

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA  
JULY 13, 2021 - 11:00 A.M.

The City Council met on July 13, 2021, in regular session.

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

The invocation was given by Brian Harbison.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on July 6, 2021, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of July 2-8 were ratified by unanimous vote.

#209106-209323	General	\$826,322.74
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RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-153-21

APPOINTING AND RE-APPOINTING MEMBERS  
TO FORREST CEMETERY BOARD

(Appointing Lloyd Miller for term expiring 4-5-22; Joanie Sledge for term expiring 4-5-23; Barbara Reed for term expiring 4-5-24; Patrice Mosely for term expiring 4-5-25; Jo Inzer Cash for term expiring 4-5-26 - Reappointing Marcia Bush-Kendrick for term expiring 4-5-23)

Councilman Worthy moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Back and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Worthy, Back, Wilson, Cannon

NAYS: Williams

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-154-21

APPOINTING AND RE-APPOINTING MEMBERS  
TO FORREST CEMETERY FOUNDATION

(Appointing Pudden McArthur for term expiring 5-28-22; Lloyd Miller for term expiring 5-28-23; Barbara Reed for term expiring 5-28-24; Joanie Sledge for term expiring 5-28-26 - Reappointing Marcia Bush-Kendrick for term expiring 5-28-25)

Councilman Back moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Worthy, Back, Wilson, Cannon

NAYS: Williams

(3) The floor was opened to allow public comment regarding application and acceptance of a Byrne Memorial JAG grant. No one spoke. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-155-21

AUTHORIZING APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE FOR JAG GRANT

(Authorizing Application and Acceptance - Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program FY2021 Local Solicitation - \$35,458.00 - For purchase of new X-Ray System for Bomb Squad and education and training in NIBRS compliance)

Councilman Wilson explained Etowah County is deferring funding, since the City's bomb squad responds to all incidents within the county.

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-156-21

AUTHORIZING INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT

(Authorizing Interlocal Agreement - City of Gadsden, Etowah County Commission and Etowah County Sheriff's Department - Regarding 2021 JAG Grant in the amount of \$35,458.00 - Note: Sheriff's Department has declined any funding and City will receive entire amount to purchase new X-Ray System for Bomb Squad and to provide NIBRS compliant education and training)

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

NEW BUSINESS

(1) Councilman Worthy introduced the following resolution in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-157-21

APPROVING ISSUANCE OF SPECIAL EVENT  
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE

(City of Gadsden - Special Event Alcoholic Beverage License - Pitman Theater at 629 Broad Street - For Ragin Cajun Swamp Party on August 26, 2021)

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-158-21

AUTHORIZING DONATION OF SURPLUS LENOVO PCS

(Authorizing donation of 5 surplus Lenovo personal computers to Versailles Christian Institute of Learning, c/o Glenda Sarita Jackson)

Acting President Cannon 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 Back and unanimously adopted.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Craig Scott, Vice-Chair of the CommUnity Thanksgiving Committee, announced the group has incorporated and is ready to reinstate the annual event on Thanksgiving Day 2021. He recognized Darlene Harcrow, Chair, and other members who were present. Ms. Harcrow thanked the Mayor and Council for their past support.

PUBLIC

Gina Hollingsworth related her family's long history in the City of Gadsden, and the homes built by her grandfather and father near the airport. She objected to being referred to as an "outsider" after opposing the proposed rendering plant, which she feels places her family's investment and her community in jeopardy. Ms. Hollingsworth asked the council to consider the broader meaning of citizenship, rather than simple geographical proximity.

Joseph Cole referred to increased incidents of violence in certain neighborhoods, stating residents are fearful. He requested that a portion of the City's \$24 million appropriation of Rescue Plan funds be used for "signing bonuses" for police and fire department hires (\$200,000) and "tip line" rewards (\$50,000). Mr. Cole suggested utilizing neighborhood associations and neighborhood crime watch to combat crime.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Councilman Cannon responded to Mr. Cole, noting violence is present in all communities. Councilman Wilson said he likes the idea of neighborhood watch groups, and neighborhood associations can bring other components, such as upkeep of grass, lighting, etc. He suggested a “blitz” for one district at a time, which would hopefully spark the community to continue maintaining. Councilman Back agreed and referred to Probate Judge Hassell’s announcement of a mental health program. Councilman Williams stressed the need for social maturity and citizen responsibility and spoke in support of a tip line. He said neighborhood watch groups are already in place but it would be useful to have more. Councilman Worthy noted two more shootings occurred last night and stated the need for additional police officers. He expressed a desire to pursue closing an “after hours club” that has been the center of recent violence.

Councilman Back expressed appreciation for constituents’ comments and reiterated his pledge to consider their wishes, conduct his own research, and to not vote for anything he feels is harmful to Gadsden or the surrounding area. He said he has finished his research on rendering plants and is preparing a report. Councilman Back expressed respect for everyone’s opinion.

Councilmen Back and Worthy encouraged citizens to attend today’s public meeting in regard to \$24 million Rescue Plan funds received by the City. Councilman Back noted spending must meet guidelines and forms will be available for input. Councilman Cannon announced the meeting will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. at The Venue.

The council joined in thanking Craig Scott for his work on the Census Complete Count Committee and the CommUnity Thanksgiving Committee.

Councilman Worthy referred to Congressman Aderholt’s letter to the FAA regarding the proposed rendering plant. He said he would oppose any effort to place it in a poor, black community, which has been rumored. Councilman Worthy encouraged working with plant opponents and said people who are still supporting it are taking money from Pilgrim’s Pride.

Mayor Guyton encouraged young people to develop a good work ethic and apply for available jobs with the city.

Councilman Cannon spoke in support of paying city employees more so they won’t have to work additional jobs to provide for their family, noting the city has sufficient funds in reserve.

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

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Iva Nelson, City Clerk (7-13-21)

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**FOURTH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM - BID OPENING  
JULY 13, 2021 - 2:00 P.M.**

The City Clerk received bid proposals as advertised for the following bid:

Bid No. 3458 - New Fire Station #7, to be located at Banks Park

Allen Building Company	\$1,693,238.00
Hudak Construction Company	\$1,770,496.98
Boatner Construction Company	\$1,881,927.35
Kyser Construction Company	\$2,153,046.13

Copies of the bids will be forwarded to the City Engineer, and a recommendation will be made to the Council.

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