

City of Donalsonville  
Council Meeting-April 2, 2019

**Official Minutes**

Mayor Dan E. Ponder, Jr. called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall. After which Mayor Dan E. Ponder, Jr. gave the invocation, then 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 Mitch Blanks, CP Travis Brooks, CP Mitzy Moye, CP Lindsay Register and CP Flossie Smith. Staff present were City Manager Steve Hicks, City Clerk Christina Corvers, Public Works Superintendent Don Gambrell, Building Inspector Tony Morris, Police Chief Woodrow Blue, Communications Director Jeffrey Hatcher, and City Attorney Billy Grantham. Guests present were David Maxwell, Sheila Williams, Virginia Harrison, Beverly Burke, Sarah Avery, Winston Ferris, Reginald Oliver, Chris Leal, Donald Martin, Beulah Weaver and Calvin Jackson, III.

Approval of the Agenda: CP Blanks made a motion to approve the Agenda, with CP Smith seconding. Motion passed. Next, the approval of the minutes from the Council Meeting held on March 5, 2019. Mayor Pro Tem Bond made a motion to approve the minutes from the March Council Meeting, with CP Blanks seconding. Motion carried.

APPEARANCES: Virginia Harrison with the Downtown Development Authority gave an update on the Firehouse BBQ Contest, which is to be held Saturday April 6, 2019 10:00 AM-4:00 PM. BBQ Teams will be coming in Thursday and staying through Saturday/Sunday, with around 28 total teams registered to compete in the contest.

Next, Sarah Avery with the Chamber of Commerce gave an update on the Rural Zone Designation application, as well as the Economic Development "Leakage Report" provided by Georgia Power. Lastly, Sarah Avery gave an update on the Boots & Roots Rodeo held last month, stating that it was once again a huge hit, with the largest crowd ever on Saturday night.

Chris Leal then requested permission to place a new Double-Wide Mobile Home at 408 Joseph Avenue. City Manager Hicks stated that after reviewing the current ordinance, the Double-Wide Mobile Home is not in compliance with the zoning restrictions and code requirements in this location as the area is zoned as R-A. Chris Leal explained the hardship he is experiencing since Hurricane Michael destroyed his home, and requested a variance to allow him to place this Double-Wide Mobile Home at his property on 408 Joseph Avenue. After some discussion, CP Blanks made a motion to grant Chris Leal the variance which would allow for the placement of the Double-Wide Mobile Home at 408 Joseph Avenue. CP Register seconded. AYES: CP Blanks, CP Register, and CP Smith. NAYS: Mayor Pro Tem Bond, CP Moye, CP Brooks. After some discussion, Mayor Ponder broke the tie vote by voting NAY. Mayor Ponder stated that he was not fully aware of the issue at hand and would like some time to look at other options and would allow Chris Leal to present another request at a later date. City Attorney Billy Grantham addressed the Council to inform that a variance may be required that may necessitate a public notice and a public hearing prior to consideration of the request. As a vote had been taken and a motion to approve the request failed, it was suggested to Mr. Leal that he reapply. City Attorney Grantham will review the requirements and inform Mr. Leal of the process.

Next, Reginald Oliver requested permission to place a used Single-Wide Mobile Home at 312 N. Friendship Avenue. City Manager Hicks stated that the zoning ordinance does allow placement of a Mobile Home in this area as it is zoned R-B. The current residential structure is in the process of being removed by the Fire Department, as it was destroyed during Hurricane Michael. CP Register made a motion to approve the request to place the Single-Wide Mobile Home at 312 N. Friendship Avenue subject to the removal of the current residential structure. CP Smith made a second; motion passed.

Winston Ferris then requested permission to place a used Double-Wide Mobile Home at 602 Chason Street, Lot #12. City Manager Hicks stated that the zoning ordinance does allow placement of a Mobile Home in this area as it is zoned R-B. CP Register made a motion to

approve the request to place the Double-Wide Mobile Home at 602 Chason Street, Lot #12. CP Smith made a second; motion passed unanimously.

