

HAHIRA CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 5, 2015

7:30 P.M.

COURTHOUSE

Mayor and Council met for a Council meeting March 5, 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, Public Works Director Donnie Warren and City Clerk Lisa Mashburn.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Bruce Cain

ESTABLISH QUORUM: Mayor Bruce Cain

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Bruce Cain

INVOCATION: Pastor Kudyk

REVIEW/CORRECTION OF MINUTES:

- A. FEBRUARY 2, 2015 WORK SESSION**
- B. FEBRUARY 5, 2015 COUNCIL MEETING**
- C. FEBRUARY 6, 2015 RETREAT**

Mayor Bruce Cain asked if anyone had any corrections or questions regarding the minutes. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that he had corrections to the work session minutes. He said that he had corrections to the comments under the Safer Grant section of the minutes. He said that he would like to table the work session minutes until corrections are made. **Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin made a motion to approve the February 5, 2015 Council meeting minutes and the February 6, 2015 Retreat minutes as presented and to table the February 2, 2015 Work session meeting minutes. This was seconded by Councilmember Barfield. Councilmember Benjamin, Councilmember Barfield, Councilmember Davis and Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin all voted in favor of the motion.**

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

Jody Nichols of 209 Redbird Place said that we do not have very good communication, we try to keep up with what is going on and all the outgoing expenses and plans for outgoing expenses. The trouble is where is the money coming from, we are planning so many things at one time and we are not sure of where the money is coming from.

Wilmon Stanley of 308 S. Washington said he would like to talk to Mayor and Council regarding an area of South Washington where a family moved out, left the house and there is a pile of junk in the front yard by the street. He said that he would like for the Council to look into it, he said that it may have been an eviction but it is all out by the street and it is clothing, furniture and junk.

Marge Stewart of 205 Thrasher Way had questions regarding the January 12 meeting, when did the DDA meeting take place, item number 5. She said we have many areas that we are working on the Railroad property, water/sewer repairs and she would like to know where the money is coming from. The taxpayers are all on the line for this. She said she would like to see the City proceed with caution, what happened to the great City of Hahira. She said that she is a concerned taxpayer and Citizen.

Barry Robinson of 803 Ga Hwy 122 West said he would like to commend the Police Department and Public works department. He said that during construction of the Huddle House that they had stolen building materials, he called the Police department right away, he said within half a day the Public works and Police department located and returned the materials and the project was completed. He said that we should all have public appreciation in law and order. The Mayor said that it is nice to have praise for our departments instead of all the negative.

REVIEW OF BILLS/BUDGET OVERAGES:

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

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

DISCUSSIONS:

D. TE SIDEWALK UPDATE (MAYOR PRO TEM CLENDENIN)

City Manager Sumner stated that Michael Windham of Ingram and Associates from Macon Georgia is here as representative for the TE project. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that he received the forward of the new sidewalk plan and it is very small but that it looks like we need an easement on 122 to Grace Street. He said that it keeps changing and that we are 3 to 4 years into the project and now we have a new plan. Now we have an easement of what looks like 25 foot. Mr. Windham said that it was changed because we will need drainage on front and back of the sidewalk, he said the original plans had drainage plans 2 foot off the road, but that he feels we need drainage ditch on both sides for drainage. He said that he looked at the 2010 plans and said that land is flat and how can we put drainage in there. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin asked how much easement is needed. He said there is 23 foot from the road to my property line. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said the original concepts showed drainage pipes. Mr. Windham said that he wants a design that will work, he does not want drainage issues. Mayor Pro Tem again asked how much property you will take. 10 foot from the right of way per Mr. Windham. He stated that he does have a full size plan in his truck that he can leave with him. He said my main issue is drainage and that he will do his best to have good drainage. He stated that he has been doing this for 30 years and we have a unique area and that we only have easement where easement is needed. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin then said the only issue will be Hwy 122, Mr. Windham said we do have to acquire easements. City Manager Sumner said that all the ownership has been acquired and we will be in acquisition for the next few months. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that he is frustrated, it has been 5 years.

