

CITY COUNCIL MEETING - GADSDEN, ALABAMA
FEBRUARY 16, 2021 - 11:00 A.M.

The City Council met on February 16, 2021 in regular session, via teleconference.

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

The invocation was given by Iva Nelson.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on February 9, 2021, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of February 5-11, 2021, were ratified by unanimous vote.

#205798-205957	General	\$1,143,779.51
----------------	---------	----------------

Councilman Back read a proclamation honoring Dr. Clarence Underwood, who was inducted into the Etowah County Sports Hall of Fame in 2020, and presented a Black History Program for the Gadsden Public Library on February 15, 2021, for his many accomplishments.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A resolution ordering the abatement of nuisances on property at 2441 Fairview Road in District 7, which was tabled for 30 days on January 12, was presented in writing for consideration. Upon recommendation of the Building Official, Councilman Reed moved to table the resolution an additional 30 days. The motion was seconded by Councilman Cannon and unanimously carried.

RESOLUTION PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-21-21

AWARDING BID NO. 3448

(Awarding Bid No. 3448 - 2021 Herbicide Application Project - EDKO, LLC - \$80,090.00 per year for a term of 3 years, totaling \$240,270.00)

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

PUBLIC

Alicia Duck shared her work history with Pilgrim's Pride and explained company programs available to employees, including education and scholarship opportunities.

John Reid (Reid Engineering) related his experience in working with most of the rendering companies. He said he designed the recent update to Koch Foods in Gadsden, as well as the proposed Pilgrim's Pride rendering plant. Mr. Reid explained the wastewater pre-treatment process and capacity, noting 85% of nitrogen is removed before discharge into the sewer system. In response to Councilman Wilson's inquiry, Mr. Reid said his compensation is not based on the rendering plant coming to fruition and there is no rendering plant in Fredericksburg, VA.

Bob Sewell (Travis Trailers, Houston) noted he had worked in Gadsden's Goodyear Tire & Rubber plant. He described the design of trailers used in transportation to and from rendering plants. Mr. Sewell noted the trailers are covered by a tarp with strap and ratchet system and have "slosh caps" at the front and rear to prevent spills. In response to Councilman Wilson's inquiry, Mr. Sewell estimated 40-50 units would be needed for the proposed rendering plant, at an approximate cost of \$60,000 each. He confirmed there is a rendering plant in a Tulsa, OK suburb. A discussion followed regarding tarp vs. solid coverings, which are not possible due to the loading method, and the life expectancy of welds. Mr. Sewell explained the bottom is one solid piece and is welded to the frame.

Dantez Robinson (Managing Director, West Gadsden Funeral Home) requested that Forrest Cemetery and Oakland (Alabama City) Cemetery be opened back up to allow families to attend commitment ceremonies and graveside services. Mayor Guyton noted the Governor had issued a statement at one time and he was not sure if changes have been made. Chairman Reed advised Mr. Robinson his request would be investigated.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Councilman Worthy announced a job fair on March 11 at The Venue.

Councilman Cannon thanked everyone for their concerns and prayers, as well as food deliveries, during his and his wife's illness. He encouraged everyone to continue wearing masks and observing social distancing.

Councilman Wilson questioned why speakers keep presenting information about the proposed rendering plant when the council is supposed to be "out of the loop." He challenged various statements made and cited rendering plants located in much less dense population areas, pointed out fines assessed to Pilgrim's for nitrogen release violations, price fixing, and OSHA violations. Councilman Wilson reiterated his objection to the proposed location under discussion.

Councilman Reed noted he had received his second Covid vaccination and commended the health department for its efficiency in administering it. He announced the work session and council meeting on February 26 will be in person and held in the Council Chamber.

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

Iva Nelson, City Clerk (2-16-21)
