

MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
CITY OF DOUGLAS  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2012

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held on Monday, September 10, 2012 at 7:00 P.M. The meeting was convened in the Council Chambers of City Hall with Mayor James H. Dennis presiding. Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson, Commissioners Ronnie Anderson, Robert Moore, Richard Hutchinson, Marty Swain and Dennis Josey were in attendance.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Marty Swain gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Coffee County School JROTC Cadet Ensign Slocum led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

MINUTE ADOPTION

The following minutes were unanimously approved:

Work Session .....August 27, 2012  
Commission Meeting.....August 27, 2012

A motion to approve (6-0) the minutes as presented was made by Commissioner Dennis Josey and seconded by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson.

APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

The Commission unanimously approved (6-0) to accept the order of the Agenda.

The motion for approval was made by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Dennis Josey.

RECOGNITION OF LAND DONATION

Dale Batten, Community Development Director, introduced Mr. Kenneth McLeod and Mr. Derek Johnson of Medallion Investment Group, LLC. They presented an executed deed to the city for 1.91 acres of land located at 603 Lupo Lane valued at \$30,000. Mayor Dennis accepted the deed and expressed appreciation on behalf of the entire Commission.

APPROVAL OF THE MEDICAL HEALTH GOAL ACHIEVER RATES

Upon recommendation from Judy Carter, Human Resources Director, the Commissioners unanimously approved (6-0) to tentatively set the 2014 Medical Health Goal Achiever Rates.

The motion to approve was made by Commissioner Dennis Josey and seconded by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson

MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
CITY OF DOUGLAS  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2012

APPROVAL OF THE COFFEE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH APPOINTMENT

City Manager Terrell Jacobs recommended that the Commission approve the appointment of Ms. Rudean Long to serve out the remaining term of Mrs. Charlotte Maley, who recently passed away, to the Coffee County Board of Health. The term will expire December 31, 2016. The Commission unanimously approved the recommendation (6-0).

Commissioner Richard Hutchinson made a motion to approve the appointment; Commissioner Ronnie Anderson seconded the motion.

APPROVAL OF THE AIRPORT COMMISSION APPOINTMENT/REAPPOINTMENT

Upon recommendation from Dale Batten, Community Development Director, the Commission unanimously approved (6-0) the reappointments of Don Brooks, Byron Gillespie and Wayne McKinnon to the Airport Commission with terms being effective October 1, 2012 and expiring September 30, 2015.

The motion to approve was made by Commissioner Bob Moore and seconded by Commissioner Marty Swain.

APPROVAL OF THE CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD APPOINTMENT

Henry Milhollin, Cemetery Coordinator, recommended appointments of the five local Funeral Home Directors and their proxies and the appointment of Ms. Norma Preston as the Historic Preservation Representative to the Cemetery Advisory Board. Mr. Milhollin announced that no applications were received for the lay person position and recommended it be advertised for two additional weeks. The term of this position will expire June 30, 2013. The Commission unanimously approved (6-0) the recommendation.

The motion to approve was made by Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson and seconded by Commissioner Dennis Josey.

APPROVAL OF THE FY13 SPLOST SUPPLIES BID

Upon recommendation from Stanley Merritt, Purchasing Agent, the Commission unanimously approved (6-0) the low bids received for the FY13 SPLOST Water Supplies needed to replace or repair water lines of streets as per the bid information below:

| <u>Vendor</u>        | <u>Low Bid Groups/Items</u>                | <u>Total Low Bids</u> |
|----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| HD Waterworks        | Line Items: 3, 5 & 12                      | \$1,396.78            |
| Dublin Winnelson     | Groups A, B, D; Line Items: 1,4,10,13 & 16 | \$26,220.21           |
| Engineering & Equip. | Line Items: 2 & 14                         | \$236.80              |
| Ferguson:            | Line Items: 9 & 11                         | \$1,960.72            |

MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
CITY OF DOUGLAS  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2012

WATER SUPPLIES BID CONTINUED

|                   |                              |                   |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| Consolidated Pipe | Group C; Line Items 6,7 & 15 | \$24,984.50       |
| Macon Supply      | Group E; Line Items: 8       | <u>\$3,161.00</u> |
|                   |                              | \$57,960.01       |

Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson made the motion to approve the recommendation and Commissioner Ronnie Anderson made the second.

