

**MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOUGLAS
SEPTEMBER 24, 2012**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held on Monday, September 24, 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 Robert Moore, Richard Hutchinson, Dennis Josey, Ronnie Anderson and Marty Swain were in attendance.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Bob Moore gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Coffee County School JROTC Cadets led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

MINUTE ADOPTION

The following minutes were unanimously approved:

**Work SessionSeptember 10, 2012
Commission Meeting.....September 10, 2012**

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

APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

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

A **MOTION** to approve was made by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Marty Swain.

RECOGNITION OF WYNETTA BOLDER FOR ACHIEVEMENT OF MASTERS IN CLERK CERTIFICATION

Terrell Jacobs, City Manager and the Mayor and Commission recognized City Clerk, Wynetta Bolder with completing her Masters Certification with the Georgia Municipal Clerks and Finance Officers Association.

MAYOR JAMES DENNIS DISCUSSED MEETING PROCEDURES

Mayor Dennis read and explained to the citizens the meeting procedures that would be applied during all Commission Meetings from this day forward.

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APPROVAL OF THE CLOSURE OF A PORTION OF EAST BRYAN STREET

Upon recommendation from Donna Shrouder, Projects Manager, the Commission unanimously approved **(6-0)** the closing of the portion of East Bryan Street between South Madison and South Pearl Avenues on October 25th between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. as a safety measure during the Annual Hometown Harvest Event that will take place on the vacant lot between City Hall and South Madison Avenue.

A MOTION to approve was made by Commissioner Bob Moore and seconded by Commissioner Dennis Josey.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

Donna Shrouder, Projects Manager announced that the city has been awarded a Community Development Block Grant from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs in the amount of \$500,000 for water and sewer improvements to the North Pearl Redevelopment Area.

Informational purpose

APPROVAL OF THE (2) COMPOST WINDROW TURNERS BID

Upon recommendation from Stanley Merritt, Purchasing Agent the Commission unanimously approved **(6-0)** the purchase of two (2) compost windrow turners from Mid-West Bio-Systems located in Tampico, Illinois for a Grand Total Cost of **\$91,955.00**. The funding will be as follow: **\$45,977.50** Water and Sewer Budget and **\$45,977.50** SPLOST Funds.

A MOTION to approve was made by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Dennis Josey.

APPROVAL OF THE NON-PROFIT USE OF PUBLIC FACILITIES

Upon recommendation from Blondale Thomas, Facility Supervisor the Commission **denied (3-4)** to not waive fees by upholding the current contracts for non-profit or government agencies that use the city facilities throughout the year.

A MOTION to approve was made by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Bob Moore, along with Commissioner Denis Josey **voted in favor** of the motion.

Mayor James Dennis, Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson, Commissioner Richard Hutchinson and Commissioner Marty Swain voted **against the motion**.

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APPROVAL OF THE FUNDING FOR SIGN AT J C ADAMS MUNICIPAL PARK

Upon recommendation from Roger Johnson, Parks and Recreation Director, the Commission **approved (4-2)** the funds from the Recreation Capital Building Fund, be used in the amount of \$10,000.00 for the sign project at the entrance to J C Adams Municipal Park based on the School Boards approval on the amount of funds the School Board will contribute.

A MOTION to approve was made by Commissioner Bob Moore and seconded by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson, along with Commissioner Marty Swain and Commissioner Dennis Josey *voted in favor* of the motion.

Commissioner Richard Hutchinson recommended that this item be tabled until after the School Board meets as was discussed in the Work Session. Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson stated she was not comfortable to make a decision at this time.

Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson, and Commissioner Richard Hutchinson and voted *against the motion*.

CONCERNS OF LARRY NESMITH

Larry Nesmith, President of the Coffee County NAACP, appeared before the Commission requesting an update on the MEAG meeting. Mr. Nesmith asked what will be the discussion with MEAG at the town hall meeting.

Mayor James Dennis stated that a town hall meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 23, 2012, 6:00 p.m. at the Central Square Complex. Mayor James Dennis responded that MEAG will discuss their roll with the City of Douglas.

Mr. Nesmith stated that citizens of Douglas would like an explanation concerning the increase of utility bills. Mr. Nesmith stated that the utilities will need to be the main concern.

Mayor Dennis stated that MEAG and staff will do their best to answer the questions for the citizens.

