

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA
SEPTEMBER 13, 2022 - 11:00 A.M.

The City Council met on September 13, 2022, 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. Heath Williamson, Lee Roberts, and Chief Jaggears were also present.

The invocation was given by Brian Harbison.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on September 6, 2022, were approved by unanimous vote.

Payment of the HTE System accounts for the week of September 2-8 were ratified by unanimous vote.

#218658-218800	General	\$406,059.93
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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(1) The following ordinance, which was introduced for first reading at last week's meeting, was presented for consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. O-33-22

REZONING 1900 RAINBOW DRIVE

(Approving Rezoning - 1900 Rainbow Drive - District 4 - From R-1, One-Family Residence District to B-1, Neighborhood Business District - Requested by David Bright, to make the zoning consistent with other commercial properties in the area - Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval)

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

(2) The following ordinance, which was introduced for first reading at last week's meeting, was presented for consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. O-34-22

AMENDING FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET

(Amending FY2022 Budget - Reflecting receipt of and appropriating \$15,000.00 grant from Alabama Tourism Department Grant - For marketing and promotion of Kansas City Barbeque Society World Invitational - To be held on November 11-13, 2022, at Noccalula Falls Park

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

President Toles stated this was the time and place as advertised to conduct the following public hearings:

(1) The floor was opened to allow anyone to offer input regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 budget. Ryan McGlaughn expressed concern on behalf of fire commanders that the pay increase is much less for their group than others (firefighters and drivers). He said many of them must supplement their income through other employment, while their department responsibilities have increased. Lisa Rosser, Finance Director, pointed out she had been asked to address compensation for the lowest paid city employees, which was done. She added that longevity pay is being adjusted for employees with more than 20 years service. Ms. Rosser pointed out the concerns expressed during this past week were heard and offered an amendment to the budget document (ordinance adopting the budget did not change) to provide raises for fire department commanders and police department lieutenants. A discussion followed and it was noted that the base pay increase will result in higher amounts for incentive and longevity pay. Appreciation was expressed to Ms. Rosser for the amendment and to first responders for their dedication and service. Councilman Cannon pointed out he had proposed a \$2 per hour increase for all city employees a number of months ago. (After the hearing ended, Tim Ramsey requested to speak but unanimous consent was not given.) The following ordinance was presented for consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. O-24-20

ADOPTING FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGETS

(Adopting FY2023 Budgets - General Fund totaling \$56,638,170.00 - Special Revenue Funds totaling \$8,374,761.00 - Debt Service Funds totaling \$7,521,496.00 - Enterprise & Internal Service Funds totaling \$14,430,532.00 - Capital Projects Fund totaling \$8,700,000.00 - Capital Projects Fund II totaling \$8,300,000.00

President Toles moved to suspend the rules to immediately consider the ordinance at its first reading. The motion was seconded by Councilman Reed and carried by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None

Councilwoman Toles moved to adopt the ordinance as introduced, which motion was seconded by Councilman Reed and adopted by unanimous vote.

(2) President Toles announced that no action was necessary regarding a resolution ordering abatement of nuisances on property at 1223 Hoke Street in District 1, as the nuisance has been abated by the owner.

(3) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak for or in opposition to a resolution ordering the abatement of nuisances on property at 123 Park Street, Latricia D. Robinson being the last known owner. Brian Harbison, Building Inspector, stated no improvements have been made since procedures began in August 2021, and recommended abatement. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-254-22

ORDERING ABATEMENT OF NUISANCE

(Ordering Abatement of Nuisance - 123 Park Street (county records list property address as Park Street) - District 1 - Latricia D. Robinson)

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

(4) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak for or in opposition to a resolution ordering the abatement of nuisances on property at 129 Park Street, Antwain Harvey being the last known owner. Brian Harbison, Building Inspector, stated no improvements have been made since procedures began in August 2021, and recommended abatement. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-255-22

ORDERING ABATEMENT OF NUISANCE

(Ordering Abatement of Nuisance - 129 Park Street - District 1 - Antwain Harvey)

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

(5) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak for or in opposition to a resolution ordering the abatement of nuisances on property at 452 Keeling Alley, Arlando Jennings being the last known owner. Amiyah Jennings acknowledged the house cannot be repaired and asked what would happen if demolished by the city. President Toles and Councilman Wilson advised her she can retain the property and to speak with Mr. Harbison about setting up payments for the demolition cost. Brian Harbison, Building Inspector, stated no improvements have been made since procedures began in December 2021, and recommended abatement. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-256-22

