

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA
MAY 26, 2020 - 11:00 A.M.

The City Council met on May 26, 2020, in regular session.

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Council President Toles. On roll call by the City Clerk, Iva Nelson, the following council members answered present: Toles, Williams, Worthy, Back, Wilson, Cannon and Reed. The clerk stated a quorum was present and the meeting was open for business. Mayor Guyton, Heath Williamson, Lee Roberts and Captain Keener were also present.

The invocation was given by Kent Back.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on May 19, 2020, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of May 15-21, 2020, were ratified by unanimous vote.

#200448-200527	General	\$950,317.41
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NEW BUSINESS

(1) Councilman Worthy introduced the following resolution in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-122-20

AUTHORIZING APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE
OF BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE
BULLETPROOF VEST PARTNERSHIP (BVP)

(Authorizing Grant Application and Acceptance - \$20,475.00 with \$20,475.00 local match - Bureau of Justice Assistance Bulletproof Vest Partnership - To purchase 35 replacement vests and 7 new hire vests)

President Toles received unanimous consent to immediately consider the resolution as an item of new business. Councilman Worthy moved to adopt the resolution, which motion was seconded by Councilman Cannon and unanimously adopted.

(2) Councilman Cannon introduced the following ordinance in writing for consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. O-16-20

AMENDING FISCAL YEAR 2020 GENERAL FUND BUDGET

(Amending FY20 General Fund Budget - Transferring \$30,000.00 from Natural Disaster Trust Fund - To be used for purchase of COVID-19 supplies)

Councilman Cannon moved to suspend the rules to immediately consider the ordinance as an item of new business. The motion was seconded by Councilman Worthy and approved by the following vote:

AYES: Toles, Williams, Worthy, Back, Wilson, Cannon, Reed

NAYS: None

Councilman Cannon moved to adopt the ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilman Back and unanimously adopted.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Kay Moore (Downtown Gadsden, Inc. Director) reported on surveys completed by downtown restaurants and retail businesses. She said many had expressed optimism and are grateful for the support of their customers. Ms. Moore said First Friday will not resume in June and asked for help in determining when it would be appropriate.

Jen Weathington (Parks & Recreation Director) noted facilities that were closed on March 17 and those, such as walking trails, that remained open. She said 88 non-full-time employees were terminated and refunds were made for bookings and events that were canceled. Ms. Weathington announced the summer nutrition program will begin on June 8 and cited events that have been rescheduled. She said reopening facilities and restarting programs will depend upon the ability to rehire staff.

Renee Baker (Community Development Planner) reported on plans to implement the application and approval process for utility assistance, which is part of the CDBG grant for COVID-19 response. She said the application will be available online and in the first floor lobby of city hall. Applicants must provide identification and proof of income.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

President Toles announced changes in the garbage collection schedule, due to yesterday's Memorial Day Holiday. She noted various reports are being requested, including the airport and Industrial Development Authority, as well as city projects and revenues.

Councilman Reed reported on the Memorial Day remembrance at Patriots Park and thanked everyone who participated in the program and attendees.

Councilman Williams provided current statistics on COVID-19 in Etowah County and stressed the need for continued social distancing, wearing masks, and placing priority on equipping hospitals and health care providers. Councilman Worthy pointed out Federal funds are assisting with Corona relief and he feels overgrown grass is a safety issue for residents. Councilman Wilson applauded actions and efforts of responders and commended businesses for their innovation during the pandemic. Councilman Back encouraged all to observe guidelines as reopening occurs. He joined with Councilman Cannon in complimenting the work of departments and pointing out the city will experience hardship due to financial losses.

Councilman Williams described Gadsden's census response as "pathetic" and announced upcoming drive-through events. Councilmen Wilson and Back agreed, urging residents to respond.

Councilman Worthy reported on last week's distribution of groceries, masks and sanitizer at Shiloh Church.

Councilman Back thanked Kay Moore for her leadership and good work over the years. He announced food distribution at First Baptist Church on Wednesday.

Mayor Guyton encouraged the public to seek employment as car manufacturers reopen and to take advantage of technical training opportunities at Gadsden State Community College and Gadsden City High School.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was duly adjourned.

Iva Nelson, City Clerk (5-26-2020)
