

CITY COUNCIL MEETING - GADSDEN, ALABAMA  
SEPTEMBER 7, 2021 - 11:00 A.M.

The City Council met on September 7, 2021, via teleconference.

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

The invocation was given by Iva Nelson.

Deborah Gaither, Emergency Management Agency Director, thanked volunteers who assisted Hurricane Ida evacuees. She reported on the Vaccinate Gadsden program and current COVID-19 statistics, noting slight decreases in positivity rate and encouraged citizens to continue taking precautions. Councilman Back thanked EMA, first responders, and the health department for response to a positive case at the Salvation Army shelter. Fire Chief Wil Reed reported on medic runs, staff absences due to Covid, local hospital capacity, and ambulance operations. Ms. Gaither and Chief Reed extended condolences to Councilman Reed.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on August 31, 2021, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of August 27-September 2 were ratified by unanimous vote.

#210415-210569	General	\$2,018,144.19
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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

ORDINANCE NO. O-10-21

REZONING 107 & 109 VIRGIN STREET

(Approving Rezoning - 107 & 109 Virgin Street - District 7 - From R-1, One-Family Residence District to B-1, Neighborhood Business District - Requested by Nick and Angie Bowen, to expand their day care facility - Note: The existing rental house will be demolished and a new Pre-K building will be constructed)

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

(2) An ordinance rezoning property at 1627 Gadsden Avenue in District 3 (from R-2, Multiple Family Residence to B-2, General Business District), which was presented for first reading on August 31, was presented for consideration. Councilman Wilson moved to consider the resolution, which was seconded by Councilman Back. The ordinance failed to be adopted by the following vote:

AYES: None

NAYS: Toles, Williams, Worthy, Back, Wilson, Reed

(3) The following resolution, which was presented under new business on August 31, but failed to receive unanimous consent for immediate consideration, was presented for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-192-21

AMENDING SECTION 1 OF RESOLUTION R-403-04,  
AS AMENDED BY RESOLUTIONS R-238-10 AND R-318-17  
REGARDING STEPS IN PAY PLAN

(Amending Section 1 of R-403-04, as amended by R-238-10 and R-318-17 - Making adjustments to salary schedule consisting of 25 ranges - Deleting first 5 steps and adding 3 steps at the end of each range - New salary schedule will contain 48 steps in each range, with 1¼ percent between each step)

Councilman Wilson said several firefighters expressed serious concerns with compensation and he will continue to address those but won't oppose this action for the other employees.

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

RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-193-21

AUTHORIZING CHANGE ORDER #1 WITH  
BEDWELL & WHORTON EXCAVATING, LLC

(Authorizing Change Order # 1 - Bid No. 3408 - Alabama City Center Parking Project - Additional \$14,170.06 to reconcile additions and deletions from changes initiated through construction - Adjusting contract price with Bedwell & Whorton Excavating, LLC to \$623,550.49)

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-194-21

AUTHORIZING COMMUNITY POLICING AGREEMENT

(Authorizing Agreement - Greater Gadsden Housing Authority - To continue Community Policing Program within seven public housing facilities - Authority will reimburse City for salary of four officers - From 10-1-21 through 9-30-22)

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

#### ORDINANCE - FIRST READING

The following ordinance was introduced in writing and read by President Toles:

#### ORDINANCE - ESTABLISHING BUDGET FOR FUND 002 - AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

Councilwoman Toles moved to suspend the rules for immediate consideration, which motion was seconded by Councilman Reed. Councilman Wilson expressed surprise at the motion and asked for the justification. Councilman Reed and Williams noted the budget includes premium pay for first responders. Councilwoman Toles withdrew the motion, and the ordinance will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting for consideration.

#### NEW BUSINESS

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

#### RESOLUTION NO. R-195-21

#### APPROVING 10% CITY MATCH

(Authorizing commitment to Alabama Department of Transportation - Relating to safety improvements at the railroad crossing on US-431/278/SR-1 (E. Meighan Boulevard) at 6<sup>th</sup> Street North - Approving City's 10% match in the amount of \$35,000.00 for project, which is estimated at \$350,000.00 - Note: ALDOT will pay 90%)

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

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

#### RESOLUTION NO. R-196-21

#### AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH CDG ENGINEERS & ASSOCIATES, INC.

(Authorizing Agreement - CDG Engineers & Associates, Inc. - to provide Construction Engineering and Inspection Services on an as-needed/on-call basis - Note: Individual rates are shown on 2021 rate schedule)

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

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Council members joined in welcoming Councilman Reed back and expressing their concern for him at the death of his wife, Barbara. Councilman Reed thanked everyone for their thoughts and prayers.

Councilman Williams commended the work of City Engineer Heath Williamson, citing the railroad crossing improvements as an example, and Councilman Back agreed.

Councilman Back said budget decisions involve hard choices and acknowledged more work to be done regarding firefighters and first responders. He complimented the work of Lisa Rosser, the Mayor's office and Kerry Payne. Councilman Back noted Major James Edmonds of the Salvation Army has been appointed to head up recovery efforts in Louisiana.

President Toles announced the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary recognition of 9/11, which will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday at 4<sup>th</sup> and Broad Streets.

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

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Iva Nelson, City Clerk (9-7-21)

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