

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA
MAY 9, 2023 - 11:30 A.M.

The City Council met on May 9, 2023, in regular session.

Due to the length of the work session, the meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.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, Lee Roberts and Chief Jagears were also present.

The invocation was given by Councilwoman Latham.

President Back acknowledged Yolanda Kimble and students from Gadsden City High School's management principles class, who were present during today's work session.

The minutes of the Finance Committee, Work Session and Council meetings held on May 2, 2023, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of April 28-May 4 were ratified by unanimous vote.

#224071-224286	General	\$2,791,710.16
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Tena King (City Services Director) recognized David Ray and Tony Garrett of Crimestoppers and Chris NeSmith and Cassie McDonald of Woodman Life, who presented "Officer of the Year" and "Life Saver" awards to Sgt. Danny Hass and Officers Alec Burgess and Chris Phillips. The three were credited with saving the life of a citizen on November 18, 2022.

Mayor Ford thanked Crimestoppers for offering a reward for the apprehension of vandalism perpetrators at Noccalula Falls Park and presented another \$1,000 from his funds. The Mayor expressed support for police officers and fire fighters.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

ORDINANCE NO. O-30-23

AMENDING FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET

(Amending FY2023 Budget - Transferring \$217,654.00 from various Public Works Department expenditure accounts - Providing funds for Grass Cutting Contracts for Districts 1 through 7 - Note: Bids were awarded by Resolution No. R-182-23)

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

RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-186-23

AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH
ACADEMY SPORTS & OUTDOORS

(Authorizing Agreement - Academy Sports & Outdoors - For sponsorship of Parks and Recreation Department - Providing \$1,200.00 cash per year and \$600 gift card in return for advertising - Term effective until May 10, 2024, with option to extend for additional year)

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-187-23

AUTHORIZING MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS WITH
ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

(Authorizing Agreements - Cooperative Maintenance and Grading and/or Landscaping on Right-of-Way - Alabama Department of Transportation - To replace existing fence along eastern right-of-way of U.S. Highway 411 (Albert Rains Boulevard), from approximately River Road to north bound ramp of I-759)

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

NEW BUSINESS

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

ORDINANCE NO. O-31-23

AMENDING FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET

(Amending FY2023 Budget - Transferring \$532,000.00 from unassigned fund balance - Providing funds for professional fees for the general administration of previously unbudgeted City projects)

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

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

NAYS: None

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-188-23

AUTHORIZING GRANT APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE

(Authorizing Application and Acceptance for Grant - From Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs - FY23 Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Program - To host vehicle charging stations in the city)

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.

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

ORDINANCE NO. O-32-23

AMENDING FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET

(Amending FY2023 Budget - Transferring \$23,750.00 from unassigned fund balance - Providing funds for emergency demolition of buildings located at 2403/2405 W. Meighan Boulevard in District 6 - Note: Contract for demolition was approved by Resolution No. R-185-23)

Councilman Wilson moved to suspend the rules to immediately consider the ordinance as an item of new business. The motion was seconded by Councilman Robinson 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 Minatra and unanimously adopted.

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-189-23

AWARDING BID NO. 3512

(Awarding Bid No. 3512 - New Covered Train Platform and Maintenance Station at Nocalula Falls Park- Bob Smith Construction, Inc. - \$551,770.00)

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

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Ruth Moffatt (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Director) introduced new Community Development Planner Najsha Corbett. Ms. Corbett provided her background information and noted she had worked with the city through her former employer, East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission.

PUBLIC

Buster Porch presented donations totaling \$500 to the CommUnity Thanksgiving board, which resulted from a special 80th birthday celebration by his daughters, and noted the contribution is in honor of his mother.

John Crane reported on activities of the Humane Society and Pet Rescue Center in his first six months as director, noting wiring and other repairs had been made to the building. He said the center regularly accepts animals picked up by animal control officers, and stated the need for assistance from local veterinarians. A discussion followed and the public was encouraged to donate money or food.

Larry Suttles thanked various city officials for their assistance and requested an update on flooding issues in various areas, including 11th Street, Airport Industrial Road, Stillman, Greenwood, Riley, and the cemetery near Hickory Street. Heath Williamson, City Engineer, noted N. 11th Street is a long-term project, others are in various stages of design, and State assistance might be required for the Alabama City cemetery.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Mayor Ford reported on last week's groundbreaking for the cancer center and efforts to recruit paramedics and firefighters, including a video. He announced the Mayor's Memorial Bash, next week's concert by Bill Avery, Grow Gadsden meetings today, and the launch of a transit bus route from downtown to various tourism sites during First Friday. The Mayor expressed appreciation for grants from Congressman Aderholt (\$6.5 million for traffic study regarding Highway 411 relocation) and Senator Tuberville (\$5 million for Broad Street Bridge and \$1.5 million for mobile command unit).

The Mayor and Council joined in welcoming Najsha Corbett.

Council members Latham and Wilson thanked Buster Porch for his spirit of giving and the CommUnity Thanksgiving event.

Councilman Smith congratulated the police officers honored today and expressed appreciation that the cancer center is coming. He announced a District 2 meeting next week and requested department heads to come.

Councilman Avery noted sign-up continues for summer clean-up events and announced the following: Carver Community Revitalization Committee clean-up on May 13; WMGJ's Juneteenth dinner on June 23 to benefit two non profits; search for performers for the Juneteenth festival on June 17, tonight's District 3 meeting at the Downtown Civic Center, and Coffee with a Cop on May 16. He complimented Head Start's recent fun day and congratulated male and female new basketball coaches at Gadsden City High School, as well as Clarence Underwood, for his induction into the Etowah County Sports Hall of Fame.

Councilman Wilson expressed hope that Mayor Ford can be appointed to East Alabama's Revolving Fund board. He commended Jonathan Tang for his work in the community, as well as other dedicated parents for their support of soccer. Councilman Wilson expressed excitement for Bill Avery's upcoming performance and birthday wishes to his stepmother, Beth Wilson.

President Back and Councilwoman Minatra thanked teachers, noting this is National Teachers Appreciation Week. Councilman Wilson and President Back congratulated the police officers honored today and Chief Jaggars.

Councilwoman Minatra commended Warren Mullins and the Theater of Gadsden for last Saturday's wonderful event, "Looking for a City."

President Back announced today's special called council meeting to conduct public hearings regarding nuisance cases.

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

Iva Nelson, City Clerk (5-9-23)