INTERNAL BUSINESS: The Financial Statements for February 2019 were presented and reviewed with comments made by City Manager Hicks on the current status, along with discussion on the three-month analysis.

### OLD BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS: City Manager Hicks gave an update on Hurricane Michael Activities which included the following:

- Completing a third pass on the vegetative debris removal operations next week. C & D debris removal will start as well. The City of Donalsonville will request a 90-day extension (current deadline is April 14<sup>th</sup>) from GEMA to complete the work which will include the burning of the vegetative debris and removal of C & D materials. Once the City of Donalsonville gets final approval on the extension we will notify the public of applicable deadlines for pickup operations. GDOT is still going to be responsible for debris on the State roads (at this point). We are scheduling site inspections with FEMA on April 17, 18, and 19 which will be a crucial element of the funding process. Efforts are being directed to do the drainage system cleanup through FEMA in order to expedite the work.
- Grass mowing operations will be somewhat hindered by the presence of storm debris on the rights-of-way.
- Commercial debris and any debris placed by private contractors will be the responsibility of the owners and contractors. Tires are not eligible for pickup. The property owner is responsible for tires unless the City picks them up which cost \$7.00 per tire with rims and \$5.00 for tire without rims.

Next, City Manager Hicks stated that the City of Donalsonville's Historical Preservation Board ordinance essentially tracks O.C.G.A. 44-10-24, which requires that the members of the commission 'shall reside within the...jurisdiction', which in this case is Donalsonville. The only exception referred to in 44-10-24 eludes to a circumstance of a joint city-county preservation commission. Also, the State Commission has informed us that Councilmembers should not serve on the Historical Preservation Commission. The following have requested to be on the Commission:

David Maxwell  
Sheila Williams

After some discussion, the Council agreed to re-post an advertisement in the local newspaper to seek out a third member to complete the Historical Preservation Board.

City Manager Hicks presented the second reading of Ordinance 03-05-19, providing for the adoption of an agreement and general addendum to the Georgia Municipal Employees Benefit System (GMEBS); Restated Defined Retirement Benefit Plan. This is required under IRS regulations to be adopted by all GMEBS members. The change will primarily apply as follows:

Ability for Eligible Regular Employees Employed on July 1, 1993 to Count Prior Credited Service as Elected or Appointed Member of the Governing Authority as Total Credited Service for Benefit Computation Purposes: With respect to an Eligible Regular Employee employed on July 1, 1993, who has at least ten (10) years of Total Credited Service as an elected or appointed member of the Governing Authority as of such date, all Credited Service as an elected or appointed member of the Governing Authority prior to July 1, 1993 shall be considered Credited Service as an Eligible Regular Employee for purposes of determining the amount of the retirement benefit payable to the Eligible Regular Employee. Such Credited Service shall not be otherwise creditable for purposes of computing retirement benefits under the Plan.

CP Blanks made a motion to approve Ordinance 03-05-19, providing for the adoption of an agreement and general addendum to the Georgia Municipal Employees Benefit System (GMEBS); Restated Defined Retirement Benefit Plan. CP Register seconded; motion passed.

## NEW BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS: City Manager Hicks stated that a request had been made by the Seminole County Public Library Board to appoint India Jernigan for the term from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2022. CP Register made a motion to appoint India Jernigan as the appointee of the City of Donalsonville for the Seminole County Public Library Board for the term starting July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2022. CP Smith seconded; motion passed unanimously.

