

The City of Pelham

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

February 12, 2015 – 6:30 p.m. – Council Chamber

PRESENT:

Mayor Pro-Tem James Eubanks
Council Member Alfred Brown
Council Member Jeremy Hatcher
Council Member Robert Hodges
Council Member Winfred L. Parker
Council Member John Taylor

City Manager, Jim Hedges
City Attorney, Randall Chew
Police Chief, Nealie McCormick
Chamber Director Kent Holtzclaw
Pelham Journal, Carl Stokes

With a quorum present, Mayor Pro-Tem Eubanks called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Mayor Pro-Tem Eubanks provided the opening prayer.

CITIZENS DELEGATION

Pelham Chamber of Commerce, Kent Holtzclaw updated the council on the following events: January 29, 2015 the Annual Chamber Banquet was held it was the 53rd Banquet. This event was held in the Hand Building with a meet and greet for the new city manager.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

City Manager Hedges reported the following: Gas Department: As a supplier of natural gas there is an unfunded mandate that requires the City of Pelham to annually distribute a flyer to all citizens that use natural gas, or live nearby a natural gas pipeline. The City will comply with this mandate and flyers should be ready for distribution within the next 60-90 days. Transportation Enhancement Project is deemed to be in the assigned readiness status. The project is primarily sidewalks, curb and gutter, informative rest nodes and landscaping in and around the depot building. City Manager Hedges has reached out to Steven Rakestraw regarding this project and he is sending project details. The Pelham Police Department has a list of critical items needed that total \$45,604 and also have a list of items that could be sold as surplus. City Manager Hedges recommendation is that all proceeds from surplus be designated for purchasing critical need items for Police Department. In developing the revised budget it was noted that they principal on the Mental Health Building was paid from SPLOST but the interest was being paid from general fund. After checking with Mitchell County it has been confirmed both principal and interest can be paid from SPLOST. A request has been submitted

for the reimbursement of interest on the Mental Health Building for the period January 2012 to December 2014 totaling \$42,962.84. A list was provided to the Council of all operational vehicles currently being utilized within the city. The city is in the early stages of developing the application for a CDBG grant for sewer rehabilitation in the southeast section of Pelham. The city currently has uncollected utility bills in excess of \$195,000 and has contacted Collection Bureau of SW Georgia. The collection agency will retain 28% of all collection and 40% if court cost is involved. "Pelham's Pothole Warriors" will utilize an inmate crew and begin attacking Pelham's potholes. As an incentive to fill potholes they will be rewarded weekly with lunch. The City Council pay frequency has been discussed if you wish to be paid weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually contact Lisa Austin.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORTS

No Report

MAYOR REPORTS

Mayor Pro-Tem Eubanks stated that qualifying has been held for the Special Election on March 17, 2015 and only one candidate qualified that being Laura Beth Tucker.

REGULAR SESSION

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Council Member Hodges made a motion to approve the agenda as written, seconded by Council Member Parker. The vote was unanimous.

MINUTES FROM PRIOR MEETING

Council Member Parker made a motion to approve minutes from the following meeting: Regular Meeting January 22, 2015 as written seconded by Council Member Hodges. The vote was unanimous.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

The City of Pelham has determined that there are community needs that can be addressed by the Community Development Block Grant Program Funds. The City of Pelham is eligible to apply for Community Development Block Grant Funds from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. **Council Member Hodges made a motion to adopt the Resolution for Community Development Block Grant, seconded by Council Member Brown. The vote was unanimous.**

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

COUNCIL MEMBER BROWN PRESIDING

LISA AUSTIN SIGNATURE AUTHORITY

Currently signing of City of Pelham checks requires the City Manager and one member of Council, or two member of Council if the City Manager is not available. By including the City Clerk as a signatory all City of Pelham checks could be signed in-house without the need of locating a member of the Council. **Council Member Brown made a motion** to adopt the Resolution on Signatory Authorization on Lisa Austin, **seconded by Council Member Taylor. The vote was unanimous.**

PELHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT NEEDS

The Pelham Police Department is in need of some very critical items including ballistic body armor, cold weather gear, desktop computer, uniforms, and flashlights. Also the Police Department has a listing of equipment obtained and held by the Police Department. City Manager Hedges recommendation that the items held by the Police Department be declared surplus or scrap and the Police Department is authorized to dispose of this equipment either by auction or scrap and that all proceeds are set aside in a special fund for use by the Police Department to purchase those much needed critical items.

