

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA
JUNE 22, 2021 - 11:00 A.M.

The City Council met on June 22, 2021, 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, Jeremy Ward, Lee Roberts and Captain Jackson were also present.

The invocation was given by Councilman Back.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on June 15, 2021, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of June 11-17 were ratified by unanimous vote.

#208721-208837	General	\$1,043,637.51
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RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION:

(1) The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-140-21

AUTHORIZING ENGAGEMENT WITH GEORGE FORD

(Authorizing short-term engagement of services on temporary basis - George Ford - \$75.00 per hour - For document management at Forrest Cemetery)

Lee Roberts, City Attorney, explained the need for expertise in interpreting deeds and other records, as well as creating procedures, records management and backup, etc. He noted he had contacted paralegals and attorneys. President Toles requested notification for the council when the process is complete. In response to Councilman Williams' inquiry, Mr. Roberts noted pro bono services were not offered.

Councilman Reed moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Cannon and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: Williams

(2) The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-141-21

AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH COMCAST

(Authorizing Agreement - Comcast - For Internet & Telephone Services at East Gadsden Community Center, when new construction is completed at 912 Wilson Avenue - \$119.95 Installation fee, then \$398.05 per month for 24 months)

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

(3) The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-142-21

AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE OF SURPLUS PROPERTY

(Authorizing conveyance of antique firetruck and protective awning owned by the Gadsden Museum of Art to Steve Lambert - For display at the Old East Gadsden Fire Station located at 107 8th Street South - Note: Firetruck and awning were previously located at the old Alabama City Fire Station and were conveyed to Gadsden Museum of Art by Alabama City Historical Association)

Councilman Reed moved to adopt the resolution as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Cannon and unanimously adopted.

ORDINANCES - FIRST READING

The following ordinance was introduced in writing and read by President Toles:

(1) ORDINANCE - AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1515 ROOSEVELT AVENUE

Since no action was taken in this meeting, the ordinance will be placed on the agenda of the next regular meeting for consideration.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Traci Pondick (RSVP Director) reported on the 2021 tax assistance program and thanked the city for its support. She noted 2,403 Federal returns had been completed totaling \$3,126,353 in refunds.

PUBLIC

Larry Suttles expressed appreciation for the work to alleviate dangerous flooding conditions on Airport Industrial Drive. He noted many areas with ditch and drainage problems still need to be addressed.

Joseph Cole referred to meetings with the Fire Chief, Personnel Director, and Gadsden City High School principal. He urged the mayor and city council to assist in recruiting efforts for black and female candidates for the police and fire departments. Ms. Cole suggested hiring incentives, such as a "\$5,000 signing bonus." He expressed disappointment an acting assistant chief, who was black, didn't receive the promotion.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Councilman Worthy agreed with the need to recruit more black employees and increase diversity. He pointed out people of all races are reluctant to work for the police and fire departments. Councilman Williams referred to prior discussion of “signing bonus” and pointed out there were limitations. He agreed with revisiting it and the need to work for better appreciation of these professions. He affirmed the police and fire chiefs both actively seek black and female candidates.

Councilman Reed thanked Lee Roberts for addressing cemetery records. He announced the Gadsden Etowah Patriots Association is presenting a fireworks display at 9 p.m. on Sunday, July 4.

Councilman Back thanked the Parks and Recreation Department for excellent work in hosting the Barbarian Challenge at Noccalula Falls Park, noting there were 4,000 participants. He said he traveled to a city in Arkansas with two rendering plants that utilize modern technology, stating a report is forthcoming.

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

Iva Nelson, City Clerk (6-22-2021)
