

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA
FEBRUARY 21, 2023 - 2:00 P.M.

The City Council met on February 21, 2023, in regular session.

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Council President Back. On roll call by the City Clerk, Iva Nelson, the following council members answered present: Latham, Smith, Avery, Back, Wilson, and Minatra. Councilman Robinson was absent. The clerk stated a quorum was present and the meeting was open for business. Mayor Ford, Heath Williamson, Lee Roberts and Captain Entrekin were also present.

The invocation was given by Councilman Smith.

The minutes of the Public Works Committee, Work Session, and Council meetings held on February 14, 2023, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of February 10-16 were ratified by unanimous vote.

#222170-222314	General	\$367,227.67
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Mayor Ford presented commendations to Everett Roberts, William Roberts, and Nintin Nagarajan, three Gadsden City High School students who are National Merit Scholarship semi-finalists. Each student thanked school officials and family members who have challenged, encouraged, and supported them in their academic journey. Mayor Ford and President Back joined in commending the students for their accomplishments.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(1) The following ordinance, which was introduced for first reading at last week's meeting, was presented for consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. O-08-23

AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN PROPERTY

(Authorizing Conveyance of Property - 3610 Georgia Avenue - Lot 3 Block 5, James H. Pruett Addition - Accepting \$1,000.00 offer from William Graves)

Councilman Wilson moved to adopt the ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilwoman Minatra and unanimously adopted.

(2) The following ordinance, which was introduced for first reading at last week's meeting, was presented for consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. O-09-23

AUTHORIZING MAYOR TO NEGOTIATE AND
CONSUMMATE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY

(Regarding approximately 25 acres at 1308 Airport Industrial Drive - Authorizing Mayor to negotiate and execute all necessary documents - Note: Kelley Auto Auction, LLC has shown interest in purchasing property for \$250,000.00 for proposed use as wholesale automobile auction business)

Councilman Wilson moved to adopt the ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously adopted.

(3) A resolution ordering the abatement of nuisances on property at 235 N. 6th Street in District 3, which was tabled for 30 days on January 17, was presented for consideration. Councilman Avery said efforts are underway to register this property as a historical site, as the first Black motel in Gadsden. He moved to table the resolution an additional 30 days, which motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and unanimously carried.

(4) The following resolution, which was tabled for 30 days on January 17, was presented for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-52-23

ORDERING ABATEMENT OF NUISANCE

(Ordering Abatement of Nuisance - 502 Henry Street - District 3 - Odell Smoot)

Councilman Avery moved to adopt the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and unanimously adopted.

(5) A resolution ordering the abatement of nuisances on property at 124 Washington Street in District 3, which was tabled for 7 days on February 14, was presented for consideration. Councilman Avery said he has questions for the building department and moved to table the resolution an additional 7 days. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and unanimously carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

President Back stated this was the time and place as advertised to conduct the following public hearings:

(1) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak for or in opposition to a resolution ordering the abatement of nuisances on property at 1300 E. Broad Street in District 2, Kenneth L. Robinson, c/o Fannie Robinson, being the last known owner. Kenneth L. Robinson referred to himself as a “scrap man” and asked what he needs to do. Brian Greer, Building Department, stated there has been no resolution on municipal court proceedings on this trash and debris case (that began on December 29, 2021) stated the need for abatement. Councilman Smith moved to table the resolution for 30 days, in order to speak with the owner and the building department. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and unanimously carried.

(2) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak for or in opposition to a resolution assessing a nuisance abatement lien on property at 303 Miller Street, Betty Joyce Gregory being the last known owner. No one spoke. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-53-23

ASSESSING NUISANCE ABATEMENT
LIEN AGAINST PROPERTY

(Assessing Nuisance Abatement Lien for Demolition - \$3,015.00 - 303 Miller Street - District 6 - Betty Joyce Gregory)

Councilwoman Minatra moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and unanimously adopted.

(3) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak for or in opposition to a resolution approving the issuance of an alcoholic beverage license for Jazmins Grill and Cantina at 221 South 3rd Street. No one spoke. The following resolution was presented for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-54-23

APPROVING THE ISSUANCE OF
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE

(Jazmins Grill and Cantina, LLC - Jazmins Grill and Cantina - 221 South 3rd Street - Lounge Retail Liquor License)

Councilman Wilson moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Avery and unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

(1) The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-55-23

ACCEPTING CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY

(Accepting conveyance of property from James and Carolyn Watkins - 1205 Dwight Avenue - District 7)

Councilman Wilson moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously adopted.

(2) A resolution amending rental rates for various facilities of the Parks and Recreation Department was presented in writing for consideration. Councilman Avery noted concerns from groups in regard to Carver Community Center. He moved to table the resolution for 7 days, which motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and unanimously carried.

(3) The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-56-23

AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH CDG, INC.

(Authorizing Agreement - CDG, Inc. - \$55,000.00 - To provide engineering, design, permitting, and construction documents for Coosa Landing Fueling Facility)

In response to inquiries from council members, City Engineer Heath Williamson explained gasoline dispensing will hopefully be available in the parking lot this summer, but probably not on the pier until next year.

Councilman Wilson moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilwoman Latham and unanimously adopted.

(4) The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-57-23

AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH CDP DESIGN, LLC

(Authorizing Agreement - CDP Design, LLC - \$39,802.00 - For architectural design services required to construct new Trolley Transfer Station on North 5th Street, between Locust Street and Meighan Boulevard)

Councilwoman Latham moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and unanimously adopted.

(5) The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-58-23

AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH
GOODWYN MILLS CAWOOD, LLC

(Authorizing Agreement - Goodwyn Mills Cawood, LLC - \$638,000.000 - For professional design services required to complete reconstruction/renovation of Nocalula Falls Campground)

Councilman Wilson highlighted improvements to be made and moved to adopt the resolution as introduced. The motion was seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously adopted.