ORDERING ABATEMENT OF NUISANCE

(Ordering Abatement of Nuisance - 452 Keeling Alley - District 3 - Arlando Jennings)

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

(6) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak for or in opposition to a resolution ordering the abatement of nuisances on property at 1706 Barnes Avenue, Michael McGuire being the last known owner. Brian Harbison, Building Inspector, stated the mobile home was removed but trash and debris remain. He noted the case began in December 2021, and recommended abatement. The following resolution was introduced in writing for consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. R-257-22

ORDERING ABATEMENT OF NUISANCE

(Ordering Abatement of Nuisance - 1706 Barnes Avenue - District 6 - Michael McGuire - Note: Mobile home was removed but remaining trash and debris need to be cleared)

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

(7) President Toles announced that no action was necessary regarding a resolution ordering abatement of nuisances on property at 1311 Tuscaloosa Avenue in District 7, as the nuisance has been abated by the owner.

RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-258-22

AWARDING BID NO. 3483

(Awarding Bid No. 3483 - Solid Waste Transfer and Disposal Services - A&D of Alabama, LLC - Cost of 3-year contract estimated to be \$2,772,690.00)

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-259-22

AMENDING SECTION 1 OF RESOLUTION NUMBER R-403-04
AS AMENDED BY R-238-10, R-318-17 AND R-192-21
REGARDING STEPS IN PAY PLAN

(Amending Section 1 of R-403-04, as amended by R-238-10 and R-318-17 - Regarding Pay Plan - Removing lowest 5 steps of all 25 ranges and adding 5 higher steps)

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-260-22

AMENDING JOB CLASSIFICATIONS AND
AMENDING RESOLUTIONS NO. R-403-04 AND R-463-04

(Regarding Pay Plan - Adding job classification of Assistant City Engineer - Adjusting pay range for job classifications of: Environmental Services Clerk; Permit Clerk; Deputy Building Official; Therapeutic Specialist; Mechanic; Golf Equipment Mechanic; Communications Specialists)

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

ORDINANCE - FIRST READING

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

ORDINANCE - ASSENTING TO ANNEXATION OF PROPERTY AT 129 SOMERSET PASS TO THE CITY OF GADSDEN, ALABAMA

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

NEW BUSINESS

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-261-22

AUTHORIZING CONTRACT FOR SERVICES WITH THE ETOWAH COUNTY COMMISSION

(Authorizing Contract - Etowah County Commission - \$250,000.00 - For contract and direct mental health services - Term of 24 months, from 10-1-21 through 9-30-23)

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 Worthy and unanimously adopted.

DEPARTMENT REPORT

City Clerk Iva Nelson announced deadlines for absentee voting for the upcoming runoff election, as well as tomorrow's public test of election machines.

COUNCIL REMARKS

President Toles announced next week's meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 21, due to the runoff election on Tuesday, September 20. She and Councilman Williams congratulated Jeremy Ward upon his retirement from the engineering department.

Councilmen Williams, Worthy, and Back joined in extending condolences to Doug Guyton and family at the death of his mother, Annie Ruth Guyton.

Several council members commented on the budget and raises to employees, noting they wish more could have been given and hope that more can be done in next year's budget process. Gratitude was expressed to the administration, council, and Finance Director for their hard work and difficult decisions made. Appreciation was extended to first responders and city employees for their dedication. Councilman Back related a personal experience many years ago when first responders saved his son's life.

Councilman Williams commented on last Sunday's 9/11 ceremony and the kindness of firemen to a little girl in attendance.

Councilman Worthy said he wished Commissioner Ramsey had been allowed to speak and President Toles advised the rules of procedure were followed.

Councilman Back referred to a recent soccer tournament at the Gadsden Sports Park and expressed pride in the facility. He thanked everyone who worked to make it a reality, noting more phases are coming.

Councilman Wilson encouraged citizens to vote in next Tuesday's election.

Councilman Cannon encouraged employees to lobby for lower health insurance costs.

Councilman Reed referred to prior meetings with firemen and the agreement to concentrate on the lowest paid positions for hiring and retention. He congratulated Miss Paris Beck for her persistence in saving a flower she planted, even after it was cut down by the city.

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

Iva Nelson, City Clerk (9-13-22)
