**HAHIRA CITY COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

**MAY 7, 2015**

**7:30 P.M.**

**COURTHOUSE**

Mayor and Council met for a Council meeting May 7, 2015 at the Courthouse with Mayor Bruce Cain presiding.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Bruce Cain, Councils: Mason Barfield, Kenneth Davis, Terry Benjamin and Mayor Pro Tem Ralph Clendenin. City Manager Jonathan Sumner, Police Chief Terry Davis, Fire Chief Dwight Bennett and PWD Donnie Warren. City Clerk Lisa Mashburn was not present.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Bruce Cain

**ESTABLISH QUORUM:** Mayor Bruce Cain

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**: Mayor Bruce Cain

**INVOCATION:** Pastor Mike Wells

**REVIEW/CORRECTION OF MEETING MINUTES:**

1. **MARCH 30, 2015 WORK SESSION**
2. **APRIL 2, 2015 COUNCIL MEETING**

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions or concerns regarding the minutes. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin asked that we postpone the approval of the minutes, he has not had time to review them. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin made a motion to postpone the minutes which was seconded by Councilmember Barfield. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin, Councilmember Barfield, Councilmember Davis and Councilmember Benjamin all voted in favor of the motion.

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:**

Christopher Dyer of 600 Stagecoach Trail said he was here tonight to talk about the small easement on his property which is a drainage ditch. The ditch is slowly starting to erode the property line and has standing water at all times. It is about a 3 foot to a 5 foot drop from the street level. The primary concern is the safety of his children and other children in the community. We have snakes, fish, varmints and running water. He said that he is here to ask the City if there is a permanent solution to fix these ditches in Woodbridge development. HE stated he knows it is very costly to have new drainage ditches and that is a long term fix but that he would like to know if in the short term if the ditches can be grated. I am in the military but have chosen Hahira as my permanent residence.

John Cramer of 604 Stagecoach Trail said that he is Mr. Dyer’s neighbor. He said that he is also here about the area between the two properties that he refers to as the mote. He said that his property is eroding also and that he has a retaining wall but it is eroding and looks like a sink hole. The water isstagnant with no flowing water, it smells and when the sun goes down we have a big problem with insects. One of the biggest concerns is the children in the area. I am retired military and have chosen Hahira as my home. He said he would appreciate it if the City could do something to alleviate it or improve it.

Wilmon Stanley of 308 S Washington Street said he wanted to commend the Mayor, Council and City Manager on their perseverance to handle all the complaints. He also wanted to confirm that on Monday night regarding the warehouse at Railroad property we would give Mr. Wetherington a year to remove the warehouse but that we can go ahead and begin process on the development of the new property. The Mayor said yes we can start with getting things done until the warehouse is moved.

Tim Coombs of 8880 Gordon Road, Hahira, I have been asked by Beth Tillman of the Georgia Sheriffs Boys Ranch to put up signs stating that Hahira is the home of the Georgia Sheriffs Boys Ranch. It has been open since 1961, it is about 4 miles out of the City and a big part of this community for a long time. Mr. Coombs said that they will have pictures from the Boys Ranch on display at the Historical Society. He stated that they have signs at the Ranch in Live Oak Florida.

**REVIEW OF BILLS/OVERAGES:**

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions or concerns regarding the bills. None noted. **Councilmember Barfield made a motion to pay the bills as presented which was seconded by Councilmember Benjamin. Councilmember Barfield, Councilmember Benjamin, Councilmember Davis and Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin all voted in favor of the motion.**

**DISCUSSIONS:**

1. **HONEYBEE FESTIVAL PROPERTY (LANA HALL)**

Lana Hall with the Honeybee Festival Committee said the committee was very excited to learn that the City has purchased the Railroad property. She said that at the committee meeting on April 21, 2015 they discussed it and had questions, they are presenting a letter to the City with the questions. The stage on the property was given to the festival by Dr. Hoye for $1.00 for the Honeybee Committee and the City to use for events and everyone has made great use of it over the years. The Committee has maintained the stage, flower beds and 4 utility poles and one outdoor lighting. We have discussed this with the City Manager and he has stated that the City is willing to take these on. The committee would like turn this all over to the City, the payment for approximately $187.00 to Georgia Power, the flower bed and stage maintenance. Mrs. Hall said we will continue to come to you for the use of the facility for the Honeybee Committee. City Manager Sumner thanked the Honey Festival Committee and stated he appreciated them putting Hahira on the map. **Councilmember Barfield made a motion to take over the items from the Honeybee Festival Committee which was seconded by Councilmember Benjamin. Councilmember Barfield, Councilmember Benjamin, Councilmember Davis and Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin all voted in favor of the motion.**