(6) The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-59-23

AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH
THOMAS M. MCEL RATH

(Authorizing Agreement - Thomas M. McElrath - \$92,500.00 - To provide architectural and engineering services required to construct new Fire Station #5 at Nocalula Falls)

Councilman Wilson moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously adopted.

(7) The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-60-23

AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH
THOMAS M. MCELRATH

(Authorizing Agreement - Thomas M. McElrath - \$175,000.00 - To provide architectural and engineering services required to construct new Fire Station #8 at the corner of Riley Street and Rainbow Drive)

Councilwoman Latham moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously adopted.

It was noted that two very old fire stations are being replaced and the new stations will include space for police precincts. The architect is able to reuse some of the design documents from the Banks Park fire station, which resulted in savings on these contracts.

(8) The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-61-23

AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH SUNBELT FIRE

(Authorizing Agreement - Sunbelt Fire - \$1,019,956.00 - For purchase of E-One HP75 Quint on Typhoon Chassis - Note: Firetruck with rear-mount 75-foot ladder)

Councilman Wilson moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilwoman Minatra and unanimously adopted.

ORDINANCE - FIRST READING

The following ordinance was introduced in writing and read by President Back:

ORDINANCE - AMENDING AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN BUDGET (Transferring funds for purchase of firetruck)

Since no action was taken in this meeting, the ordinance will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting for consideration.

NEW BUSINESS

(1) Councilman Wilson introduced the following resolution in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-62-23

AUTHORIZING ACQUISITION OF
AIRPORT AUTHORITY PROPERTY

(Authorizing Acquisition of property from Airport Authority - Parcel containing approximately 85.10 acres in East ½ of Section 26, Township 12 South, Range 5 East - Parcel containing approximately 64.98 acres in NW ¼ of Section 26, Township 12 South, Range 5 East - For proposed business, which will require Federal Aviation Administration approval)

President Back received unanimous consent to immediately consider the resolution as an item of new business. Councilman Wilson moved to adopt the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilwoman Minatra and unanimously adopted.

(2) Councilman Wilson introduced the following ordinance in writing for consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. O-10-23

AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN PROPERTY

(Authorizing Conveyance of Property - 613 Polk Street - Lots 32 & 33, Block 5, Eastview Addition - Accepting \$840.00 offer from Gadsden Land Bank Authority - Note: Land Bank proposes to convey to developer for construction of residence)

Councilman Wilson moved to suspend the rules to immediately consider the ordinance as an item of new business. The motion was seconded by Councilman Avery and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Latham, Smith, Avery, Back, Wilson, Minatra

NAYS: None

Councilman Wilson moved to adopt the ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilwoman Minatra and unanimously adopted.

(3) Councilman Wilson introduced the following ordinance in writing for consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. O-11-23

AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE OF CERTAIN PROPERTY

(Authorizing Conveyance of Property - 1009 Vinson Avenue - Lots 14-16, Block 2, Tommie Vinson Addition - Accepting \$1,080.00 offer from Gadsden Land Bank Authority - Note: Land Bank proposes to convey to developer for construction of residence)

Councilman Wilson moved to suspend the rules to immediately consider the ordinance as an item of new business. The motion was seconded by Councilman Avery and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Latham, Smith, Avery, Back, Wilson, Minatra

NAYS: None

Councilman Wilson moved to adopt the ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilwoman Minatra and unanimously adopted.

(4) Councilman Avery introduced the following resolution in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-63-23

APPROVING THE ISSUANCE OF SPECIAL EVENT
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE

(Smoke House 227, LLC - Derez Deshon Concert - Special Events license for concert at 922 Tuscaloosa Avenue on February 25, 2023)

Councilman Avery moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and unanimously adopted.

PUBLIC

Deverick Williams related personal stories regarding the work of his father, Rudolph Williams, with youth sports and said the Coach Rudolph Foundation was formed by family and friends after his father received a leukemia diagnosis. He commended everyone who has supported the efforts and presented a \$5,000 ceremonial check to the city for use in parks and recreation team sports, with a request to target youths who need financial assistance.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Council members joined in thanking Deverick Williams for the contribution and commending his father's work. Councilman Wilson suggested naming the "champions field" at the Gadsden Sports Park in his honor.

Councilwoman Minatra encouraged everyone to view the "Ragged Old Flag" presentation with narration by Johnny Cash, which was part of the pre-Super Bowl broadcast.

Councilman Wilson announced three upcoming meetings by Habitat for Humanity on bridging the gap for home ownership. He thanked Mayor Ford for his efforts to education himself and the public regarding a proposed State bill regarding occupational license fee, which could have a catastrophic effect on Gadsden and other cities.

Councilman Avery announced Black History programs by Gadsden State Community College, Valley Street campus and Carver Community Revitalization Committee. He thanked Jurell Harris for a recent financial literacy event. Councilman Avery asked everyone to be mindful of under-served communities in appropriation of American Rescue Plan funds.

Councilman Williams announced Sunday's Kingdom Expo event at New Destiny Church, which will include health screenings and a job fair.

Councilwoman Latham noted a District 1 meeting has been scheduled for March.

President Back noted last Thursday's district meeting, which was canceled due to the threat of severe weather, will be rescheduled in the near future. He announced Thursday night's town hall meeting at The Venue in regarding to the occupational license fee bill. President Back complimented today's ground breaking ceremony for the new advanced manufacturing facility at Gadsden State Community College, noting it will be one of five in the state.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was duly adjourned.

Iva Nelson, City Clerk (2-21-23)
