

**HAHIRA CITY COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

**JANUARY 8, 2015**

**7:30 P.M.**

**COURTHOUSE**

Mayor and Council met for a Council meeting January 8, 2015 at the Courthouse with Mayor Bruce Cain presiding.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Bruce Cain, Councils: Mason Barfield, Kenneth Davis, Ralph Clendenin and Mayor Pro Tem Terry Benjamin. City Manager Jonathan Sumner, Police Chief Terry Davis, Fire Chief Dwight Bennett, Public Works Director Donnie Warren and City Clerk Lisa Mashburn. Attorney Rob Plumb was present.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Bruce Cain

**ESTABLISH QUORUM:** Mayor Bruce Cain

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mayor Bruce Cain

**INVOCATION:** Pastor David Gordon of Hahira First Baptist Church

**PROCLAMATION-HAHIRA MIDDLE SCHOOL SOFTBALL TEAM**

The Mayor said that they could not attend tonight to postpone to later date.

**COUNCIL ELECTION-MAYOR PRO TEM**

Mayor Cain stated that it is time to nominate a Mayor Pro Tem for 2015. Councilmember Mason Barfield made a motion to nominate Senior Councilmember Ralph Clendenin which was seconded by present Mayor Pro Tem Terry Benjamin. All voted in motion of the favor.

**COUNCIL ASSIGNMENTS-MAYOR CAIN**

Mayor Cain announced the assignments for the departments of the City and gave each Councilmember a copy of the assignments. The assignments are as follows:

Benjamin-Fire Department

Barfield-Parks, Recreation, Nutrition, Streets, Special Events

Clendenin- Police Department

Davis- Water, Sewer, Sanitation

## **REVIEW/CORRECTION OF MEETING MINUTES:**

- A. DECEMBER 1, 2014 WORK SESSION**
- B. DECEMBER 4, 2014 COUNCIL MEETING**

Mayor Cain asked if anyone had any questions or corrections regarding the meeting minutes. None noted. Councilmember Terry Benjamin made a motion to accept the minutes as presented which was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin. Councilmember Benjamin, Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Barfield and Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin all voted in favor of the motion.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **A. WATER-SEWER RATE ORDINANCE (SECOND READING-CITY MANAGER)**

City Manager Jonathan Sumner said that as discussed at previous meetings this is the second reading for the water/sewer ordinance. No vote is required tonight. He said that three consecutive reads are required with the vote at the February 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. The purpose of public hearing is to increase public awareness, we have sent out letters and made presentations at previous meetings. He explained that the rates will increase quarterly starting April 2015 and the increase will be for residential and commercial accounts. He stated again that there will be a senior citizen discount for citizens 65 and older who are considered low income. Starting in January 2016 there will be a perpetual 3% increase each year. The Mayor asked if anyone wished to speak against the new water/sewer ordinance.

Harriett Crum of 307 E. Lawson Street asked how many years the 3% annual increase will be assessed. Councilmember Barfield said that there are other improvements to the system that will have to be done in the future. He said that at any time the 3% annual increase can be repealed, the Council can vote to repeal it and it is done.

Jody Nichols of 209 Redbird Place asked when a governing body ever repeals something in effect. Councilmember Barfield said that it can be repealed by Council with majority vote. Councilmember Barfield said that every year the Council can review and approach in whatever manner they would like. Ms. Nichols asked if the funds can only be used for water/sewer/sanitation. City Manager Sumner said yes the funds can only be used for the proprietary fund.

The Mayor asked if anyone wished to speak in favor. None noted.

## **CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:**

Mr. Wilmon Stanley of 308 S Washington Street said that his wife was very happy to get a thank you card from the City after the dinner she prepared for City employees. Everyone enjoyed the dinner.

Marilyn Dye of 205 Redbird Place said she would like to say Happy New Year and said that she is requesting information maybe in a forum or town hall meeting to let us know what the DDA can or cannot do for us. Information regarding the DDA, people are talking about this; how would you turn back from this.