H. 5 YEAR REVENUES AND EXPENSE PLAN (MAYOR PRO TEM CLENDENIN)

Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that this was discussed at last month meeting and it was not well received and then at the retreat Councilmember Barfield suggested a 5 year revenue plan and now you want to do it. The Revenue plan is only half the plan. We need some kind of way to judge our buying power, we have \$100.00 and next month we spend \$110.00. With the Safer grant we will need \$125,000-150,000, lighting on interstate \$25,000.00 per year which was approved by Council with no collation. He said our biggest cost is labor, we have 3% increase per year where is that coming from. We have an increase in power and petroleum of at least 5% per year. We need the plan, it will give us a road map for things that we want to buy. Now we are just blowing the dice, we need to show transparency. This is a good way to do that, show the revenue stream. He thinks this is an excellent project to put together a 5 year expense and revenue plan. Councilmember Davis said that he agrees with the projection of revenues that we talked about at the retreat. The possibility of adding expenses, he understands the logic of the revenue projection. He said we cannot look at the future, we do not have a crystal ball. He said he understands that this was done years back, and that you cannot use something you cannot predict. We have things that cannot not be expected, we had an emergency situation with the lift station, we needed heaters for the fire station that was an emergency situation, and these are all things that we could not predict. Revenues yes we do need that but revenues and expenses will end up costing the City and it will not be worth it. Councilmember Benjamin said talking about transparency the budget is the most transparent thing you can have. It is the most accurate accounting of what we are spending and what we are bringing in. As far as taxes go, we have lowered taxes or kept it the same. The millage does not yield what people think. If you are looking at what the City will do then look at the budget because it is what we hope to realize. The Departments and the City Manager have been spot on since we have been here, not one time have we had to use our fund balance. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that 1 mill is \$100.00 in taxes. We have \$123,000 for the safer grant, were are we going to get that from. Look at the salaries, 18% in the next 5 years, Councilmember Benjamin said have you looked at the previous years. Councilmember Clendenin said we paid someone \$1800.00 to come here and learn about the DDA, for DDA training. City Manager Sumner said we have extra money in the budget for that. Councilmember Barfield said we have discussions and we talk about certain things that we would like to see coming down the line and we almost feel like we are flying by the seat of our pants, but there is a process in place for correcting and spending revenues. No discussion or firm decision has been made about the DDA here. I will be done when a DDA process has been taken by the public, the planning has not been done yet. It will need to be discussed in Public hearings and meetings. You all assume decision have been made behind closed doors but it has not. We have a budget in process every year, we cannot just go out and spend money. Councilmember Barfield said that he has felt comfortable so far, I have worked in high government systems that has not given me pause and I as a citizens feel that I have not been informed. I do not feel that things are going on that I have no knowledge of. Yes they are giving us money to us for Safer Grant and if we cannot afford it then we can end it after the first year, we will still be in a plus. And we did say that the money would be there. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said how. City Manager Sumner said we have a rising graph of our liquid cash balance, we are still estimating the revenues and expenses through budget process and we have a satisfactory fund balance. Councilmember Barfield said that he heard we had satisfactory fund balance and we are not millions in the hole. City Manager Sumner said that the department heads had to carefully watch account balances about 8 years ago, but I can say due to wise stewardship of Council and department heads we do

not have to worry about that. He said that staff will do what the Mayor and Council want. Councilmember Davis stated was I correct regarding the current budget process that it is based on an 18 month period, department heads do project for about 18 months. Our budget requires us to have more long range forecasting. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said look at the salaries, they will increase 18% over the next five years that is a lot of money, and if we hire more people that will be more money. City Manager Sumner said we have the tax commission mileage rate in August each year and we start working on the budget in June-July which gives the public and Mayor/Council 6 months to review and that is transparency. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that we need to look at since 1984 we have 3% increase in salaries and we need a revenue and expense plan. Councilmember Benjamin said we have certain expenditures that we know are fixed but a lot are not, how are you going to come up with a five year plan. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said it is called a statistical analysis. The Mayor said that he needs a motion to add expenses for the 5 year plan. **Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin made a motion to have a 5 year Revenue and attach a 5 year Expense plan to it. The Mayor asked for a second. None noted. The motion dies due to a lack of second.**

