

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA  
SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 - 12:30 P.M.

The City Council met on September 12, 2023, in regular session.

Due to the length of the work session, the meeting was called to order at approximately 12:30 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, Minatra and Robinson. The clerk stated a quorum was present and the meeting was open for business. Mayor Ford, Heath Williamson, and Chief Jagears were also present.

The invocation was given by Councilwoman Latham.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on September 5, 2023, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of September 1-7 were ratified by unanimous vote.

#226944-227106	General	\$1,299,145.89
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Mayor Ford presented a commendation to the Etowah County Board of Education, which received an "Excellence in Adaptive Reuse" award from Main Street Alabama for its new headquarters at the former BB&T building at 401 Broad Street. He presented it to Dr. Alan Cosby (Superintendent) and Board Members Tim Langdale, Danny Golden, Scarlett Farley, and Jay Freeman.

NEW BUSINESS

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

ORDINANCE NO. O-59-23

AMENDING CITY CODE CHAPTER 86 - NUISANCES

(Amending City Code regarding Nuisances - Requiring registration of vacant commercial or industrial building or residential property - Providing exception for I-2 and R-1 zones - Establishing registration fees - Providing parameters for exemptions)

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

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

NAYS: None

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-489-23

AUTHORIZING PURCHASE OF 2022 CHEVROLET TAHOE  
FROM THE CENTER POINT FIRE DISTRICT

(Authorizing Purchase of 2022 Chevrolet Tahoe - From Center Point Fire District in Birmingham - \$61,500.00 - For Fire Department)

Councilwoman Wilson explained the city ordered new vehicles, which have not been received, and this purchase will allow monetary savings, as well as immediate delivery.

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 Councilman Minatra and unanimously adopted.

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-490-23

AUTHORIZING PURCHASE OF THREE CHEVROLET SILVERADOS  
FROM THE ETOWAH COUNTY COMMISSION

(Authorizing Purchase of three 2021 Chevrolet Silverados - From Etowah County Commission - \$126,000.00)

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.

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-491-23

AUTHORIZING USE OF THE MEMORIAL BRIDGE  
A/K/A BROAD STREET BRIDGE FOR SUNSET SIPS

(Authorizing use of the Memorial/Broad Street Bridge by Downtown Gadsden, Inc. - For Sunset Sips event on October 12, 2023 - Note: Needed for ABC Special Event License)

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 Latham and unanimously adopted.

## PUBLIC

Emma Clapp (Family Success Center Director) thanked the city for past support of establishing a community garden on property adjacent to the center and reported on its success. Katie Bohannon recognized partners Torie Ennis and Christina Drummond (Etowah County Extension Office) and explained the objectives of the program. She invited the mayor and council to attend a ribbon cutting on Thursday, September 28. Ms. Clapp thanked the extension office and additional partners Intensive Supervision Parents Association, the Islamic Center and Modern Woodmen. President Back applauded these efforts.

Robert Avery commented on the weekly meetings of finance and other committee meetings early on in mayor-council form of government. He related his contacts with the mayor's office in seeking a meeting with the mayor, which has not occurred. Mr. Avery cited communication with the clerk's office and legal department regarding his records request concerning American Rescue Plan funds and questioned why he has not received the public information.

## MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Councilman Robinson, Councilwoman Minatra and President Back commended the Mayor and staff, Finance Director and department heads for their work on the proposed budget and the information presented today. Councilman Robinson and President Back agreed that time for review will be needed.

Councilman Robinson announced Arts on the Rocks at Noccalula Falls Park this weekend.

Councilman Avery encouraged residents to participate in CERT training underway at the Carver Community Center.

Councilman Smith commended the mayor and staff for good things going on throughout the city and thanked Emma Clapp, Katie Bohannon and Robert Avery for coming.

Mayor Ford announced a GROW public meeting on September 19; commended the response of police, fire and public works employees at the Downtown Gadsden, Inc. building; thanked the Beautification Board for the 9/11 ceremony; thanked all agencies who assisted with last week's search and recovery of a drowning victim in the Coosa River; congratulated Kay Moore for her work in obtaining the "Up from the Depths" sculpture; addressed the records request and previous method of governing. (Robert Avery attempted to respond from the audience but was advised by President Back this would violate the rules.)

President Back thanked citizens for their patience for the length of today's meetings and explained his duty is to adhere to rules of procedure in conducting meetings. He noted the council would convene in a special meeting at 1:30 p.m. to conduct public hearings in regard to nuisance cases.

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

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Iva Nelson, City Clerk (9-12-23)

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