APPROVAL OF THE GEORGIA CORRECTIONAL SINGLE-SOURCE VENDOR FOR SIGNAGE

The recommendation of Stanley Merritt, Purchasing Agent, to approve Georgia Correctional of Glennville, Georgia, as a single source vender for all future road and street signage for the city and to allow signs to be ordered as needed. The Commission unanimously approved (6-0) the recommendation.

A motion to approve was made by Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson and Commissioner Dennis Josey made the second.

APPROVAL OF THE LEASING FAIRGROUND PROPERTY FOR CARNIVAL

Upon recommendation from Roger Johnson, Parks and Recreation Director, the Commission unanimously approved (6-0) the use of the fairgrounds at J C Adams Municipal Park for lease by the Shriners for a fair to be held October 21-29, 2012 and the fees of \$1,025.00 be approved for temporary water, electric, and land use with the city preparing the fairgrounds and to include public safety either by the City of Douglas Police Department or a combination of the Police Department and the Shriners.

Commissioner Marty Swain made a motion for approval and was seconded by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson.

APPROVAL OF THE NON-PROFIT USE OF PUBLIC FACILITIES

Upon recommendation from Georgia Henderson, Central Services Director, the Commission unanimously approved (6-0), due to time restraints, to waive the facility fees submitted by the following non-profit organizations for the month of October: Kayla Day Event; 4-H Day; the Community Job Fair and the Domestic Violence Prayer Breakfast. As discussed in the Work Session prior to this meeting, Ms. Henderson will present additional information at the next Work Session on the actual cost of the facility use.

The motion to approve was made by Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson and seconded by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson.

MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
CITY OF DOUGLAS  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2012

APPROVAL OF THE REQUEST TO PURCHASE GIS EQUIPMENT

The recommendation made by Jacob Lott, City Engineer/Public Works Director, to purchase GIS equipment in the amount of \$24,853.75 was approved by majority vote (5-1). Funding for the equipment was budgeted in the FY'13 IT Department fund.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Dennis Josey and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson with Commissioner Richard Hutchinson voting against the recommendation.

CONCERNS OF LARRY NESMITH

Larry NeSmith, President of NAACP, appeared before the Commission expressing concern about the high utility bills and read information he had obtained about the Municipal Electric Authority of Georgia (MEAG). After a lengthy discussion regarding MEAG, a meeting was scheduled for the next morning at 9:00 AM with appropriate city staff, the Mayor and Mr. NeSmith to contact MEAG to address Mr. NeSmith's concerns.

Mr. NeSmith then discussed personnel issues and people being wrongfully terminated. He questioned the establishment of the City's Ad-hoc Committee and its makeup. There was also discussion regarding the fact that employee appeals were no longer heard by City Commission but by the Ad-hoc Committee with the final decision made by the City Manager. City Manager Jacobs stated that the appeals process is in the personnel policy and was approved by the Mayor and Commission. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson stated that she had no knowledge of it. City Manager Jacobs stated that it was discussed at the last retreat and then sent to the Mayor and Commissioners for review for several months prior to adoption. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson admitted she should have read the information she received from the retreat, but since it was included with other documents she was not aware of the change in the appeals process and felt that since she was unable to attend the retreat, the City Manager should have updated her.

Commissioner Josey stated that he had called several cities regarding their hiring/firing policies and the City Manager had all the power. Commissioner Pearson questioned which Commissioner made the motion to relinquish the final say to the City Manager. There was not a response, but Commissioner Anderson stated it could be changed back by the Commission by placing it on the agenda.

Commissioner Pearson then stated she was dissatisfied with the recent terminations and stated that the community had asked that we ask for your, City Manager Jacobs, resignation and the resignation of the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief and Mr. Charlie Davis because of the high light bills he has had a hand in. However, she stated she did not feel right in doing that because she had not discussed it with him. Commissioner Pearson further stated she was dissatisfied with the investigations. She then corrected

MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
CITY OF DOUGLAS  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2012

herself and stated it was the Police Chief and Assistant Chief's resignations not the Fire and Assistant Fire Chief they were wanting.

Mayor Dennis stated that the Commission had not heard all the evidence and they needed the opportunity to hear all the facts.