Next, City Manager Hicks recommended approving Resolution 04-02-19, providing for a funding guarantee for the DDA Front Porch Market facility. The DDA has made application for grant funds to purchase the current Front Porch Market location at a cost of \$90,000. Grant conditions require that the Development Authority contribute \$10,000.00 to match the grant funding. The DDA is contemplating financing the \$10,000.00 contribution with Three Notch Electric Membership Corporation, which will require a letter of credit from a bank to secure the loan. The bank will require the City of Donalsonville to guarantee the \$10,000 commitment for the letter of credit. City Manager Hicks stated that if approved, recommendation is for the DDA to require the loan be repaid from funds currently used for rental payments by the DDA until such time the loan is paid off. Mayor Pro Tem Ed Bond made a motion to approve Resolution 04-02-19, providing for a funding guarantee for the DDA Front Porch Market facility pending approval of the grant. CP Blanks seconded; motion carried.

City Manager Hicks then recommendation to enter into an agreement with Master Meter to completely update the registers for the entire water system. Master Meter will exchange a total of 889 registers and provide 421 new registers to the city. There is approximately two years left on the current warranty. Master Meter will provide a new 10-year warranty on all registers at a cost of \$76.50 each. CP Register made a motion to enter into an agreement with Master Meter to completely update the registers for the entire water system. Mayor pro Tem Bond seconded; motion passed.

Next, City Manager Hicks stated that North Henderson Street extends across East Chason Street to extend to the property now occupied by SunSouth. However, there is a drive-way and possible building encroachment on the City's right-of-way that has been existing for some time. Brian, Harrell, with SunSouth is requesting access through that property. City Attorney Grantham has reviewed this request, the City has obtained a survey, and met with the property owner and made him aware of the encroachment. The property owner was not aware of the issue. Currently there is a drive-way and a small storage building in the back of the property, along with several trees that are down due to the storm. There is a possibility that the City can provide access without tearing up the driveway. However, it will require moving a pole and cleaning up the hurricane debris. Currently, the City will get no direct benefit from expending funds to open up the right-of-way which has been there since 1922, and the work would only benefit one party. However, there is potential for further development of the property which may require access at some point in the future. City Manager Hicks stated that the City of Donalsonville has the following choices that can be examined:

- (1) Require the requestor (Brian Harrell/SunSouth) to clean it up in exchange for limited access
- (2) Abandon the road
- (3) Require current property owner to remove all encroachments
- (4) Do nothing.

After some discussion, and no interest in the request to open North Henderson Street no action was taken. The Council did state that they would allow the requestor, Brian Harrell/SunSouth, to present an action plan related to the request at a later meeting.

City Manager Hicks then presented the first reading of Ordinance 04-02-19, providing for the enforcement of the Georgia Department of Public Safety Maximum Rate Tariff for Non-Consensual Towing and utilization of the Wrecker Qualification/Rotation List of the Seminole County Sheriff's Department when circumstances require utilization of wrecker services and storage of vehicles as determined by the Donalsonville Police Department. Among the conditions are:

- (1) The Towing Operator must be on the Seminole County Sheriff's rotation list to be placed on the City of Donalsonville's list.
- (2) The Towing Operator must have current applicable license(s) on file with the City of Donalsonville.
- (3) The maximum rates and guidelines established by O.C.G.A. § 44-1-13 and the Georgia Department of Public Safety Rule No. 570-36-03 for non-consensual towing will apply.

Next, City Manager Hicks recommended to adopt a policy for Data File Backups to ensure that all City related information is maintained for compliance with State Law and emergency events. Every user at the City of Donalsonville has two additional drives in Windows Explorer. The R drive is for creating folders and saving Word and Excel files that need to be shared and accessible to all users in the department. The U drive is for saving documents that only the individual user will be able to access and store. Only servers are being backed up. Any files that are saved to documents or desktop are not backed up. If files are saved to either the R-drives or U-drives will be backed up and can be restored if needed. The only files that need to be saved to these two new drives would be business-related Word and Excel files. No music or pictures that are personal in nature should be stored on the R or U drive. CP Blanks made a motion to approve adopting a policy for Data File Backups to ensure that all City related information is maintained for compliance with State Law and emergency events. CP Register seconded; motion carried.