Mr. Nesmith questioned the knowledge of the Mayor and Commission giving authorization of 37 employees with a total of **\$98, 072.80** increased in pay this year. Mayor Dennis stated that the Commissioners do not have authority concerning pay increases. City Manager, Terrell Jacobs stated that in regards to the pay adjustments they are given through reclassifications, promotions, and additional responsibilities that have been taken on by elimination of positions, and those that have received certification just as you have seen on tonight with Mrs. Bolder's certification.

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CONCERNS OF LARRY NESMITH-CONTINUED

Mr. Nesmith elaborated that Mrs. Bolder did not receive a raise. City Manager Jacobs stated that Mrs. Bolder just received her certification and she will be given compensation based on her certification.

City Manager Terrell Jacobs offered to meet with Mr. Nesmith regarding the report to discuss this information detailed.

Mr. Nesmith stated that this is a conspiracy with 37 employees' receiving a pay raise and this is the reason for the utilities increasing. Therefore he is requesting an internal investigation on pay raises, electric bills, and wrongful termination of employees.

Mayor Dennis instructed Mr. Nesmith to put his allegations in writing in order for the Commission and staff to properly address his claims.

Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson recommended that Tyler Software appear at the town hall meeting. Mayor Dennis recommended that the citizens are showed how bills are calculated.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Dennis stated that citizens are allowed 3 minutes.

Mr. Johnnie Lee Roper stated that he resides at 711 S Daughtry Avenue, and his Commissioner is Richard Hutchinson. Mr. Roper expressed concerns regarding the tickets that were issued to citizens on Ross Street. Mr. Roper stated that he was told by the Commission the citizens would receive warnings instead of the citations. Commissioner Josey stated that this was a State decision. Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson stated that she thought she recalled for warnings to be given. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson also stated she met with City Manager Jacobs and staff concerning this issue and the response was stated this was decided one year ago to issue warnings. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson stated that she doesn't believe it has been one year ago and requested for the minutes to be pulled concerning this issue.

Commissioner Richard Hutchinson stated that when he came on the Commission in January he was approached by citizens that they were being given tickets. He stated that there were procedures along with warnings before citizens were given tickets.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS-CONTINUED

Mr. Ronnie Johnson stated that he resides at 1105 S. Pearl Avenue and his Commissioner is Marty Swain. Mr. Johnson expressed concerns regarding the light bills and stated that the city is a “modern day Robin Hood”. Mr. Johnson questioned the Commission concerning the procedures of having a generator in your home. Mr. Jacobs responded that a generator is only used temporarily. Staff will research ordinance concerning the use of generators.

Ms. Barbara Anderson stated her Commissioner is Ronnie Anderson. Mrs. Anderson stated that she asked if the city would reimburse her \$3,157.00 of unemployment funds that she is to repay to the Department of Labor because the city denied her unemployment after allowing her to receive the benefits for a few months. Mrs. Anderson also apologized for stating Ms. Cynthia Shaw’s name during the last Commissioner’s meeting and stated the correct name was Kristine Shaw. Ms. Anderson requested for the Commission to reinstate her unemployment due to being wrongfully terminated. Ms. Anderson stated that she requested an Open Record for a list of individuals who have received unemployment from the City of Douglas. Attorney Jerome Adams stated that the request Ms. Paulk made was unemployment compensation. This is paid by the Department of Labor and they are subject by the same Georgia open records policy. Attorney Adams stated that the Finance Director informed him the city does not keep the information she is requesting at the city. Mr. Adams stated that this information is kept by the Department of Labor and she should make her request to this agency.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson stated that in the past it was the consensus of the Commission not to interfere with individuals requesting their unemployment. Mayor Pro Tem recommends that this issue be returned to the Mayor and Commission for discussion.

Larry Nesmith, President of the Coffee County NAACP stated that allegedly there are employees in other departments that are engaging in extramarital affairs. Mayor Dennis requested for Mr. Nesmith to give this information to City Manager Jacobs to allow him to investigate these allegations.

Ms. Patricia King stated that she resides at 802 Jamestown Dr. and her Commissioner is Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson. Ms. King asked the Commissioner, “What is going to be done about the light bills right now?”

Mayor Dennis recommended for Ms. King to meet with the Customer Service Manager, Tommy Harrell for assistance.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS-CONTINUED

Ms. Cynthia Shaw stated that her Commissioner is Ronnie Anderson. Ms. Shaw stated that Mrs. Barbara Anderson stated her name by mistake while appearing before the Mayor and Commission at the September 10, 2012 regular meeting and she wanted to clear her name.

Mr. Thomas Paulk stated that he resides at 1509 N. Gaskin Avenue and his Commissioner is Ronnie Anderson. Mr. Paulk expressed concern of the murders that are occurring in the City of Douglas and not being solved by the Douglas Police Department.