DEPARTMENT REQUESTS:

A. MARKETING PLAN (DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR)

Brandi Dame the Downtown Development Coordinator said that last meeting she asked that we change the billboard or end the contract. She felt that the billboard was a waste of money for advertisement. She put together a price list for different options for the 2015 advertising for the City of Hahira. She said that she would like to see a billboard around the mall area if you would like to go with a billboard. She said that the billboard would be \$250.00 a month, it would be a stand-alone billboard and it could be changed up to 3 times a year. The next option would be television, a lot of the businesses would like to do television like the City of Thomasville. The commercials would be a 30 second commercial around events and it would promote businesses to shop or eat in Hahira (especially around the holidays). The cost would be \$500.00 per month for 5 months per year at a total cost of \$2,500.00. We have the option to put it in a Health life magazine every other month at a cost of \$225.00 which is \$1,350.00 per year. Another good option would be radio, promoting events and businesses in town, this would be \$501.00 per month for a total of \$3006.00 per year. Brandi said that she would like to do a radio commercial and do the TV advertisement. The total cost for the year for the two would be \$5,506.00. Councilmember Barfield said that he would be happy to see us have a partnership with the businesses in town. Councilmember Davis said that he agreed with Councilmember Barfield and said that building a relationship with the local businesses is an ongoing process and that we need to show that effort is being made. Do not exclude them. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said that he thought they had a monthly meeting on Fridays at 8:30 a.m. every other Friday. Councilmember Barfield said that we need to bring the gap with the businesses, go and ask them to bring a plan to us and see how we can partner with them. City Manager Sumner said that we need to let them know that staff is willing and able to work with you and craft a plan for all demographics. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said we need to have a market plan. Councilmember Barfield said we need to take it to the business owners and see what they would like to do. Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said if the businesses do not want to participate in this then we should not support this or if they do not contribute to this. The Mayor said that this is all to mull over, we need to sit down with them and said that he would

like to see a better relationship with them. City Manager Sumner said that he will take that direction, no motion is needed at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. HONEYBEE FESTIVAL-STREET CLOSURES**
- B. STORMWATER-CLASS-PUBLIC WORKS**

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions regarding the consent agenda. None noted.

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

REPORTS:

Councilmember Barfield said that he would like to reiterate how at this point the comfort and confidence level and the processes that are going through that he feels very confident where we are going and the process. He thanked everyone for having concerns and bringing them to us. He said that he is thankful for the town and the citizens. Thanks to everyone for all the hard work.

Councilmember Benjamin thanked everyone for coming out and the opportunity to serve District 1. Thank you to all departments and employees for what they do. Speaking of transparency, the City Manager and Department heads are there from 8-5 Monday –Friday, go see them. We are not like Washington, anyone can come by; we have an open door policy. The budget is there for inspection, it is available to you.

Councilmember Davis said that he would like reiterate everything that has been said. Thank you for coming out and participating, either compliments or dissentions they are all good to hear. He said that he gets very few calls in his District, his district is running perfectly. He said no matter what district you are in you can call him, I will be glad to talk to you. Thank you.

Mayor Pro Tem Clendenin said we need transparency, the citizens don't feel like we have transparency. We need to work on it, get out and talk to people. The website should soon be completed and we can get it out there. Thanks for coming out.

City Manager Sumner thanked Mayor and Council for the opportunity to serve and said it is our objective to resolve issues. He said that you can call his direct line at 794-2829 or come by to see him at City Hall. We are out on the streets. We will have several ribbon cuttings this Saturday in town. Monkey Britches at 9:30 a.m., Vertice Boutique and Frogtown Winery. Thank you to all the department heads.

The Mayor thanked everyone for coming out, it is nice to see the crowd. We are working on the web site and it should be up and running in the near future. Thank you to all department heads and it is nice to hear positive comments about our departments. Thank you to all the employees, thank you to Jonathan and Lisa.

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

ADJOURN.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 9:15 P.M.

MAYOR BRUCE CAIN

CITY CLERK LISA MASHBURN