Marge Stewart of 205 Thrasher Way said she moved here in 2007 because she liked the area but that she is concerned about the water increases and the collection site ; setting up fees for debris. She said we are considering buying the property from the railroad but where are the boundaries. She feels that

the property will help the City but where are the boundaries. She thinks that we should proceed with caution.

Jody Nichols of 209 Redbird Place concerned at how Council works and relates back to the people. Trees were taken out and now trees are being put back in. The railroad boundaries, do we even know where the property lines are. We need to be slow and thorough. She said she know we are the City of honeybees but she is mad as a hornet.

David Gordon 201 Church Street, Hahira First Baptist Church said that he was here regarding an issue with the sidewalks in front of the Church. He said that he understands that it is City property and that the sidewalks are horrible and he is afraid that someone could have a serious incident. He said he would like to know the process and what he needs to do to have it repaired. City Manager Sumner said that it was discussed at the August retreat and that he knows we have a lot of trip hazards and that Council will need to study the issue and fix them, this is a SPLOST eligible expense. He said we need to decide to break up the sidewalks and replace them or grind down to make them level surfaces. We will discuss this in February at the retreat and we will keep you informed.

#### **REVIEW OF BILLS/BUDGET OVERAGES:**

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions or concerns regarding the bills. None noted. **Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin made a motion to approve the bills as presented which was seconded by Councilmember Barfield. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin, Councilmember Barfield, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Benjamin all voted in favor of the motion.**

#### **DISCUSSIONS:**

##### **A. RAILROAD PROPERTY PURCHASE (CITY ATTORNEY)**

City Attorney Rob Plumb said that the contract for the City to purchase 4.177 acres from Georgia-Florida Southern Railroad and the assignment for the lease has been completed. The land has been surveyed and the appraisal is \$334,000. He said that after further inspection we can close in 90 days. He said that we do know where the property begins and ends and has been verified by appraiser. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin asked about the tobacco warehouse that is there on the property. Plumb said the contract on the tobacco warehouse is month to month and the lease can be terminated by either party within 30 days but that the current contract ends June 30, 2015. City Manager Sumner said that this is a SPLOST VII expense and is for public use only. Mayor Pro Tem said that it looked good to him. The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions. None noted. **Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin made a motion to approve the purchase of the railroad property for \$334,000 which was seconded by Councilmember Barfield. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin, Councilmember Barfield, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Benjamin all voted in favor of the motion.**

#### **DEPARTMENT REQUESTS:**

##### **A. COLLECTION CENTER ROLL OFF CONTRACT (CITY MANAGER)**

City Manager Sumner said that as stated on Monday night that the current cost for the collection site will go from \$52.00 to \$140.00 per pull with the current provider. This is a budget issue and is free of charge to the residents of Hahira. He stated that he put out an RFP in the

Valdosta Daily Times and received one proposal from Mark Webb with Safe Waste Disposal. The cost would be \$115.00 per pull with no monthly rental fee. Staff recommends awarding the bid to continue to have this service for the citizens. We will have to pay tipping fees and we will have to crunch numbers for the February retreat. He said that we spend about \$2,000.00 per month on tipping fees. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin asked if it goes to a different site for dumping. No it all goes to the same site per PWD Warren. **Councilmember Barfield made a motion to accept the bid from Safe Waste Disposal at \$115.00 per pull which was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin. Councilmember Barfield, Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Benjamin and Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin all voted in favor of the motion.**

**B. INFLOW & INFILTRATION FIND AND FIX PROJECT-SPLOST VI & SPLOST VII (CITY MANAGER)**

City Manager Sumner said that Mayor and Council have a list of the priority projects and it was talked about at the retreat about the I & I problems within the City. He said that as observed with heavy rainfall that we have areas of concern. He said that every sewer system in the state has problems with manholes. He said after putting out the RFP that we received 7 bids in December 2014 with the low bid of \$185,858.00. He said that this is a SPLOST VI & VII expense and would cover the areas of Main Street and East side of Grace Street to Stanfill Street. This would cover about 2 acres that would be slip lined. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin asked if the storm drains will drain or just sit there. Sumner said that this would take out the cross draining, this has all been smoke tested but should work as it is repaired. Clendenin asked what the life of this. PWD said that it has about the life of PVC. Sumner said that this is being done on large scale in Valdosta. **Councilmember Davis made a motion to accept the low bidder Insituform for the amount of \$185,858.00 which was seconded by Councilmember Barfield. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin, Councilmember Barfield, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Benjamin all voted in favor of the motion.**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**A. FIRE TRUCK RADIO-SPLOST VI**

