

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA
AUGUST 17, 2021- 11:00 A.M.

The City Council met on August 17, 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, and Cannon. Councilman Reed was absent. The clerk stated a quorum was present and the meeting was open for business. Mayor Guyton, Heath Williamson, Lee Roberts and Captain Jackson were also present.

The invocation was given by Brian Harbison.

Deborah Gaither, Emergency Management Agency Director, provided an update on Covid-19 local statistics, reporting 423 new cases and a 35.2% positivity rate in the last week, the highest since the pandemic began. She added hospitals are currently on diversion, with ICU capacity at 100%. Fire Chief Wil Reed reported 30 calls regarding people under investigation for Covid-19. Ms. Gaither also reported difficulty in obtaining PPE and N95 masks. Ms. Gaither reported 195 new vaccinations in the past week and cited participating providers and upcoming clinics. She responded to questions and suggestions from council members.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on August 10, 2021, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of August 6-12 were ratified by unanimous vote.

#209959-210136	General	\$899,918.88
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RESOLUTION PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-175-21

AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF GADSDEN,
THE ETOWAH COUNTY COMMISSION AND
THE SHERIFF OF ETOWAH COUNTY

(Authorizing Agreement - Etowah County Commission & Sheriff of Etowah County - Regarding incarceration of City prisoners in Etowah County Detention Center - \$62,500.00 per month, totaling \$750,000.00 - Term of 1 year, from 10-1-21 to 9-30-22)

President Toles noted Councilman Reed had called to advise that his negotiations only included the initial term and amount. (Payments will increase by 3% if the month-to-month option is exercised at the end of the term.)

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

NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Williams introduced the following resolution in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-176-21

AUTHORIZING ASSIGNMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

(Authorizing Assignment & Assumption of Agreement - Relating to agreement with Akin Holdings V Gadsden, LLC authorized by R-171-21 - Allowing Olive Garden Holdings, LLC to receive incentive rebate payments)

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

PUBLIC

Robert Hunter requested an update on comments submitted last month regarding American Rescue Plan funds. He explained a submission on behalf of the Free Store, which includes a “free fridge,” and requested to retrieve the paperwork for contact numbers it contained. (Lisa Rosser, Finance Director, noted the paperwork is in the Finance office.)

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Councilman Worthy announced a Job Fair scheduled for next Tuesday at The Venue, noting vaccines will be available. He added over 70 employers with openings are participating.

Councilman Cannon noted his absence the past two weeks was due to visiting his son and his daughter’s move to Tuscaloosa. He referred to rumors and announced he would not seek reelection. Councilman Cannon encouraged prayers for Councilman Reed and Barbara as they battle Covid.

Councilman Wilson advised Robert Hunter the budget process for Rescue funds has begun, but no decision has been made, noting he will provide follow-up. He explained council actions taken today. Councilman Wilson read a resolution he submitted to the legal department for review, which would allow the council to have final approval on certain business licenses subject to Schedule 64, and said he hopes to introduce it next week.

Councilman Back reiterated the serious nature of the pandemic and expressed concern that students are experiencing infection. He urged the public to consult with physicians and pharmacists to determine their risk and response. Councilman Williams agreed and encouraged everyone to take steps to protect the most vulnerable, especially as football season begins.

President Toles announced a ribbon cutting for the roadway connecting The Venue and Coosa Landing following today's council meeting. She also announced a free concert by Bill Avery to be held at the amphitheater on Labor Day. President Toles encouraged support for the work of the 100 Black Boys organization, including a project at Lincoln Hills Cemetery on Saturday. In response to Councilman Worthy's inquiry, she noted masks cannot be mandated at this time.

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

Iva Nelson, City Clerk (8-17-21)