City Manager Jacobs provided extensive comments about the City Manager form of government and explained that most cities were structured as we are, with a Council Manager form of government where personnel issues are not dealt with by the elected officials. He pointed out that the elected officials, the City Manager, and staff all has roles in local government.

Mr. NeSmith expressed appreciation to the Commission for hearing their concerns and hoped the matters can be resolved quickly and peacefully.

Citizens came forth complaining about the high utility bills received this month and some questioning the ability to change electric service providers. City Attorney Jerome Adams reported that was not possible due to territorial boundaries within an area to provide power.

Mayor Dennis asked that a town hall meeting be scheduled where citizens could ask questions and bring their concerns. The City will ask a MEAG representative to attend the meeting to address their issues.

STAFF COMMENTS

Georgia Henderson, Central Services Director, updated the Commission on the following:

- The Commit to Be Fit Walk on Thursday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, walkers will meet at the Alternative School and walk on the trail.
- The Broxton Rocks Volunteer Day is scheduled for September 29<sup>th</sup> to help clean up; and training for anyone interested in being a tour guide should be there at 10 AM that day.
- Job Announcement: Vehicle Maintenance Worker. The deadline to submit an application is September 21, 2012. Interested parties can apply on line or at City Hall.
- The Annual Christmas Parade Theme is "Celebrate a Home Town Christmas". The parade is schooled for Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, at 6:30 PM. Registration can be completed on line or at Central Square Complex.

MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
CITY OF DOUGLAS  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2012

GENERAL COMMENTS

Ms. Mattie Freeman appeared before the Commission and stated she was a Prophetess from God and presented her credentials. Ms. Freeman stated that God sent Mr. Terrell Jacobs here. She then spoke about a vision she had received from God. Mayor Dennis interrupted Ms. Freeman to let her know her time was up. There was then a very vocal and loud exchange of words between Ms. Freeman and Mayor Pro Tem Pearson.

Former employee Barbara Paulk commented on her termination and requested the city pay her for the two (2) years she has been terminated.

Following additional comments concerning their high utility bills, the issue with the software conversion delay was mentioned again. They felt the additional days was not their fault and stated they had not been notified of the conversion. Mr. Jacobs explained in depth, details of the conversion and the reason for delaying the conversion.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Commissioner Richard Hutchinson stated that he concurred with Mayor Pro Tem Pearson and over 51% of the people have spoken and have come up with the conclusion of what they want done and he too was not satisfied with the policy. He stated he understood that Mr. Jacobs made the decisions and the Commission expected him to listen to them. He expressed concern that there was a sense of fear and low morale among city employees. He further stated an environment was needed where employees would be happy to come to work and right now that is not the case. He reiterated that he agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Pearson that something needed to be done.

Commissioner Robert Moore asked if the commission voted a pay raise for City employees in this year's budget. City Manager Jacobs stated that the commission did not vote a cost of living pay raise for city employees for this year's budget.

Commissioner Marty Swain stated there are a lot of things going on and some things could have been done better, but we are trying. He further stated that they had not turned their backs on the people and that it takes everyone to get things done.

County Commissioner Frank Jackson questioned the continual increase in the city's annual budget and stated that the city was going to have to cut back. He further stated at the County, provides satisfaction for everyone because they have the final say. The County Commission makes policy and the County Administrator carries them out. He further stated that the Commission should start making policy and let the City Manager carry them out. City Manager Jacobs stated that he did not make policy. Commissioner Anderson stated that the City Commission makes policy.

MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
CITY OF DOUGLAS  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2012

Mayor Dennis encouraged everyone to support the Trojans this week.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, a motion to adjourn to Executive Session was made by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Dennis Josey. The Commission unanimously approved (6-0) to adjourn to the Executive Session.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

PERSONNEL ISSUES

Terrell Jacobs, City Manager, and Judy Carter, Human Resources Director discussed personnel issues with the Mayor and Commission.

Commissioner Ronnie Anderson made the motion to adjourn from Executive Session and to return to the regular meeting. It was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson and approved by all. (6-0)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Dennis Josey made the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marty Swain and unanimously approved (6-0). The meeting adjourned at 10:52 P.M.

CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA

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James H. Dennis, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Donna Shrouder, Project Manager