**B. BOARD OF ELECTIONS CONTRACT-2015 ELECTIONS FOR DISTRICTS 2,3**

**The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions regarding the consent agenda.** A motion was made by Councilmember Benjamin to accept the consent agenda as presented which was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin. Councilmember Benjamin, Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Barfield and Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin all voted in favor of the motion.

**REPORTS:**

Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that he was happy to see all the faces tonight. He said that we do have a survey on the railroad property and that we do have a 100 foot setback going east and west. He said that it is nice to see everyone and that he hopes it warms up outside. Thank you for coming out.

Councilmember Davis said Happy New Year to you all and thank you for coming out. He said that he had a great first year on Council and that he is looking forward to his second year. He said that as Councilmember for District II he works hard to get information and to make the right decision. He tries to make sure that he is doing the right thing. You can all me with any questions and if he doesn't know the answer he will find out for you. Thank you all for being concern and for asking questions and he hopes to see everyone here at meetings this year. Have a good night.

Councilmember Terry Benjamin said he would like to say Happy New Year and to thank Council. He said for the last 14 years we have been talking about the railroad property, water issues and the DDA. Thanks to the good lord we finally are purchasing the railroad property, to see this finally be settled. HE said that he would like to thank each member of Council, the attorney, City Manager and staff for the work they have done regarding these issues and projects. He said that after sitting in 16 hours of training that he feels the DDA is what we need to do to revitalize the downtown and help the businesses. He said if you go to Bainbridge and Thomasville that they brag on the DDA, what is the drop off? He said that all these gentlemen have done their due diligence concerning the water, railroad property and the DDA and that they have taken their calling seriously. Thanks to all the department heads and staff employees. HE said to the question earlier in Citizens to be heard what has ever been repealed by Council that there are many things that can be repealed and have been repealed in the past. He said that we have a good group and that we can get Hahira in the future. Thank you for the opportunity to serve and thank you to the Mayor.

Councilmember Barfield said how you follow that and that he would like to echo what everyone has said tonight. He thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve this first year in Hahira. He said that when he decided to serve it was with a lot of apprehension but that apprehension was not founded. He has enjoyed his first year, he feels that this Mayor and Council has integrity and the agenda is to serve the citizens of Hahira. This is all presented to the public, the system can be better and that he looks forward to the next three years. This is going to be a great year. We have not made a decision on the DDA, a lot has to be done and plenty of input from the public before anything can be decided. We are all in the learning stages, nothing behind the scene being done. He is happy to turn the Railroad property into the City center and we have the need for it. He said we are the best small city and that he appreciates all employees. Happy New Year.

City Manager thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve and said that he appreciates the work that Victoria, Lisa and Paula do. The Retreat will be February 6<sup>th</sup> from 2-8 p.m. and February 7<sup>th</sup> from 8-2 p.m. He is not sure of the location at this time. He said that he looks forward to another year and thank you.

The Mayor said that he would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and hopes that everyone had great holidays. Thank you to the department heads, Public Works, Fire Department and Police Department for all their hard work. They watch their budget closely and do a fantastic job. Thank you to the City Manager, City Clerk and the rest of the City staff. He said that he has completed his first year and that he is proud of this year, he feels that we have all come together and we do not have to worry. The Fire Department did a good job with the ISO and he would like to thank the new Council Barfield and Davis and it has been a pleasure to work with them. He feels that he has great support and that we are finally moving forward. Hahira is moving along great. Have a blessed year.

The Mayor asked for a motion to adjourn. **Councilmember Barfield made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Councilmember Benjamin. Councilmember Barfield, Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Benjamin and Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin all voted in favor of the motion.**

**ADJOURN.**

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**MAYOR BRUCE CAIN**

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**CITY CLERK LISA MASHBURN**