

City of Donalsonville  
Council Meeting-December 6, 2016

**Official Minutes**

Mayor Dan E. Ponder, Jr. called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Councilman Lindsey Register then gave the invocation, after which all joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

Councilmembers present for the meeting included, Mayor Dan E. Ponder, Jr., Mayor Pro Tem Ed Bond, CP Lindsey Register, CP Mitch Blanks, CP Travis Brooks, and CP Annie Ruth Callaway; CP Tony Buczek joined the meeting around 6:20 PM. Staff present were City Manager Steve Hicks. City Clerk Christina Corvers, Chief of Police Woodrow Blue, Fire Chief Dean King, Public Works Superintendent Donald Gambrell, and City Attorney Paul Fryer. Guests present were Kathleen Barineau, Barbara Barber, C.J. Hodge, Stacy Watkins, and Billy Grantham.

Approval of the agenda: Councilperson Blanks made a motion to approve the Agenda with CP Register making a second, motion carried. Approval of the minutes from the regular Council Meeting held on November 1, 2016; Mayor Pro Tem Bond moved to approve with CP Callaway seconding, motion passed unanimously.

INTERNAL BUSINESS: The Financial Statements and a Utility Billing Summary for October were presented and reviewed with comments made by City Manager Hicks on the current revenue status. City Manager Hicks stated he would work on a projection for the remaining year in order to prepare for next year's budget. CP Blanks proposed extending the Natural Gas Service to generate City Revenue in the future.

OLD BUSINESS: Mayor Ponder gave a brief update on the SoZo Wireless Project, where he stated that Ray Cheng had planned to attend the meeting to give a more detailed update but due to various conflicts he would reschedule the presentation to a later date.

Next City Manager Hicks requested the Councils approval to approve the FY 2017 LMIG/SPLOST Street Resurfacing Project contract to Oxford Construction Company in the amount of \$199,751.40. The bid on the LMIG/SPLOST Resurfacing Project has already been awarded. CP Blanks made a motion to approve the contract with Oxford Construction Company, with Mayor Pro Tem Bond seconding; motion carried.

City Manager Hicks then requested action of the Council on the FY 2017 LMIG/SPLOST Sidewalk Project. City Manager Hicks and Project Engineer Stacy Watkins discussed various options which would lower the cost of the project by \$20,000.00. These options would require assistance from the City in the form of limited traffic control, silt fence installation, along with maintenance, and grassing of the affected areas. The new contract amount after adopting these changes will approximately be \$127,000.00. City Manager Hicks stated that there was sufficient SPLOST IV Funds available to handle the difference after utilizing LMIG Funds available in SPLOST V for the Resurfacing and Sidewalk Project. City Manager Hicks recommends to award the bid to David Taylor Construction Company in the amount of \$148,204.30 and then approve a change order to reduce the project cost to approximately \$127,000.00. City Manager Hicks also request to authorize Mayor Ponder to execute the contract as the City is required to be under contract with this project by year-end. CP Register made a motion to award the bid to David Taylor Construction Company in the amount of \$148,204.30, with Mayor Pro Bond making a second; motion passed unanimously. Then Mayor Pro Tem Bond made a motion to award the Change Order Form which would reduce the total cost of the project to \$127,000.00, with CP Blanks making a second; motion passed.

Next City Manager Hicks recommended the approval of the agreement with Southwest Georgia Regional Commission to develop a zoning ordinance, policies and procedures for zoning, and a zoning map. The total cost of the project would be \$17,000.00, which had previously been budgeted. CP Brooks made a motion to enter into the agreement with Southwest Georgia Regional Commission with CP Callaway making a second; motion passed unanimously.

City Manager Hicks then presented the new Personnel Handbook and Drug Plan to the Council for review to approve, with any necessary changes, at the next Council meeting. The new policy would provide for random drug and alcohol testing of City Employees. City Manager Hicks stated that once the Personnel Policy is adopted, the Policy itself and description of the drug and alcohol will be made available to employees 30 days before it would be implemented. City Attorney Fryer stated some concerns he had with implemented these two policies, where he recommended some changes be made before they go into effect. City Manager Hicks and City Attorney Fryer agreed to review the necessary changes before presenting them to the Council for approval.

**NEW BUSINESS:** A request was given by City Manager Hicks to seek proposals for a New Telephone System for the City. City Manager Hicks stated that the unbudgeted cost should be less than \$10,000.00, with the option of administering an audit of the current phone system. Through this audit, the City could potentially be refunded for costs previously charged which would help fund the cost associated with acquiring a New Telephone System. This system would replace a seventeen-year-old Telephone System with new technology and also provide for voicemail capabilities. This system would also allow expansion to accommodate the New Fire Station. CP Blanks made a motion to allow City Manager Hicks to request Proposals for a New Telephone System within City Hall, with Mayor pro Tem Bond making a second; motion carried unanimously.

