



**BLAKELY CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES**

**SEPTEMBER 4, 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 Mills 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 Hutchins and Councilman Smith were all present. Councilman Charles Middleton was not 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 Hutchins to approve both the August 7th and August 21st Minutes. The motion carried unanimously

**III) CITIZENS AND DELEGATIONS**

**LISA COLLINS – HOTEL FEASIBILITY STUDY**

Lisa Collins came before the Council to present the Hotel Feasibility Study. She presented to the Council condensed report of the full study. As she presented her report she informed the Council that the land location was a triangular land site situated and surrounded by three access routes into the Blakely Court Square (US 27, GA HWY 200 and GA HWY 62) and that the site was just South of the Blakely Gateway Project. She then informed the Council that they had used AIMS, White Oak Pastures, Quail Country and other firms for marketing for this study. She informed the Council that they found that there was sufficient demand and need for a 46 room mid-scale limited-service hotel and that a Comfort Inn & Suites would best serve the market for Blakely. Lisa then explained that the project, at this point, was broke down into 4 phases. Phase 1-Marketing Area (North to Columbus, South to GA-FL state line, East to Interstate 75 and West to US 231 to include Dothan, Enterprise and Troy). Lisa stated that this Phase was to gather names and contact data of local leading hoteliers. Phase 2-Retain interim hospitality consultants to represent EC2055 at a lodging conference in October. Phase 3-Expand the marketing area for developer solicitation (North to southern suburbs of Atlanta, South to Gulf of Mexico coastline, East to Lake City, FL and West to Pensacola, FL and Montgomery, AL). Phase 4-Would be to attend the Atlanta Hotel Investors' Conference in March. Lisa informed the Council that all these pieces were based on cost and if there was the money to do them if need be but that they were going to do their very best. Lisa then answered some questions from the Council and informed the Council that she would provide a complete copy of the study to be available at City Hall.

**EARLY TREE & LANDSCAPING**

Robert Murkerson gave a presentation to the Council stating interest in bidding on taking over a portion of the City's sanitation duties. Robert stated some equipment that they had purchased and were looking to starting picking up and hauling off yard debris, large waste (brown goods, couches, appliances, etc...). Robert stated that they knew that taking this portion off the City could possibly eliminate a few jobs, but that they would need to hire a few individuals for the additional work. Robert then answered some questions from the Council. Robert informed the Council that they felt that they could save the City money with this process. Councilman Mills questioned the cost to the City and Robert informed him that those figures were being worked on at the present time.

**PAUL SIMONTON - CDBG**

Paul presented to the Council the bid for the 2011 CDBG project which is to replacing sewer lines on Ft. Gaines St. and Washington Ave. There were two bids, one from Blankenship in the amount of \$459,931, and one from Fortes Engineering in the amount of \$719,058 but when doing the bid tabulation the Fortes amount was actually \$777,558. Paul the informed the Council that when looking at the bids to the grant amount (\$454,119), they found a short fall of \$5,812. He then informed the Council that in relooking at the plans they found a section of sewer pipe, at the west end of Washington Ave. beyond Lee St, could be taken out of the project at this time. He stated that this would reduce the contract amount to \$449,562 leaving a contingency of \$4,557. Councilman Mills questioned Mr. Simonton on the portion they were looking at taking out of the project. Mr.

Simonton stated that the section being removed was a section that even though could be replaced was not the most pressing at this time. Mr. Simonton stated that if the City had an additional \$6,000 this section of pipe could be put back into the project with no contingency. The Mayor informed Mr. Simonton that the budget process was about to begin and that he felt that they could find the additional funds. Mr. Simonton then revised his request and asked the Council to approve Blankenship's bid for \$459,931. A motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Smith to accept the bid from Blankenship in the amount of \$459,931. The motion carried unanimously.

Paul then updated the Council on the Landfill Methane project from TTL. He informed the Council that the solar power fans that are there now are not really working. He stated that he has been in contact with EPD several times and given them a report. The report stated that he wants to put in a vent extraction system connecting all the wells together with a large blower at the end and valves in the lines so that the vacuum rate could be adjusted and they all vent at the same rate. He informed the Council that at the present time there is no control and no venting. He informed the Council that he is looking at the complete design and submission to EPD to be done by mid September. He stated that once the system is in place it would take about one month to finalize the adjustments on the valves for the correct ventilation. The proposal for the project, for design (field investigation, better measurements) about \$2,500, design and report EPD about \$1,200, design and plan preparation would be \$8,000 and this would get the project permitted and under construction. He reminded the Council that the last submission by him for this part was about \$16,000 and has decreased to a total of \$11,700. The remaining part would be field testing and adjustment of which he budgeted about 45 hrs., could be more, could be less and that would depend on how much trouble they had to get everything adjusted. He informed the Council that he budgeted \$5,400 for this portion with an additional \$1,000 for rental of flow equipment for a total of \$6,400 and a grand total for this portion of the project of \$18,100. He informed the Council that he would like to move on this, with their approval, as quickly as possible because he had some individuals on standby for this project. The Mayor explained to the Council EPD's visit and that we have exhausted all other efforts and that the County to pay half of this cost. Paul then answered questions from the Council. Paul will be coming back before the Council once he has material costs but that he is hoping that the entire project to cost \$50,000 or less. A motion was made by Councilman Smith and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to approve the initial project proposal of \$18,100, pending County approval. The motion carried unanimously.

