

COUNCIL CHAMBER - CITY HALL - GADSDEN, ALABAMA
SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 - 11:00 A.M.

The City Council met on September 26, 2023, in regular session.

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Council President Back. On roll call by the City Clerk, Iva Nelson, the following council members answered present: Latham, Smith, Avery, Back, Wilson, Minatra and Robinson. The clerk stated a quorum was present and the meeting was open for business. Mayor Ford, Heath Williamson, Lee Roberts and Chief Jaggars were also present.

The invocation was given by Heath Williamson.

The minutes of the last work session and council meeting held on September 19 , 2023, were approved by unanimous vote.

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

#227284-227505	General	\$935,839.29
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Mayor Ford presented commendations to Fire Department members who volunteered as a “chainsaw gang” to assist residents on Lookout Mountain after the August 3 storm.

City Clerk Iva Nelson read a proclamation proclaiming September 29, 2023, as “Plumbers Wholesale Supply Company Day” and Mayor Ford presented it to company family members.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

ORDINANCE NO. O-60-23

ORDINANCE AMENDING CITY CODE CHAPTER 74

(Amending City Code Sections 74-61 through 74-93 - Updating rates for Privilege License Tax and procedures/schedules for issuance of business licenses)

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

(2) An ordinance adopting Fiscal Year 2024 budgets, which was introduced for first reading at last week's meeting, was presented for consideration. Councilman Wilson stated the administration had made slight amendments to the budget, resulting in a net increase of \$75,000. He then moved to substitute the following ordinance, which motion was seconded by Councilwoman Latham and unanimously carried:

ORDINANCE NO. O-61-23

ADOPTING FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGETS

(Adopting FY2024 Budgets - General Fund totaling \$60,250,513.00 - Special Revenue Funds totaling \$8,442,287.00 - Debt Service Funds totaling \$6,750,331.00 - Enterprise & Internal Service Funds totaling \$15,716,165.00 - Capital Projects Fund totaling \$9,200,000.00 - Capital Projects Fund II totaling \$8,500,000.00)

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

PUBLIC HEARINGS

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

(1) The floor was opened to allow anyone to speak in opposition to or in favor of an ordinance approving the rezoning of property at 1203 Gardner Street from B-2, General Business District, to R-1, One-Family Residence District. The Planning Commission recommended approval. Danielle Byers (applicant) spoke in favor of the rezoning and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to change back to residential use. President Back stated the ordinance had been presented today for the first reading, and the Council will vote on it next week.

RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED FOR CONSIDERATION

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-517-23

AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY BY GADSDEN AIRPORT AUTHORITY

(Assenting to Gadsden Airport Authority's conveyance of property to Prince Metal Stamping, USA, Inc. - Approximately one acre of property in NE¼ of NE ¼, Section 14, Township 12 South, Range 5 East - Located at Airport Industrial Park)

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-518-23

AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT WITH GOODWYN MILLS CAWOOD, LLC

(Authorizing Agreement - Goodwyn Mills Cawood, LLC - \$24,000.00 - To complete Downtown District Restriping Design from Walnut Street to Meighan Boulevard and North 1st Street to North 7th Street)

Mayor Ford explained this firm is completing the city's master plan and this design will create additional parking spaces, bike lanes, etc. Councilmen Robinson, Back and Wilson also commented.

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-519-23

AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION
AND AUTHORIZING AGREEMENT

(Accepting \$18,000.00 donation from Kids to Love Foundation - Authorizing Lease and Service Agreement with Safe Haven Baby Boxes, Inc. - Initial fee of \$12,000.00 and annual fee of \$300.00 - For placement of baby box, with pre-installed internal camera, at Fire Station #3, located at 300 Garden Street in East Gadsden)

Mayor Ford commended Brett Johnson, Chief of Staff, for his work in obtaining one of the first baby boxes in the state.

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

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

RESOLUTION NO. R-520-23

AUTHORIZING LEASE AGREEMENT WITH
PLAZA COTTON STORAGE, LLC

(Authorizing Lease - Plaza Cotton Storage, LLC - For Building T-8, Sections A & B, at Air Depot - \$9,000.00 per month - Term of 6 months, beginning 10-1-23)

Mayor Ford noted the sale of other buildings at the Air Depot, stating the city is retaining this building. Councilman Robinson thanked the Mayor for additional time to remove items from the building, including a historic printing press.

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

ORDINANCE - FIRST READING

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

ORDINANCE - AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE OF PROPERTY (Buildings T-1 and T-2 at Air Depot to Creek Ridge Properties, LLC)

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

PUBLIC

Syndee Isbell (Neely Henry Lake Association) advised the lake water level will be dropped by five feet on October 23, and will be returned to full pool on November 4-6. Shoreline work permits may be obtained from Alabama Power Company's website. She announced the Christmas boat parade in Gadsden will be held on December 1.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REMARKS

Mayor Ford: thanked the council for passing the Gadsden F.I.R.S.T. budget, noting \$2 million was dedicated to employee pay raises; commended the work of Brett Johnson (Chief of Staff) and Brandon Phillips (Finance Director) and thanked Lisa Rosser (former Finance Director) for her assistance; said he is traveling to Washington, DC, to meet with Federal representatives; explained Etowah County will remain in Congressional District 4 (Robert Aderholt) for one more year, then will transition to District 3 (Mike Rogers); expressed concern about extreme dusty conditions residents are enduring during work on S. 11th Street and said the city will aggressively address the issue with the contractor and will provide watering, if necessary; referred to speeding on the other end of S. 11th Street, noting a number of citations have been issued.

Councilwoman Latham thanked everyone for good wishes expressed during her recent birthday.

Councilman Smith complimented City personnel for their work in addressing issues in the community.

Councilman Avery: announced Job Corps' Youth 2 Youth event at Carver Square on Thursday, September 28; thanked everyone who participated in recent CERT training; announced a District 3 meeting Thursday, September 28, at Handy Chapel AME Church; wished Mattie Whitehead a happy 101st birthday and commended her work in the community; referred to National Daughter Day and recognized Anslei and Ariyah.

Councilman Wilson thanked Chief Jaggars and everyone working to address problems and safety issues on S. 11th Street, and expressed appreciation for street and other improvements in the area. He noted today's Public Safety Committee meeting to discuss animal issues and the proposed ordinance.

Councilwoman Minatra reported on this morning's Public Works Committee meeting and noted work on publishing a debris collection schedule is continuing.

Councilman Robinson acknowledged delays and frustration, but assured residents that storm and regular debris will be collected. He urged them to refrain from mixing household garbage with debris.

President Back expressed empathy for Lookout Mountain residents, as well as city employees, and acknowledged many acts of kindness from the firemen recognized today and others. He referred to the historic budget adopted today and commended the work of the administration. President Back congratulated Plumbers Wholesale and encouraged everyone to attend their celebration on Friday.

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

Iva Nelson, City Clerk (9-26-2023)

FOURTH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM - BID OPENING
SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 - 2:00 P.M.

The City Clerk received bid proposals as advertised for the following bid:

Bid No. 3442 - Coosa Riverfront Fueling Facility - Phase 1

Oil Equipment Company	\$319,000.00
Jet-Pep, Inc.	\$375,250.00

Copies of the bids will be forwarded to the City Engineer, and a recommendation will be made to the Council.