Communications Director Hatcher then gave an update on eDonalsonville activities, along with the systems continued growth. Communications Director Hatcher stated that the City of Donalsonville has had some discussions with the FCC Attorney, concerning the Seminole County Board of Education License for EBS Spectrum, which will allow for the process to move forward. The process should move quickly pending Federal oversight, as the City's FCC Attorney does not see any issues with the application. Communications Director Hatcher then gave an update on the Test Equipment, stating that the equipment was on order and was obtained at a significant cost savings. Lastly, Communications Director Hatcher gave an update on the completion of Spectrum and Sector re-alignment, stating that by completing the re-alignment, eDonalsonville will be able to increase the capacity of the existing system and free up equipment for use elsewhere pending the EBS approvals.

Next, Police Chief Blue stated that there was no update to report at this time.

Public Works Superintendent Gambrell gave a brief update on the Water/Sewer Line Project, stating that the project is coming to an end. Public Works Superintendent Gambrell also asked for patience as the City of Donalsonville continues to get things cleaned up and back in order.

Next, City Manager Hicks gave an update on the following:

- (1) Proposed Budget Schedule- The following is a schedule of proposed Budget deadlines for your FY 2018-2019 Budget. Dates need to be set to review the Budget and hold a Public Hearing which should be at least 7 days prior to Budget Adoption.  
 April 15-23, 2019: Budget Review/City Council  
 April 25, 2019: Public Notice of Proposed Budget and Call for Public Hearing  
 April 29, 2019: Public Hearing on FY 19-20 Budget  
 May 7, 2019: Final Budget Approval  
 After some discussion, the Council agreed April 17, 2019 at 4:00 PM to hold the Budget Review/City Council Meeting.
- (2) CHIPS Grant- The City has been awarded \$300,000 in HOME funds through the CHIP Program. The grant term is from August 1, 2019 thru July 31, 2021.
- (3) Letter of Support: DDA- A letter of support was issued for the Development Authority to make a grant application to replace the gym roof, repair the floor, and other improvement at an estimate of \$647,000 at the "Old Rambo Gym", which is currently being leased by the Friendship House. Pending legal documentation requirements (not in our control) this is also included in the FEMA cost recovery request in the event the grant is not awarded.
- (4) Fire House BBQ Contest- The barbecue cook-off contest will be held this weekend at the new Donalsonville Fire Station. As you know this was

approved last year to provide the site and applicable utilities which was estimated to be about \$4,000-\$5000. Materials costs at this point are \$12,283.00 with additional labor costs pending.

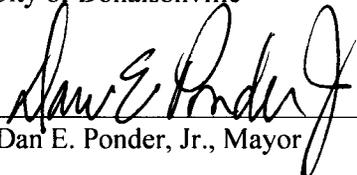
Finally, City Manager Hicks reminded the Council of the following upcoming events:

Firehouse Barbecue Cook-Off-April 5-6, 2019  
Chamber of Commerce-Social Event April 8, 2019 6 PM- 8 PM  
Budget Review by City Council- April 17, 2019 4 PM  
Public Notice of Proposed Budget and Call for Public Hearing April 25, 2019 (TBD)  
Public Hearing on FY 19-20 Budget-April 29, 2019 (TBD)  
SCES Concert- "Little Mermaid, Jr"-Downtown Donalsonville May 2, 2019  
MGAG 2019 Annual Membership Meeting-St. Simons Island, May 1-3, 2019 (CM)  
Council Meeting-May 7, 2019 (Adopt FY 19-20 Budget)  
Personal Leave (CM)-May 8-11, 2019  
2019 Annual GMA Convention-Savannah, GA June 21-25, 2019

With there being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, at 7:52 PM, Mayor Pro Tem Bond made a motion to adjourn, with CP Register 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 April 2, 2019  
meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Donalsonville.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Christina Corvers, City Clerk