boyd spoke on Early Trucking's history. He stated that the company started in 1982 as an extension of Damascus Peanut Co. Webb spoke of the several areas they had expanded to and of the new office space and facility this new building would have. He stated that they would be bringing 130 jobs with a possibility of 25 additional jobs. Wanda and Ivan described the REDLEG program to the Mayor and Council stating that this can only be done through a utility provider. They stated that that loan amount was 2,000,000 and that Early Trucking had already put a lot of funding into the project. They stated that that this loan would be 0% interest for Early Trucking and that City was only a pass thru for the funds. Councilmember Zachary asked what the City's liability would be. Ivan then spoke about the letter of guarantee. Ivan spoke of the guarantee from Early Trucking thru the City to USDA and how the City was still not fully obligated by signing the letter of conditions. He stated that nothing was final until the papers went to the USDA attorney. The Mayor asked Ivan to inform the Council of their cost in this project to which Ivan stated that they charged 2% which came out to \$40,000. Councilmember Jarrett questioned the total cost of the project to which Webb stated it was 2.7 to 2.8 mil. Councilmember Jarrett questioned collateral from Early Trucking. The City Attorney, Tommy Coleman spoke of his conversations with USDA. The City Attorney stated that that the Development Authority had no responsibility if Early Trucking was to default and that the City is responsible. The City Attorney stated that the City has to do a loan agreement with Early Trucking/ETC Holding then a security agreement so that if there was a default the City would go in to take property. The City Attorney stated that their attorney was familiar with all of this and that there were some other items that needed to be worked out. The City Attorney also stated that after speaking with USDA the City could request an extension in writing. Mike Newberry readdressed the Council to inform them that in phase one of the project the Development Authority was signing over 18.32 acres and 25.66 acres in phase two. There was more discussion between the Council and Wanda/Ivan.

IV) ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Will Caudill – Updates

Chief Caudill gave an update to the Mayor and Council on the monthly activity. He updated the Council on how the Police Department has been operating due to COVID-19.

Chris McClendon or Lane Davis - Purchase of Backhoes
Previously taken care of under Citizens and Delegations

V) CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

First Reading of Ordinance Requiring Occupational Tax Certificate

The City Attorney, Tommy Coleman informed the Council that this ordinance came about per a request from Trudie Evans. She recommended that definitions be put in place regarding landlords regarding how many rentals requires an Occupational Tax Certificate. The City Attorney stated that they had come up with 5 or more rentals would require the certificate but that the Council could change that number if they chose to. Councilmember Zachary questioned what the fee would be to which the City Attorney responded that it was based on the number of employees a landlord had. He further explained how the license amounts are based. This constituted the First Reading of the Ordinance Requiring an Occupational Tax Certificate.

VI) CITY CLERK'S REPORT

The City Clerk presented the monthly and year to date revenues, expenditures and ending bank balance to the Mayor and Council. She informed the Council the FEMA monies received along with the ITAD/OneGA Equity and two more insurance checks. Councilmember Jarrett asked the Clerk where the monies had been deposited to which the Clerk informed the Council that the FEMA monies went into the General Fund, the ITAD/OneGA Equity monies had gone back into the accounts they were paid from and the insurance monies had gone into the savings account.

VII) NEW ITEMS PROPOSED BY MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

Appointment to Planning Commission

The Mayor informed the Council that a member of the Planning Commission, whose term was about to expired was having some health issues and would notify the City if they felt they were unable to continue to serve. The Mayor also requested that the name of the previous appointment member be corrected to Exie Smith not Essie Smith.

Councilmember Zachary questioned hazard pay for those departments that did not stagger work schedules during the Executive Orders for COVID-19. The Mayor asked the Council to appoint an individual to look into this regarding amounts, how long and funding source for hazard pay. The City Attorney, Tommy Coleman, stated that some cities had done this while others had not and that hazard pay was not something covered by FEMA.

Councilmember Hutchins spoke of letting the County return to cutting the grass around the Courthouse. A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Zachary to approve letting the County return to cutting the grass around the Courthouse with notification of one week. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

The Mayor informed the Council that SOWEGA Council on Aging was closing the Senior Center and looking at other alternatives. He then informed the Council that he would be discussing this with the City Attorney.

The Mayor informed the Council that the City had been award a CHIP Grant through the Regional Commission. He explained that there had been a miscalculation in the scoring and once found the City qualified. He stated that an administrator for the Grant would need to be appointed.

The Mayor reminded the public of the 2020 Census and the Election. He also thanked the public for their ongoing assistance regarding social distancing, gatherings, etc... to continue to prevent additional cases of COVID-19

VIII) EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Zachary to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of litigation and personnel. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Jarrett to reenter regular session. The motion carried unanimously by

IX) PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Mayor informed the Council that with the financing of the backhoes through the GMA master lease a resolution would need to be approved to appoint the Mayor as the official authorization. A motion was made by Councilmember Hutchins and seconded by Councilmember Zachary to approve the Authorizing Official Resolution for the GMA master lease financing. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

X) ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilmember Zachary and seconded by Councilmember Hutchins to adjourn the May 5th City Council meeting. The motion carried unanimously by Councilmembers present

Travis Wimbush, Mayor