**HAHIRA CITY COUNCIL**

**WORKSESSION**

**MARCH 30, 2015**

**6:30 P.M.**

**COURTHOUSE**

The Mayor and Council met for a Work session March 30, 2015 with Mayor Bruce Cain presiding.

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

**REVIEW/CORRECTIONS OF MINUTES:**

1. **FEBRUARY 2., 2015 WORK SESSION**
2. **MARCH 2, 2015 WORK SESSION**
3. **MARCH 5, 2015 COUNCIL MEETING**

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions or concerns regarding the minutes. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said he had reviewed the amendment to the February 2, 2015 work session and no changes were noted.

**REVIEW OF BILLS/BUDGET OVERAGES:**

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions or concerns regarding the bills. None noted.

**DISCUSSIONS:**

1. **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FEE (CITY ENGINEER)**

Robert Ramsey with Stevenson and Palmer Engineering said he would like to introduce Courtney Riech of Ecological Planning Group. Courtney stated that she prepared an overview to assist the City of Hahira with its consideration of the Storm water Utility and storm water user fee system. She stated we have developed this overview using the knowledge we’ve gained in assisting numerous local governments in Georgia set up their Storm water Utility to fund and operate their municipal storm water management program (SWMP). She stated that she had worked with Stephenson and Palmer Engineering and the City of Camilla to work out their storm water program. She stated that this is all part of the MS4 plan. The City has a storm water plan but after a period of time it will expand. Phase II of the MS4 will require public information regarding illicit discharges. As the pipes age they require maintenance, we have to be proactive and maintain the pipes. The storm water used to be all natural but now it runs into man made hazards. She stated that you do have storm water funding options taxes, revenue and grant funding. She stated that most cities use General fund for storm water and generally it takes a back seat to other needs and this results in an ineffective storm water program. She said that many cities across Georgia are implementing a storm water user fee per customer based on the amount of storm water runoff generated by the impervious surface characteristics of the parcel and the SWMP services received at parcel from the City. This money would be put into an Enterprise fund, a stand-alone fund and allocated to storm water only. If you are funding under the General Fund it is paid by the taxpayers and you bear the larger cost for all property owners. With the Storm water user fee every parcel pays, no tax exemption. The storm water user fee per customer account is generally based on the amount of storm water runoff generated by the impervious surface characteristic of the parcel and the SWMP services received by that parcel from the City. One of the most important components of a storm water utility rate structure is a user fee credit policy to ensure that customers who reduce their parcel’s burden on the drainage system through implementation of on-site storm water controls, this may make them eligible to receive a reduction in the user fee. As of 2015 50 local governments in Georgia have implemented a Storm water Utility to fund their SWMP. The average rate in Georgia is $3.75 and $4.50 per month for a single family household. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that there are no smaller cities in Georgia listed. Courtney said that they are currently working with smaller cities and she can get the smallest one in Georgia to you. Courtney reviewed the set up process and implementation process. She said that it is typically 9 months to complete the set up.

City Manager Sumner said to give a little background on the previous discussion of the MS4 plan. He said that after investigation we are concerned with what the city has been dealing with for years. We have limited public works staff, piping in ditches are a continuous issue and in Woodbridge we have detention ponds that need work. SPLOST funds are limited. We maintain them out of necessity, they are owned by the property owners but we have to maintain the ditches. It depends on the direction of the Council but this is something to look at. Councilmember Benjamin asked what are the MS4 requirements from us to local EPD. Courtney said there is no distinction on community size, small or large every drainage structure will be part of the storm water in the next 5 years. The city will have to monitor any surface water is discharged illegally i.e. car wash, basically we will have to monitor the quality of water that goes into drain system and what come out. They will inspect drainage system every 5 years and they can make new requirements. This can be set up as capital or maintenance fee. The first step will be to have a statement of services. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin asked the cost of this. It was stated that the assessment would be around $10,000.00 but the whole thing will be around $40,000.00 to $50,000.00.