1. **RAILROAD PROPERTY WAREHOUSE (CITY MANAGER)**

City Manager Sumner said we had our City attorney here Monday night but he was called away on some personal business tonight but he did receive instructions from you on Monday to convey to Mr. George Newbern the attorney for Mr. Wetherington. A document was forwarded to you yesterday, in summary the City will give Wetherington Farms notice that the lease has been terminated. Wetherington will have 12 months from the date of notice to remove the warehouse and demolition debris and surrender possession. The specifics are in the paperwork. If acceptable by the Council tonight they are expecting an agreement. We would need to authorize the Mayor to sign the agreement and transmit it to Mr. Wetherington to sign, this would give us an ending date of May 15, 2016. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said he does not understand why it is taking 12 months to take down the warehouse, he thinks Mr. Wetherington should come and talk to Council and explain this personally. Councilmember Barfield said that he can understand why he would want 12 months, there is a process for doing things. We can go on and start working on our plans for the property. Councilmember Davis said that he too believes that it can be taken down in a shorter time but he thinks to keep good relations with Wetherington Farms that we need to give him the full year, give him an incentive to have it done by December if possible. Councilmember Barfield said you cannot just go take it down quickly, they will salvage the materials and reuse them, this a building from the early 1900’s. City Manager Sumner said that this will give 12 months to take down the building. Councilmember Barfield asked that the word prorated be added to the contract as incentive to have it down at an earlier time, this amendment was added to the contract. Also it was added that if the property was vacated by December 31, 2015 the rent is hereby refunded. **A motion was made to accept the contract as written which was seconded by Councilmember Benjamin. Councilmember Barfield, Councilmember Benjamin and Councilmember Davis all voted in favor of the motion. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin opposed the motion. The vote was 3-1.**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

1. **JULY MEETING AGENDA SUBMISSION AND PACKET SCHEDULE**
2. **TEACHER’S LUNCHEON**
3. **TE SIDEWALK PROJECT PROPERTY ACQUISITION APPRAISALS-SPLOST VII**
4. **GDOT INTERCHANGE PROPERTY ACQUISIITION**

**Councilmember Davis made a motion to approve the Consent agenda which was seconded by Councilmember Benjamin. Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Benjamin, Councilmember Barfield and Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin all voted in favor of the motion.**

**REPORTS:**

Councilmember Barfield thanked everyone for what they have done. I know it has been discussed before about the ditches, but we have never come to any conclusion. I appreciate the residents bringing it back to us and I will be one to make sure that we move forward on getting the ditches taken care of. Thanks to everyone for the support and for being a great citizen. I hope everyone has a great summer.

Councilmember Benjamin thanked everyone for coming out and the citizens of District 1 for the opportunity to serve. Today is the National Day of Prayer and he urges every citizen to pray for the Mayor and Council and that we continue to make good decisions to bring the City forward. Thank you for the work of the Mayor, City Council, City hall and employees.

Councilmember Davis thanked everyone for coming out, if we do not hear it we do not know it is a concern. He wanted the gentleman that brought up the concerns for the ditches that it has been discussed in detail at the Retreats, we have discussed some costs estimates and no conclusion has been made. We will get with the City Manager and PW Director to see if we can come up with a short term solution. Thank you again for coming and we will see you next month.

Councilmember Clendenin said that he is back from Europe and thanked everyone for coming out. He stated that at the last Regular Session that he felt disrespected when he talked about the people he had talked to regarding the surveying of the drainage ditches. He said he was not at liberty to divulge the names of the people he talked to and did not feel comfortable giving out the information. He said that it will cost around $50,000 to do surveying of ditches if done by outside source. He said he spoke to two cities over close to Savannah that are both doing this with employees and say that the cost will be around $18,000-$20,000. He said he called the City of Pooler City Manager and discussed the cost of the survey and that City is three times larger than Hahira. The cost is $18-20,000 compared to $58,000. He said you can call the City of Pooler to confirm. If the City can do it at a lesser rate then why not do it. I do not give out the names of people that I talk to unless I have written or audio consent to do so.

City Manager Jonathan Sumner said he would like to thank the Mayor and Council for the opportunity to serve, he thanked the department heads for the work that you do. You may notice work being done around town, a company Insituline is doing slip lining on our sewer lines around town. Our infiltration should improve and the PW department has been out covering manholes.

Mayor Bruce Cain thanked everyone for coming out, thank you to the public works department for the work that they are doing. Thank you to the department heads, they always do a great job. Thank you to all the employees you deserve a slap on the back for your hard work.

Councilmember Barfield made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin. Councilmember Barfield, Councilmember Davis, Councilmember Benjamin and Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin all voted in favor of the motion.

**ADJOURN.**

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**MAYOR BRUCE CAIN**

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**CITY CLERK LISA MASHBURN**