

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA
MARCH 9, 2021 - 11:00 A.M.

The City Council met on March 9, 2021 in regular session.

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Council President Toles. On roll call by the City Clerk, Iva Nelson, the following council members answered present: Toles, Worthy, Back, Wilson, and Cannon. Councilman Williams joined the meeting shortly after it began. Councilman Reed was absent. The clerk stated a quorum was present and the meeting was open for business. Mayor Guyton, Heath Williamson, Lee Roberts, and Captain Jackson were also present.

The invocation was given by Heath Williamson.

(Councilman Williams joined the meeting at this time.)

Breonna Cole (Emergency Management Agency) provided an update on Covid-19 local statistics and announced a mobile vaccination clinic on March 13 by Quality of Life at the Roberta Watts clinic, through use of EMA's covid trailer. She responded to questions regarding alternative means of administering vaccines.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on March 2, 2021, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of February 26-March 4, 2021, were ratified by unanimous vote.

#206178-206359	General	\$900,556.94
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PUBLIC HEARINGS

President Toles 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 2010 Broadway Street, the State of Alabama, possible rights of redemption to Denise Bellew, subject to a mortgage in favor of Associates Financial Services, and J & R Development being the last known owners. Brian Harbison, Building Inspector, stated no improvements have been made to this burned structure since procedures began in March 2020, and recommended abatement. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-26-21

ORDERING ABATEMENT OF NUISANCE

(Ordering Abatement of Nuisance - 2010 Broadway Street - District 5 -State of Alabama; possible rights of redemption to Denise Bellew; Subject to mortgage in favor of Associates Financial Services; J & R Development)

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

(2) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak for or in opposition to a resolution ordering the abatement of nuisances on property at 1621 Roosevelt Avenue, Dan and Deborah Duckett being the last known owners. Mr. Duckett said the work will finish today and he's asked for final inspection tomorrow. In response to Councilman Wilson's inquiry, Mr. Duckett said he's been working two weeks or a month. Brian Harbison, Building Inspector, stated no improvements have been made to this mobile home since procedures began in July 2020, although a permit was obtained in September 2020. He recommended abatement, noting City personnel have been onsite at least four times in the last 30 days and have not observed anyone present or any work. In response to President Toles' inquiry, Mr. Harbison advised an inspection has not been scheduled. Gracie Green spoke in favor, noting there have been no improvements made since the trailer was placed there in the 1960's or 1970's. She said the current resident gathers garbage from various locations and sorts through it, burning what remains. Ms. Green said smoke from the fires, as well as rodents, are harmful to the neighbors. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-27-21

ORDERING ABATEMENT OF NUISANCE

(Ordering Abatement of Nuisance - 1621 Roosevelt Avenue (mobile home) - District 5 - Dan and Deborah Duckett)

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

(3) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak for or in opposition to a resolution ordering the abatement of nuisances on property at 2905 Tallahassee Street, James Pendley and Buddy Evans being the last known owners. Brian Harbison, Building Inspector, stated no improvements have been made since procedures began in March 2020, and recommended abatement. He noted a demolition permit obtained by the owners that will expire on April 1 will be honored. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-28-21

ORDERING ABATEMENT OF NUISANCE

(Ordering Abatement of Nuisance - 2905 Tallahassee Street - District 6 - James Pendley; Buddy Evans)

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

RESOLUTION PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-29-21

AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH CELLCO PARTNERSHIP D/B/A VERIZON WIRELESS

(Authorizing Agreement - Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless - \$129,124.00 for FY2021 - For all wireless, cellular, data and related services at City of Gadsden - Note: Pursuant to GSA Multiple Award Schedule Number 47QTCA20D00BS)

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

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Katrina Herring, Gadsden Career Center Director, provided information concerning the upcoming job fair from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on March 11 at The Venue. She noted job seekers can obtain updated resume's at the center. Sheila Hand was introduced and said employers include manufacturing, health care, hospitality, restaurants, and corrections.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Mayor Guyton thanked Governor Ivey and ALDOT Director Cooper for the \$2 million allocation for engineering design on the eastern connector (I-759 extension). Councilmen Williams, Back, and Wilson agreed and commended the Mayor's office and City Engineer for their work.

Councilmen Cannon and Wilson explained most condemnations involve abandoned property owned by people who don't live in Gadsden. The city gives ample time and opportunity for assistance in bringing structures up to code and is forced to intervene to give relief to neighbors.

Councilman Wilson reported on S. 11th Street improvements, noting resurfacing work is budgeted but right-of-way and property acquisition is necessary to add sidewalks. He said district projects include a new fire station near Banks Park, securing a location for a business incubator, development of Striplin Elementary School campus and general needs are eliminating trash and potholes. Councilman Wilson noted no formal proposal has been received concerning the proposed rendering plant and referred to the letter issued by the Water Works and Sewer Board suspending its commitment to accept wastewater.

Councilman Back described his activities in the district, which include identifying problems (potholes, debris, signs that need to be replaced) and responding to constituents' calls. He noted district meetings were suspended due to Covid. Councilman Back said he is glad to see Moragne Park reopen and ongoing work on the sports complex at Gadsden State Community College. He referred to outstanding garbage debt nearing \$1 million and said he is working on a plan. Councilman Back stated the council's only function in industrial recruitment is consideration of tax incentives.

Councilman Worthy reiterated information concerning the Quality of Life vaccine clinic. He expressed appreciation to the City Engineer for resurfacing of Penny Street, to Library Director Craig Scott for masks and socks given to the holiday meal attendees, to those who provide meals to the homeless on the weekends, and training opportunities provided by the career center.

Mayor Guyton referred to newspaper articles written by John Floyd, noting his invitations for calls were unanswered. The Mayor pointed out attempts had been made by local officials to retain Goodyear but were unsuccessful.

President Toles highlighted the role of women in our country and mentioned local leaders Holley Arbery, JoAnn Ray, Alice Presley, and Martha Elrod, as well as symbols Lady Justice, Statue of Liberty, and others.

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

Iva Nelson, City Clerk (3-9-21)