Next was a request to seek bids for a Standby Generator given by City Manager Hicks. This Generator would be 125kw and would support Administrative and Public Safety Functions. CP Buczek made a motion to approve City Manager Hicks to seek bids for the Standby Generator with CP Brooks making a second; motion carried.

City Manager Hicks then made a recommendation to authorize Police Chief Blue to purchase two New Police Vehicles under the Georgia Statewide Contract ES-RFR-40199-409 in the amount of \$42,546.70 and to further authorize the financing of the vehicles under a lease purchase agreement utilizing SPLOST Funds. City Manager Hicks stated that these items were budgeted into the current year's budget and reminded the Council this would be a lease purchase. CP Register made a motion to approve the budgeted lease amount of two New Police Vehicles, with CP Callaway making a second; motion carried unanimously.

Next, City Manager Hicks and City Attorney Fryer gave a discussion on the presented Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Brinson. This proposed agreement is a request from the City of Brinson requesting the City of Donalsonville to assist with the treatment of Nitrates in their wastewater System. City Attorney Fryer also represents the City of Brinson with this matter and briefly discussed the purposes for the request. No action was taken.

City Manager Hicks then informed the Council of the upcoming 25% increase in the Health Insurance Premiums, which will occur on January 1, 2017. This will increase the premiums by \$149.00 per month, which would increase the employee portion to \$34.38 weekly. City Employees who are currently participating pay \$9.47 per week. City Manager Hicks stated that we are currently projected to be under budget for the salaries and benefits this year due to utilization, and he recommends consideration to address the increase amount to be passed onto the employees in the next budget. This would help determine if any changes may be forthcoming in reducing Health Care Cost in the New Administration. City Manager Hicks stated that in the meantime, he would explore some options that may provide assistance to employees to help ease the costs and help reduce cost to the City. CP Blanks made a motion to table addressing the increase to the Health Insurance Premiums until next Budget time, CP Callaway made a second; motion passed unanimously.

Next, Fire Chief King gave a brief update on the status of the New Fire Truck/Apparatus. Fire Chief King also updated the Council on the removal of the Burn Ban which was in place due to the drought. He stated citizens will still need to acquire a Burn Permit in order to burn items within the City Limits. Next, Fire Chief King stated that he is awaiting a response from the Governors Office on the ban of Fireworks. Lastly, Fire Chief King stated that the Fire Department would be burning the Blighted Property located on the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Tallman Avenue the morning of December 19, 2016.

Police Chief Blue gave a brief update on the New Radio System and stated the installation would begin within the next couple of weeks.

Public Works Superintendent Gambrell then gave a brief update on the Mortgage Hill Sewer Project, along with the projection of the installation of Water Lines on Rucus Ridge and Joseph Avenue.

A general update was then given by City Manager Hicks on various items including the Railroad Crossings and the Bid Process for the Fire Department. City Manager Hicks stated that repairs to the Railroad Crossing on SR Alternate 91 would begin on January 9, 2016 and once that crossing is completed, CSX would begin repairs to SR Alternate 91. City Manager Hicks also indicated that a request has been initiated to begin maintenance repairs on Henderson, Broome, and Morris Avenue. Next, City Manager Hicks announced that plans for the New Fire Station are complete and that invitations to bid and advertisements have been sent out to implement the bid process. The bid opening is set for January 5, 2016 for the New Fire Station. A brief update was also given by City Manager Hicks on the Police Department Radios and discussed possible upgrades to better communicate between the City and County into the coming budget. Next, a brief discussion was made by City Manager Hicks and Public Works Superintendent Gambrell to undergo a possible Drainage System Study performed by Stacy Watkins in order to provide the City with some solutions to drainage issues. CP Blanks suggested when the Council is ready to examine this study further, to include the County in hopes of conducting it as a joint effort.

With there being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, at 7:26 PM Mayor Pro Tem Bond made a motion to adjourn with CP Brooks making a second, and the motion carried.

ADJOURNED

City of Donalsonville

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Dan E. Ponder, Jr., Mayor

Attest and Certification:

I, Christina Corvers, do here Attest and Certify that  
The above written is a true and correct representation  
of the business and actions conducted during the December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Donalsonville.

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Christina Corvers, City Clerk