Paul discussed the inert pit at the Landfill. Paul informed the Council that there were two things going on regarding this matter at the present time. The first thing is that there was a compliance review and there were a few things they had on the City and the second item was that they are changing to rules, as we speak, in regards to inert landfills and that this will change how we operate. Paul informed the Council that the main things right now that was focused on was the stock pile of things being put in the inert permitted areas. He stated that we need to move and shuffle things in and out of this area every 90 days. The issues are that materials are staying too long and that it is on the site that is the permitted landfill. He stated that in order to keep materials there and continue to stock pile the City would need to re-plate the inert landfill so that materials being stock piled are adjacent to it but not on it when re-permitted. He then stated that the City really did need to try to get some of the materials out of the area. Paul then stated that within 18 months the inert landfill needs to be closed or brought up to the new rules and regulations, which would be keeping up with the volume, reporting quarterly and do methane monitoring when it was eventually shut down. He stated that by October 2013 we would have to have a permit application to EPD stating that we are following all the new rules and regulations or we would have to shut it down by April 2014. He stated that EPD stated that we can go vertical which is unlimited. There were then some questions about the cost of a new landfill. The Council questioned Paul on what type of materials are considered inert. Paul's suggestion to the Council was to go vertical and that it should be fenced.

Paul then discussed with the Council a new CDBG application for 2013. He stated that he and Wanda had discussed a sewer project along River St. and Meadowbrook Dr. Paul stated that he needs to camera the lines to get the numbers regarding impact and then some demographic investigation which is the grant consultant portion. There was some discussion between the Council and Paul regarding types of projects for CDBG and Paul informed the Council that anything outside of sewer projects would be hard to get.

**FIRST THURSDAYS – REQUEST TO TURN ON SKYLINE LIGHTS** - Debra Anderson came before the Council asking if the City could turn on the lights on the buildings the first Thursday of each month for the next four months (Sept, Oct, Nov and Dec) and if we could run it on the sign in front of City Hall. A motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to approve Ms. Anderson's request. The motion carried unanimously.

**IV) ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**CHIEF JONES - ZONING MAP** - Chief Jones presented to the Council changes in zoning from past minutes but had not made on the zoning map. Chief Jones and the Council discussed making additional zone changes City wide in one motion before sending the map to the RDC to be updated. Chief Jones stated that he would leave the map at City Hall for the Council to inspect for any other changes. There was then discussion on the process.

**CHIEF JONES - PERMIT FEES** - Chief came before the Council to ask that they examine the fee schedule and confirm the fee and permitting process. He then stated that some individuals have asked about exemptions to the permit fees. The Mayor stated that exemptions and/or classification of exemptions should take place through the Council. It was then discussed between the Chief, the City Attorney and the Council about categorizing permits for exemptions.

**V) CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

**RESOLUTION ABOLISHING BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS** - The City Attorney brought to the Council a Resolution to abolish the Board of Zoning Appeals seeing as we do not use a zoning appeal board. The City Attorney stated that this needed to go before the Planning Commission before the Council could take action.

**RESOLUTION REGARDING ENFORCEMENT OF BUILDING CODE** - The City Attorney stated that this should be an Ordinance and therefore this constituted as the first reading of an Ordinance regarding enforcement of building code.

**VI) CITY CLERK'S REPORT**

The City Clerk presented the financial information to the Council stating that there was \$20,948.12 in the bank. She also informed the Council that at the present time the City is still down, revenue to expenses, \$133,000. The Clerk informed the Council that she was still working on the fee schedule for commercial credit card usage.

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

**APPROVE MILLAGE RATE** - There was a motion by Councilman Smith and seconded by Councilman Mills to approve leaving the Millage Rate at 3.25 for the City. The motion carried unanimously

**REQUEST FORM FOR DISPLAYING A BANNER** - A motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Smith to approve the request form for the City to hang banners. The motion carried unanimously

**TAKE ACTION ON THE GIS MAPPING CONTRACT** - A motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Smith to approve the contract with the City Of Americus to do the GIS/GPS mapping of the City's gas system. The motion carried unanimously

**INSURANCE DEDUCTIBLE** - A motion was made by Councilman Smith and seconded by Councilman Mills to approve the insurance quote of \$12,218 for the electrical distribution system and leave the deductible at \$1,000. The motion carried unanimously

**FLU SHOTS FOR EMPLOYEES** - A motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Smith to approve flu shots for the City employees. The motion carried unanimously

Jeff Jones came before the Council to update them on the 39 lift station stating that the design was about 90% complete and that they were getting prepared to set up meetings for easements.

Councilman Hutchins informed the Council that the appliances in the kitchen, at the Civic Center, were in need of extreme cleaning. He stated that the stove was unusable. He asked that we get this cleaned and make sure that it is check on regularly.

Councilman Hutchins questioned the process on pay increases for the Council.

**VIII) PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**IX) EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The City Clerk informed the Council that there had been an issue with the billing system regarding a commercial demand customer. She informed the Council that demand readings had been omitted June and July 2011 and therefore it had thrown the calculation in their billing off by under billing this customer by \$25,000. She then informed them that the system was back to calculating correctly now and that she would be checking into the other demand customers to see if there were any others that had miscalculated. She also informed them that the customer was going to be billed

for the under billing and that she would be checking into ways, with other employees and the software company, so that this never happened again.

The Council set the date of September 25<sup>th</sup> to hear from Electric Cities regarding the Cost of Service Study.

**X) ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Councilman Mills and seconded by Councilman Hutchins to adjourn the September 4<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting. The motion carried unanimously

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Anthony Howard, Mayor