1. **HARVEY’S-HUDDLE HOUSE SEWER-SPLOST VII (CITY ENGINEER)**

Robert Ramsey with Stevenson and Palmer stated he would like to speak regarding the issue of the Huddle House and the sewer crossing Highway 122. He stated that he camera truck determined the problem, bad deflection in the sewer pipe, he stated that it rises up to the downstream manhole. This is not a good situation, it has been sent to DOT for processing and sent out to contractors for pricing. The two bids are from Standard Contractors in the amount of $49,880.00 and Little River at $45,693.00. This is the turn key price. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin asked if the original work was a sloppy job. Mr. Ramsey said by appearance I would say yes, the boring machine may have hit rock and created it, it has alignment issues. City Manager Sumner said that it has always flowed but when the Huddle House added to the flow it caused a problem. We are getting by now but we need to fix the problem, it needs to be addressed. City Manager Sumner asked Robert Ramsey who he would recommend to do the work. Robert stated that both are good, he would go with the lower price and a Stevenson & Palmer representative will be present. Sumner asked if we need 10% contingency, Robert said we always recommend have the contingency. Sumner said that this is a SPLOST VII expense. The Mayor said that the prices are high but that he thinks that is due to the emergency situation. Robert stated that they are both prepared to move on approval and that it will take two weeks to get here. The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin asked what it cost for us to have it pumped out now. Sumner said that there is no charge now but that this is only temporary fix, if it turns into long term then we will have to pay. Councilmember Davis asked what is required is that it needs to be someone that can do a bore, or may contractors that can do that and be there as quick as you need it. He stated that we expected it to be $30,000 to $35,000 but this is time sensitive. The Mayor said yes it is free now but it will start costing us. Councilmember Barfield said if we keep pumping every night what it will cost us. PWD Warren said he urge you to take action and do it as soon as possible. Councilmember Barfield said that he would like to bring it back Thursday night with maybe discussion with contractors and getting a lower price.

1. **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ORDINANCE (HISTORIC PRESERVATIONIST)**

James Horton introduced himself as the new Historic Preservationist with the City of Valdosta Planning & Zoning. He said that he had a long history with Hahira from way back in the 90’s. He said that in the past it came to the area where you have to have districts and this never was decided on. He said that he thinks the City will be interested to bring it back to life and that they have put together a study committee. We need to meet and decide where we are on the project. The next study committee meeting will be April 16th at 2:30 p.m. and we will meet at the community center. We have a capable group of people and we need to get the ordinances and commission back together to enjoy for future generations. City Manager Sumner said that he had the opportunity to work with Mr. Horton for years and that he knows the history of what has gone by previous Historic Preservation Committees, he said that they discussed it and the ordinances have issues, they are 25 years old and it can all be updated. James stated that he read the ordinance, it is a good ordinance and it has good parts, somethings have changed and it just needs to be updated for today’s usage. The study committee can make ordinance updates to present to Mayor and Council. He said that just a few paragraphs can be changed or simplified. He thinks it has a positive outlook. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that we have a map from 20 years ago and one from 2004 and they are pretty much the same. Mr. Horton said the maps are not ready to show public, we would need to update the map as the in the study committee and present it to Mayor and Council before we do a public hearing. Councilmember Barfield said that at several meetings we saw the old maps and that we concluded that we are at the point of making things simpler and change to make it a better fit. You can expand on it later on. Sumner said that main concern for the historical society is the loss of historic buildings. We need to have the study commission and historical society, they are essential to working this all out.

1. **FIVE YEAR REVENUE PLAN (CITY MANAGER)**

City Manager Sumner said that he put this five year revenue plan in the packets. He asked if anyone had any questions, he said it is not aggressive it has a 1-3% growth. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that this is only half of the equation, you need expenditure plan, and this means nothing without expenditures. City Manager Sumner said that he thinks it means something. Councilmember Benjamin thanked City Manager Sumner for his work and stated his efforts are not in vain.

1. **ZONING ORDINANCE (PLANNING AND ZONING ADMINISTRATOR)**

Matt Martin Planning and Zoning administrator said that he had three handouts. He stated it is the comparison of districts for the residential in Valdosta. Hahira is the same way with R-10 and R-15. He stated that Valdosta added two more zones, mostly based on lot size and they are more restrictive. In 1994 Valdosta recognized one of the concern was vacant land and the R-15 was on smaller lots. The RE class is estate residential with 3,000 square feet requirement and this was for Cherry Creek North subdivision. R-25 would be in between but that none exist at this time. We will need to update the ordinance with zoning maps and what areas might fit the criteria. It is possible to create new zoning areas. Matt concluded that Hahira zoning ordinance would add the R-25 based on lot size and RE is also available if needed. He stated we have portion of the city use table with zoning districts for you to look at. Staff can initiate any changes and how to craft this, and stated that it is always a good idea to have these in place. City Manager Sumner said that any changes would go to the planning commission and then come before this body for adoption, it is the same type of process, and would be amendment to zoning. City Manager Sumner asked what the next step, do you want staff to look at or take it under consideration. Councilmember Barfield said he would like to have something drafted to ponder and move forward if we decide to do so. Councilmember Barfield said this is a step program to start with, look at it again and not present to the Planning Commission yet. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that this could be more tax money for the citizens. Matt Martin stated that zoning is not supposed to affect taxes.

**DEPARTMENT REQUESTS:**

1. **CITY HALL-POLICE DEPARTMENT PHONE SYSTEM-SPLOST VII (CITY MANAGER)**

Sumner said that he would like to have more discussion with firms and police department, he requested that this be tabled for a month and be considered at the May meeting to get additional questions clarified and Police Chief to be present.

**SET MARCH COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA:**

**-STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FEE**

**-HARVEY’S-HUDDLE HOUSE SEWER**

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.**

**ADJOURN.**

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**Mayor Bruce Cain**

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**City Clerk Lisa Mashburn**