

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA
AUGUST 1, 2023 - 11:00 A.M.

The City Council met on August 1, 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, Avery, Back, Wilson, Minatra and Robinson. The clerk stated a quorum was present and the meeting was open for business. Heath Williamson, Lee Roberts and Captain Entekin were also present.

The invocation was given by Councilman Smith.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on July 25, 2023, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of July 21-27 were ratified by unanimous vote.

#226017-226173	General	\$688,492.18
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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

ORDINANCE NO. O-49-23

AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY

(Authorizing Conveyance of Property - 1601 Cansler Avenue - Accepting offer of \$37,500.00 from Mayron Omar Gomez Martinez)

Councilman Wilson moved to adopt the ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilman Smith and 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 in opposition to or in favor of an ordinance approving the rezoning of property at 808 South 4th Street from O-1, Office District, to B-2, General Business District. (The Planning Commission recommended approval.) No one spoke. President Back stated the ordinance has been presented today for the first reading, and the Council will vote on it next week.

(2) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak in opposition to or in favor of an ordinance approving the rezoning of properties on Fields Avenue from I-2, Heavy Industry District, to I-1, Light Industry District. (The Planning Commission recommended approval.) Noah Smith explained the reason for the request. President Back stated the ordinance has been presented today for the first reading, and the Council will vote on it next week.

(3) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak in opposition to or in favor of an ordinance approving the rezoning of property at 809 Vandell Boulevard from R-1, One-Family Residence District, to I-1, Light Industry District. (The Planning Commission recommended approval.) No one spoke. President Back stated the ordinance has been presented today for the first reading, and the Council will vote on it next week.

(4) The floor was opened to allow public input regarding the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance (JAG) Grant in the amount of \$45,054.00. No one spoke. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-448-23

AUTHORIZING INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT
FOR 2023 JAG GRANT

(Authorizing Interlocal Agreement - City of Gadsden, Etowah County Commission and Etowah County Sheriff's Department - Regarding 2023 JAG Grant in the amount of \$45,054.00 - Sheriff's office has opted to defer funding with the understanding that equipment will be shared by both departments - Note: Camera system with WIFI connectivity and pole adapter and 6 of the illumination units will be assigned to Sheriff's office)

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

RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-449-23

REAPPOINTING MEMBERS TO DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

(Reappointing Nell Minton, Kevin Silvey, Lance Smith and Wesley Williams - For terms expiring on 6-30-26)

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-450-23

ACCEPTING CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY
2617 E. MEIGHAN BOULEVARD

(Accepting conveyance of property from Christine Darnell - 2617 E. Meighan Boulevard - District 1 - Lots 5 & 21 of Herring and Rosenbaum Subdivision)

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-451-23

ACCEPTING CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY
AT 1858 JEFFERSON STREET

(Accepting conveyance of property from Gunvant Patkar - 1858 Jefferson Street - District 5 - E½ of Lot 15, Block 37, South Gadsden Addition)

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-452-23

AUTHORIZING CONTINUATION OF AGREEMENT
WITH VITAL RECORDS CONTROL

(Authorizing Agreement - Vital Records Control - For records storage and services for the Police Department - \$355.00 per month for up to 1200 cubic feet - Term of 36 months)

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

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Jen Weathington (Parks & Recreation Director) announced registration is open for youth flag football. She thanked the Coach Rudolph Foundation for its \$5,000 contribution that will pay fees for the first 50 participants in each age category and recognized board members who were present. Ms. Weathington announced registration is open for the fall Etowah Youth Soccer League and youth softball league. She also announced upcoming events, including adult softball game, farmer's market, summer concert, operating schedule for trains at Nocalula Park, and the longest yard sale. In response to Councilman Wilson's inquiries, Jen Weathington confirmed that soccer registration fees will cover scheduled practices and games. Non-city teams for all sports pay \$10 per hour for use of practice fields. At this time, after school programs will continue at Walnut Park, Raymond Hill, and Mitchell Community Centers after the properties are turned over to the Board of Education. The Board is expected to continue the Edge programs.

Derek Mummert announced upcoming CERT training classes. In response to Councilman Avery's inquiry, he advised storm damage evaluations continue for the possibility of relief funds. Mr. Mummert noted local people and groups are assisting seniors with cleanup and chainsaw classes will possibly be provided. No weather radios are currently available but he will try to assist.

PUBLIC

Neonta Williams noted she now serves on the Birmingham School Board and is founder of the Black Alabamians for Education Foundation. She described the upcoming Parent Symposium in Gadsden on August 12 at The Venue, with many sessions and keynote speaker Roland S. Martin. President Back commended Ms. Williams and thanked her for bringing this much-needed program to Gadsden.

COUNCIL REMARKS

Brett Johnson (Mayor's Chief of Staff) reported on last week's Eastern Connector meeting and encouraged citizens to participate in citizen comments by August 11 for this very important project; thanked Etowah Cares and the American Legion for partnering to clean the War Memorial at Noccalula Falls; reported 279 tons of debris was collected within 5 days by 11 trash trucks and noted data collected will be utilized to formulate a regular pickup schedule; wished students safety and success as school begins next week.

Councilman Robinson and Smith joined in complimenting the removal of trees from the river bank, creating better views of the river. Councilman Robinson said this work is also needed for Black Creek at Noccalula Falls.

Councilman Robinson asked local residents to be patient during the longest yard sale on Thursday through Sunday.

Councilwomen Minatra and Latham and President Back thanked Mayor Ford, Tena King, and the Public Works Department for the new process and improvements in debris collection, including the work on Saturday.

Councilwoman Minatra complimented the Theater of Gadsden's production of "Always Patsy Cline" and the performance of Courtney Linam.

Councilman Wilson noted lighting has been damaged on the traffic round at Randall and Argyle Circle. He referred to issues of raccoons and possums on 4th Avenue and urged residents to not feed wild animals.

Councilman Avery extended condolences to the family of Percy Hall; thanked everyone who assisted with the first clean-up event and invited them to participate in the upcoming cleanup on August 27; thanked the Rubicon group and others who have assisted residents in clearing trees that fell during recent storms; announced Carver Community Revitalization Committee's first Saturday event on August 5; announced Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church's back to school and public safety awareness event on August 19; congratulated the new boys and girls athletic directors and head softball coach at Gadsden City High School; noted 26 Gadsden City High School graduates have committed to Alabama A&M; expressed appreciation for thoughts and prayers during his father's surgery and recovery.

Councilmen Smith and Back joined in commending the work of Coach Rudolph Williams, the Coach Rudolph Foundation, and former Councilman Deverick Williams.

Councilman Smith and Councilwoman Latham joined in thanking Neonta Williams for bringing the Parent Symposium and Roland Martin to Gadsden.

Councilwoman Latham thanked attendees and expressed excitement about the coming school year and the work of the government. She noted problems with chickens and roosters in District 1.

President Back encouraged drivers to slow down as children begin school and announced a food giveaway at First Baptist Church on Thursday. He noted the council will convene in special session today at 1:30 to address nuisance cases.

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

Iva Nelson, City Clerk (8-1-23)
