

**HAHIRA CITY COUNCIL**

**WORK SESSION**

**JULY 5, 2016**

**6:30 P.M.**

**COURTHOUSE**

Mayor and Council met for a Work Session July 5, 2016 with Mayor Bruce Cain presiding.

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

**REVIEW/CORRECTIONS OF MEETING MINUTES:**

- A. MAY 31, 2016 WORK SESSION**
- B. JUNE 2, 2016 COUNCIL MEETING**

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions or corrections regarding the minutes. None noted.

**REVIEW OF BILLS/BUDGET OVERAGES:**

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

**DISCUSSIONS:**

**A. HMA JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> CELEBRATION REPORT (HMA PRESIDENT)**

Vicki Rountree HMA President gave an update on the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration stating that it was an awesome event. She stated that if you were not there that you missed something. The total cost was \$4,707.50. There will be a meeting Thursday morning with the HMA to discuss what worked and what did not work and also a meeting on Friday with Black Crow Media. Sumner stated the remaining balance for the HMA budget is \$14,617.00. Rountree stated that they had a very good turn out and that Citizens Community Bank that was a sponsor was very thrilled with the event and turn out. We had around 8,000 to 10,000 people present. She stated that she would like to thank the Fire Department, Police Department, Public Works and all staff for their help and was happy about all the positive comments.

**B. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE (SOUTHERN GEORGIA RC PLANNER)**

Ariel Godwin with the SGRC stated that he was here regarding the Comprehensive Plan. He will be in charge of transmitting it to the DCA and that this is a joint comprehensive plan for Lowndes County, Valdosta and surrounding area. We had our kick off in January and we have had many workshops and public hearings with public comment. On June 28<sup>th</sup> we will have a public hearing before we send it to the DCA. We will need approval from all Councils. There were no questions at this time.

**C. CITY CENTER (A & B ARCHITECTS)**

Walter Altman with A & B Architects kicked off the meeting stating that we will need a survey for engineering processing for the 4 acre park and this will cost around \$3,200 to \$4,200. This will show us where the utilities are and the slope of the land for construction documents. Now that the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event is over and a success we can see what we need at the City Center. After talking to citizens we see that we might need vendor set up spots and an interior city type park because it is the center of town. We will need a band stand that is tied into the train depot, may the old caboose as a welcome center, additional parking and maybe a fence down the railroad track. It would be better to place the stage on the east side for shade and the park would need to start at Main Street. I am here tonight to get ideas of what you might like to see at the park. City Manager Sumner said that the street at the back side of the property is a concern; the crossing and the closure of the crossing has been an issue. People do not want the crossing closed, we will need to talk to the railroad. Also if the Honeybee Committee puts all vendors in central place we will need electricity for all vendors. Councilman Warren stated that he would like to see a splash pad for the young kids. If you go to a park in Valdosta, Saunders Park they have one and this could be a main attraction for the kids. The Mayor said that he would like to see a fountain at the front of the park on the Main Street side and a fence by the railroad would be a necessity. Altman reviewed some ideas. Relocate the caboose, public bathrooms at the band stand and historical train station theme. A perimeter side walk with benches and green lamp post. IT will need to meet ADA requirements, maybe a lay out of vendors and flow. The rear of the property has always had a drainage issue, this may be good for vendors or maybe parking. Councilman Davis asked if we would put trees around the perimeter of the park. We would like to have some type of message board and maybe a name a brick entrance. Altman stated that he would have a few graphs and cost elements for next month meeting.

**D. SLUDGE BLANKET REMOVAL, LIFT STATION CONSTRUCTION (CITY ENGINEER)**

Robert Ramsey the City Engineer is here to discuss the sludge blanket and sewage capacity. The sludge blanket takes up about 2 ½ feet of capacity. IF the sludge blanket is cleaned up we will have about 10 days of retention time. He stated the summer months are the problem times. If we clean this out we can petition EPD to increase discharge limits for summer months. We estimate the cost will be \$300,000 up to \$400,000. City Manager Sumner said that we have several projects on tap for the water/sewer. We have I & I improvements which is slip line construction and manhole repair for heavy rain. This will reduce the amount of sewage to process. We also have the main lift station construction at a cost of \$200, 000 and then the sludge blanket will be \$300,000 to \$500,000. Sumner said that he spoke with the GEFA representatives and the GEFA rate would be 1% for 20 year loan. We had a \$70,000 appreciation this year in cash positive funding and this is all due to the rate increase and it could be used to improve the current system. He said he would recommend the GEFA clean water state revolving fund at an annual cost of around \$45,000, and use the SPLOST for other projects, I think this would be wise use of City funding. Sumner then asked if anyone had any questions. Councilman Davis said that he would like to clarify that we are we are talking about the project itself and the funding. Sumner stated yes. He stated that Councilman Barfield is not present, he viewed the materials and had not specific questions. Councilman Warren said completing the sludge blanket removal would be part of EPD compliance. Sumner stated that back in 2000 it

