

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA
MARCH 14, 2023 - 11:00 A.M.

The City Council met on March 14, 2023, in regular session.

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Council President Back. On roll call by the City Clerk, Iva Nelson, the following council members answered present: Latham, Smith, Back, Wilson, Minatra and Robinson. Councilman Avery was absent. The clerk stated a quorum was present and the meeting was open for business. Mayor Ford, Heath Williamson, Lee Roberts and Chief Jaggars were also present.

The invocation was given by Councilman Smith.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on March 7, 2023, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of March 3-9 were ratified by unanimous vote.

#222655-222803	General	\$1,633,371.14
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At the request of Mayor Ford, City Clerk Iva Nelson read a commendation for the Gadsden Middle School scholars bowl team, who won the Alabama Scholastic Competition Association's district championship and placed third in the state competition. The Mayor presented the commendation to Latika Prasadh, Lowndes Robinson, Andrew Nguyen, Grey Stephens, William Edwards, and Hudson Ellis. Parents were recognized, as well as Dr. Sue Bliss, who commended the team, related details of the competition, and thanked Principal Goodwin for his support.

President Back recognized Craig Inzer, Chairman of the Etowah County Commission, who made positive remarks concerning the development of relationships between city and county officials. President Back commended Mayor Ford and his staff for teamwork with the county and other area cities.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(1) An ordinance authorizing conveyance of property at 3113 Sudie Avenue, which was introduced for first reading at last week's meeting, was presented for consideration. Councilman Wilson moved to substitute the following ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilman Robinson and unanimously carried:

ORDINANCE NO. O-19-23

AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY

(Authorizing Conveyance of Property - 3113 Sudie Avenue - Accepting \$500.00 offer from Dave Cummins)

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

(2) An ordinance authorizing conveyance of property on Sudie Avenue, which was introduced for first reading at last week's meeting, was presented for consideration. Councilman Wilson moved to substitute the following ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilman Robinson and unanimously carried:

ORDINANCE NO. O-20-23

AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY

(Authorizing Conveyance of Property - Sudie Avenue - East 1/3 of Lots 1 and 2 in Block 8, West Point Addition - Accepting \$500.00 offer from Dave Cummans)

Councilman Wilson commended Dave Cummans, who corrected the amount of the offer from \$10 to \$500, and has constructed over seventy houses. He moved to adopt the ordinance as substituted, which motion was seconded by Councilman Minatra then unanimously adopted.

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 503 Patterson Avenue, the State of Alabama, possible rights of redemption of Samuel Fears, Cassandra Coats, Georgia Wyatt, and Virginia Wyatt, their heirs, successors, and/or assigns, being the last known owners. Brian Harbison, Building Inspector, stated no improvements have been made since procedures began in June 2022, and recommended abatement. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-87-23

ORDERING ABATEMENT OF NUISANCE

(Ordering Abatement of Nuisance - 503 Patterson Avenue - District 1 - State of Alabama; Possible rights of redemption of Samuel Fears, Cassandra Coats, Georgia Wyatt, and Virginia Wyatt, their heirs, successors, and/or assigns)

Councilwoman Latham moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson 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 505 Patterson Avenue, Chara D. Bell being the last known owner. Brian Harbison, Building Inspector, stated no improvements have been made to this burned mobile home since procedures began in June 2022, and recommended abatement. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-88-23

ORDERING ABATEMENT OF NUISANCE

(Ordering Abatement of Nuisance - 505 Patterson Avenue - District 1 - Chara D. Bell)

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

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Mayor Ford reported on various topics, including: grant applications submitted to Congressman Aderholt’s office; clearing of 3.5 acres behind Mars, a potential site for a Challenger Center; tonight’s kickoff meeting for the Goodwyn Mills Cawood comprehensive plan at The Venue; upcoming meetings with ADECA and Department of Commerce; Municipal Court amnesty day on March 22; upcoming St. Patrick’s day event on Saturday and First Friday in April; commended work of The Venue staff for last weekend’s fishing expo event.

Councilmembers Latham, Smith, Wilson, and Back joined in congratulating the Gadsden Middle School scholars bowl team for their accomplishments and recognized parents, Dr. Bliss, and Principal Goodwin.

Councilwoman Latham thanked the Mayor and department heads who attended last week’s District 1 meeting and thanked John Moore for the weather radios.

Councilman Smith expressed appreciation to the Mayor, council, and city staff for the work they do and excitement to work with the county commission. He reported on last week’s advocacy day in Montgomery and looked forward to the upcoming National League of Cities conference.

Councilman Wilson thanked Commissioner Inzer for coming and wished the Auburn Tigers basketball team well as they compete in Birmingham. He shared personal memories of Bart Scott and extended condolences to his family.

Councilman Minatra and President Back thanked Mayor Ford for his strong leadership.

Councilman Robinson noted improvements are underway for the gorge trail at Noccalula Falls.

President Back complimented the fishing event and related positive feedback he received from vendors and organizers regarding our city. He reported on the recent District 4 meeting, noting a subsequent traffic study is underway. President Back thanked volunteers from Church of the Highlands who performed pressure washing and landscaping at city hall. He commended local businessmen Kevin Ferguson and Dave Cummans.

On behalf of Councilman Avery, City Clerk Iva Nelson announced a Health Fair and Job Fair event at the Carver Gymnasium on March 18.

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

Iva Nelson, City Clerk (3-14-23)