Mr. Samuel Simpson stated that he resides at 301 Pine Street and his Commissioner is Richard Hutchinson. Mr. Simpson expressed concern of being able to pay his utilities after being set up on a payment plan.

Mayor Dennis recommended for Mr. Simpson to meet with the Customer Service Manager, Tommy Harrell for assistance.

Mrs. Doral Wilson stated she resides at 1422 Adams Street and her Commissioner is Marty Swain. Mrs. Wilson asked the Commission how long the City has been with MEAG. Mayor Dennis responded since 1975. Ms. Wilson stated that the city did not prepare the citizens with the increase of light bills and suggested that the city absorb the money on the light bills in order to help the citizens.

MAYOR AND COMMISSION COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson stated that she has not looked over the list of pay increases because she recently received the information. Mayor Pro Tem Pearson stated to Mr. Roper that she has instructed the City Clerk to research the information concerning Ross Street. Also Mayor Pro Tem Pearson stated to the citizens her concerns of the increased utilities and recommends for Tyler Software to either appear in person or online to answer questions from the citizens.

Commissioner Josey asked if staff continues to conduct energy audits upon request. Mr. Josey stated these people were using high utility bills. Commissioner Josey stated that there is a lot of wasteful use of electricity. Commissioner Josey stated that citizens should request an energy audit and if Mr. Nesmith really would like to help these people... (Inaudible due to audience) Mr. Nesmith responded with an outburst concerning the statement that was spoken by Commissioner Josey. Mayor Dennis asked for Mr. Nesmith to be excused from the meeting. Commissioner Josey stated that he was these people. Mr. Josey rephrased his statement by saying that if Mr. Nesmith would like to help all the people; he can assist by educating the people on how to use the electricity.

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MAYOR AND COMMISSION COMMENTS-CONTINUED

Commissioner Marty Swain suggested that Commissioner Josey apologize for the statement that was made to those inside and outside of city hall. Mr. Swain also stated that staff needs to look into how the city can absorb the cost of the high utilities.

Commissioner Richard Hutchinson expressed concern of the needed repairs on the railroads on College Avenue.

Mayor Dennis encouraged citizens that if they see criminal activities to take advantage of the Anonymous Tip Line 912.260.3600.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss in the Regular Meeting, a motion to adjourn to Executive Session was made by Commissioner Bob Moore and was seconded by Commissioner Dennis Josey. The Commission unanimously approved **(6-0)** to adjourn to the Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

LITIGATION ISSUES

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

Commissioner Bob Moore made the **MOTION** to adjourn from Executive Session and to return to the regular meeting, **MOTION** was seconded by Commissioner Dennis Josey, and **approved** by all. **(6-0)**

Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson made the **MOTION** to reconvene to the Regular Meeting and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson, and **approved by all. (6-0)**

Commissioner Richard Hutchinson made the **MOTION** to approve the litigation item #1 that was discussed in Executive Session, was second by Commissioner Ronnie Anderson. The Commission unanimously approved **(6-0)**

Commissioner Ronnie Anderson made the **MOTION** to approve the litigation item #2 that was discussed in Executive Session, was second by Commissioner Dennis Josey. The Commission unanimously approved **(6-0)**

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ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Ronnie Anderson made the motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson. The Commission unanimously approved **(6-0)** at 8:26 p.m.

CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA

James H. Dennis, Mayor

Wynetta J. Bolder, City Clerk

**UTILITY COMMISSION MEETING
CITY OF DOUGLAS
September 24, 2012**

A Utility Commission Meeting was held on Monday, September 24, 2012 at 8:30 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 Robert Moore, Richard Hutchinson, Dennis Josey, Ronnie Anderson and Marty Swain were in attendance.

Kevin Davis, Assistant Water and Sewer Director appeared before the Mayor and Commission to discuss and receive recommendations for the following adjustments:

RENKOTA K. NEWKIRK- 934 THRASH CIRCLE

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Marty Swain and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson approving Ms. Newkirk's water and sewer bill with a credit of **\$271.00**.
Approved (6-0)

LYNETTE MCCOY RICHARDSON- 525 CECIL WAY

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Bob Moore and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson approving Ms. Richardson's water and sewer bill with a credit of **\$201.84**.
Approved (6-0)

BETTY ODOM-1359 S. GASKIN AVENUE

A **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Bob Moore and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Pearson approving Ms. Odom's water and sewer bill with a credit of **\$304.71**.
Approved (6-0)

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the Utility Commission Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.