was recommended to dredge the pool two foot and this is about 25 years of sludge. Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin said that this would handle ammonia and the violations that we have, I know it does not happen all the time. Robert Ramsey said this is to help with capacity, depending on what we can get through EPD for permit for the summer months and increase discharge to spray fields. Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin said this will help with the increase in housing and communities in the City. We will have cleaner water and be able to put some water out. We can entertain more residents and commercial properties in the future and put the issues of capacity to rest. City Manager Sumner said that he would like some direction of what the Council would like to do. I think we should start with the lift station and sludge blanket removal with the GEFA loan and see what we have. I think we should hold our final opinions until we get something from GEFA, think about it for another month. Councilman Davis said the need is there, it was recommended over 20 years ago, I think we should use the GEFA loan and not deplete the SPLOST funds. Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin and Councilman Warren both agreed with Councilman Davis. I recommend we do the application for the GEFA loan and bring it back to the next meeting.

#### **DEPARTMENT REQUESTS:**

##### **A. PUBLIC SAFETY/ADMIN STAFF FUNDING REQUEST (CITY MANAGER)**

City Manager Sumner said that it was requested to review the salary of the staff with current market conditions; we know we are paying under the market rate. Our staff salaries have remained the same for a long time, we have a good staff that want to work and we would like to compensate their hard work. Two years ago we reviewed the DCA wage and salary survey for every staff position but no changes were made. The Mayor took the average salary for each position and the max salary and decided on the middle ground. Last month we increased the Public works department and now we are in Phase II with the Public Safety and Admin. I would recommend the increases listed on the report in lieu of cost of living 3% raise. This would all be covered by the General Fund account. Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin said we have had this on the shelf for 10-12 years, we had studies done and spent money for what we already know. We have long term employees and we now have the opportunity to do what we should do for the employees. I think we also need to increase retirement and benefits. I also think we need to do the cost of living increase also, set the standard. The employees deserve it. We need to show our commitment to the employees. Councilman Warren said that he is in agreement. Councilman Davis said he also agrees, we have a great group of employees and they deserve it. Our salaries are falling behind, it has been a long time. City Manager Sumner said that Councilman Barfield looked at the suggested salaries and has no issue with what the Council decides to do. Mayor Pro Tem Benjamin said if you really want to see sticker shock then try to replace one of our employees.

##### **B. COURTHOUSE A/C (PWD WARREN)**

We need to replace the A/C unit at the Courthouse, it is not cooling the building. We have three bids:

Coombs Heating and Air \$5665.00

Stones Heating and Air \$6500.00

Waller Heating and Air \$6250.00.  
Coombs Heating and Air is the low bid.

**C. CLUTCH (PWD WARREN)**

Public Works Director Warren said that he had two tractor clutches that need to be replaced. The cost will be around \$3600.00.

**D. METER READER (PWD WARREN)**

Public Works Director Warren said that we need new equipment and upgrade for our current meter reading system. The cost will be \$4750.00 and this could be paid out of SPLOST.

**E. FALL CONFERENCE (PWD WARREN)**

Public Works Director Warren said that he would like to attend the Georgia Rural Water Conference in October 2016, the cost will be approximately \$900.00.

**SET JULY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA:**

All items moved to consent agenda

**SET JULY CONSENT AGENDA:**

-Public Works Fall Conference

-Comprehensive Plan Update

-City Center Survey-SPLOST VII

-Sludge blanket removal, lift station construction GEFA application

-Public Safety/Amin Staff funding request

-Courthouse HVAC-Coombs-SPLOST VII

-Public Works Clutches-SPLOST VII

-Meter Reader-SPLOST VII

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

**ADJOURN.**

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**Mayor Bruce Cain**

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**City Clerk Lisa Mashburn**