

HAHIRA CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

APRIL 7, 2016

7:30 P.M.

COURTHOUSE

The Mayor and Council met for a Council meeting April 7, 2016 at the Courthouse with Mayor Bruce Cain presiding.

PRESENT: Mayor Bruce Cain, Councils: Mason Barfield, Kenneth Davis, Patrick Warren and Mayor Pro Tem Terry Benjamin. City Manager Jonathan Sumner, Fire Chief Dwight Bennett, Police Chief Terry Davis, PWD Donnie Warren and City Clerk Lisa Mashburn.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Bruce Cain

ESTABLISH QUORUM: Mayor Bruce Cain

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Bruce Cain

INVOCATION: Rev. Jackson

REVIEW/CORRECTIONS OF MEETING MINUTES:

- A. FEBRUARY 4, 2016 COUNCIL MEETING**
- B. FEBRUARY 29, 2016 WORK SESSION**
- C. MARCH 3, 2016 COUNCIL MEETING**

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions or concerns regarding the meeting minutes. None noted.

A motion was made to approve the minutes as presented by Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin which was seconded by Councilman Barfield. Councilman Barfield, Councilman Warren, Councilman Davis and Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin all voted in favor of the motion.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

Marge Stewart of 205 Thrasher Way said she would like to thank Chief Davis for putting the police cars on Thrasher Way. She said she noticed people slowing down and stated she would like to see the speed limit lowered in that neighborhood.

Marilyn Dye of 205 Redbird Place said that she would like to let everyone know that on April 11th at the Hahira library they will have free legal advice for citizens. The time will be from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and it is with Georgia Legal Services. She said that she had many questions regarding the police presence and that she would like to thank them for being there.

REVIEW OF BILLS/BUDGET OVERAGES:

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

DISCUSSIONS:

A. FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFFING (CHIEF BENNETT)

Chief Bennett said that as discussed on Monday night at the Work Session that after assessment of the Fire Department operations it was noted that there is a central flaw. Many of the fire fighters have moved out of the City of Hahira, this makes a distance for them to travel and is problematic. He stated that one solution would be to hire some full time employees that would allow for two full time firefighters to be on duty per 24 hours. I would like to hire two full time employees for rotation and utilize the part time help.

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions. The Mayor asked about the Valdosta Daily Times article regarding the Valdosta Fire Department. Chief Bennett said that this is the difference in two different departments, Valdosta has 6 or 7 stations. They are increasing the distance requirements for recruiting. Their needs are different than ours. Councilman Warren said that he is all for increasing the Fire Department coverage for the citizens and we have three options. Councilman Barfield said that he feels we should start with plan 1 and re-evaluate at next retreat before we go to steps 2 or 3. Chief Bennett said that plan 1 will work. Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin said we should use caution and look for any budget concerns in the next year. The Mayor said that he feels we should keep it at baby steps and not add a lot of personnel. As of now we have no problems but we do have a lot of other things going on. The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions. The Mayor said that in the last two years we have more than doubled the revenue and that has a lot to do with the department heads. City Manager Sumner said that he agrees with the Mayor, we should be practical because we do have a lot of obligations, we have salary adjustments and capital projects in the near future. I am confident in the fund balance, we now have the opportunity to spend down the fund balance of the last 6 or 7 years. I think this is a great decision, expansion of service, this is the logical next step. The Mayor asked if anyone had any more questions. None noted.

Councilman Barfield made a motion to approve option 1 for 2 full time firefighters for the Fire department which was seconded by Councilman Davis. Councilman Barfield, Councilman Davis, Councilman Warren and Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin all voted in favor of the motion.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. REQUEST BY HAHIRA MIDDLE SCHOOL ARCHERY TEAM-\$1000.00 DONATION**
- B. HMA SPRINGFEST FUNDING REQUEST**
- C. HMA POSITION REQUEST**
- D. WATER/SEWER DEPARTMENT TRUCK-SPLOST VII**
- E. SUMMER TRAINING FOR CHIEF DAVIS**

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions regarding the Consent Agenda. None noted. **Councilman Davis made a motion to approve the Consent agenda as presented which was seconded by**

Councilman Warren, Councilman Davis, Councilman Warren, Councilman Barfield and Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin all voted in favor of the motion.

PROCLAMATION: GEORGIA CITIES WEEK

The Mayor stated that this is a proclamation for Georgia Cities Week in conjunction with Hahira Merchants Association. This is the first time in 10 years and it will kick off April 17th to April 23rd. City Manager Sumner read the Proclamation for Georgia Cities Week.

REPORTS:

Councilman Warren said congratulation to Mayor and Council for making this change to the Fire Department and making citizens feel safe. He feels that this is a wise choice. Great job to everyone, and thank you to the Public works department for staying on top of things during the rain cycle we just had.

Councilman Barfield said ditto to what has been said. Thank you to Chief Bennett for bringing this to our attention. Thank you to Vicki Rountree for the move to get additional help. Thank you to PWD Warren for going out at 3:00 a.m. during the rain storm, thank you for coming out and fixing the road. It was a bad rain but nothing like Valdosta is dealing with.

Councilman Davis said that he is very proud to be a part of this group. I look up to them all and I think they all have knowledge they bring to the table. Thank you to the Mayor, City Manager and City Clerk. I think when needs are brought up that we all work together to get the information to make the right decisions. When we have needs you have to weigh the options. This Council has moved forward with many trying issues. When you are looking at \$115,000 you do not take it lightly. Thank you to the Public works department and to the police officers, it does not go unnoticed.

Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin said ditto to everything that has been said. I would like to thank District I for the opportunity to serve, we have a lot of great things that are coming up. This group has had a lot of long term goals that are getting accomplished after many years of research. This is a good position to be in, thank you for all your concerns and insight. People are excited about moving to Hahira. HE said to Chief Bennett that they lost 3 lives in District 1 years ago, you can't save everyone but you can try to do something. Thank you to Reverend Jackson from Magnolia Church for coming out tonight.

City Manager Sumner thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve and thank you to all the department heads. I participate in many conferences and panels, I don't have their issues, and I have the best and most talented department heads and employees. We are pulling the trigger, this is the countdown, we have had many challenging things and we haven't been able to get over the hump, now we need to celebrate the opportunity and expand our services. We will have many other opportunities ahead of us in the next few months.

Mayor Cain thanked everyone for coming out tonight. We appreciate all the department heads, things are looking good. As Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin said we are doing things that we wanted to get done for the last 5 years. Now we see the fruits of our labor. The Police department received a very nice letter regarding Officer Hunter, how he was very nice and courteous. Thank you to Donne for going out after the rain, Hagenbridge was washing out and we had to close the road. He said that he feels this is a very good decision regarding the HMA, you have a lot of work to put on events and that he hopes this all works out. Thank you to Reverend Jackson and we hope to see more of you.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

ADJOURN.

MAYOR BRUCE CAIN

CITY CLERK LISA MASHBURN