SURPLUS EQUIPMENT

The surplus equipment will be properly advertised as provided by law, and that the proceeds from the auction of surplus equipment be placed in a separate account for the purpose of the purchase of needed equipment for the Pelham Police Department. **Council Member Brown made a motion** to adopt the Resolution on Equipment Surplus Auction for Police Department, **seconded by Council Member Hodges. The vote was unanimous.**

ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 50-OFFENSES AND MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Currently the Pelham Police Department is making arrests for disorderly conduct, gambling, lewd houses, simple assault, simple battery, criminal trespass, and theft by taking; however these offenses are currently not included in the Pelham Codes, these cases are tried at State Court and all proceeds go to State Court. **Council Member Brown made a motion** to amend Chapter 50-Offenses to incorporate into the Pelham Codes, **seconded by Council Member Hodges. The vote was unanimous.**

ORDINANCE COURT FEES

The Municipal Court shall have authority to establish a schedule of fees to defray the cost of operation. A Municipal Court fee of \$50.00 shall be established to defray the cost of operation and may be made an Order of the Court upon sentencing any person found guilty of violating the criminal ordinances of the City of Pelham. **Council Member Brown made a motion to adopt the Ordinance for Court Fees, seconded by Council Member Taylor. The vote was unanimous.**

NCOURT

The Pelham Police Department has been negotiating with nCourt, an organization that provides secure online payment services bill payment, cash bonding payments, and court fines. All services provided by nCourt are at no cost to the city. Individuals utilizing the services of nCourt pay a small fee. **Council Member Brown made a motion to adopt the Resolution Authorizing Execution of Contract with NCourt for Electronic Payments, seconded by Council Member Parker. The vote was unanimous.**

SUSPENDING RETIREMENT BENEFITS FOR MAYOR AND COUNCIL

The City of Pelham has in the past provided contribution to the Georgia Municipal Association for Mayor and Council benefits however due to the financial condition of the City Mayor Pro-Tem and Council voted to suspend contributions at this time. **Council Member Brown made a motion to adopt Resolution to Suspend Contribution for Mayor and Council Retirement Benefits with GMA, seconded by Council Member Taylor. The vote was unanimous.**

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Council Member Brown directed the Council to the January 2015 reports:

Code Enforcement:

Business/Peddler's license (6), Selling Alcohol without a current alcohol license (1), Litter or Debris on street or sidewalk (11), Violations of Animal Control Ordinance (2), Sign Ordinance (1), Water/Sewer Violation (2), Zoning Violations (1), Miscellaneous (5), Yard Sale Permits (1), and Building Permits (6).

Animal Control:

Animals Impounded (2)

Police/Jail:

Mitchell Co. 911 (621), Cases Opened by Investigation (13), Cases Cleared by Arrest (3), Patrol Mileage (6,245), Housed Inmates other agencies (175), and Inmate Housing Billed (\$99,385).

Fire Department:

Responded to calls (40)

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

COUNCIL MEMBER PARKER PRESIDING

NATURAL GAS CAPACITY TRANSFER TO CAMILLA

The City of Pelham will transfer of natural gas capacity to the City of Camilla the transfer will be a daily quantify of 100 Mcf of natural gas. **Council Member Parker made a motion** to authorize Mayor Pro-Tem Eubanks to sign the agreement with the Georgia Municipal Gas Authority which will 100 Mcf of natural gas demand to be transferred to the City of Camilla from the City of Pelham effective March 1, 2015 through February 29, 2016, **seconded by Council Member Brown. The vote was unanimous.**

JAMES WORKMAN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Memorandum of Understanding is as follows: The City of Pelham will expand their existing natural gas facilities from their gateway located on Highway 93 approximately 2.16 miles at an estimated cost of \$77,195. James Workman agrees to contribute \$67,000 for the construction of the pipeline and other related costs. Workman agrees to pay \$42,000 to the City of Pelham and the City of Pelham agrees to finance the remaining \$25,000 at an interest rate of 3.8 percent for five years. Mr. Workman is in agreement with these terms. **Council Member Parker made a motion** that Mayor Pro-Tem Eubanks be authorized to sign the MOU on behalf of the City of Pelham, **seconded by Council Member Hatcher. The vote was unanimous.**

AGREEMENT FOR COLLECTION SERVICES

The City of Pelham has approximately \$196,000 in uncollected utility bills. A representative of the Credit Bureau of Southwest Georgia has been contacted and has agreed to address these uncollected utility bills upon contractual agreement. The Credit Bureau will retain 28% of collections and if court costs are incurred they retain 40%. **Council Member Parker made a motion** to authorize Mayor Pro-Tem Eubanks to sign a contract for collection services with the Collection and Billing Service, Inc., **seconded by Council Member Hodges. The vote was unanimous.**

WATER RATES RESOLUTION

The City of Pelham consumers are to pay a fee for the use of water which is provided by the City. **Council Member Parker made a motion** to adopt a Resolution to Establish New Base Rate for Water Service the new base water of water shall be \$19.00, **seconded by Council Member Hatcher. The vote was unanimous.**

STREET FEE RATES RESOLUTION

The City of Pelham consumers are to pay a street fee (limbs and leaves) which is provided by the City. **Council Member Parker made a motion** to adopt a Resolution for New Rubbish and/or Refuse Fee with the new yard debris rate being \$5.00, **seconded by Council Member Taylor. The vote was unanimous.**

NATURAL GAS RATES RESOLUTION

The City of Pelham provides natural gas to its customers however due to the continued escalation of costs it is necessary that new rates be established for both residential as well as commercial users. **Council Member Parker made a motion** to adopt a Resolution for Natural Gas Rates for Residential and Commercial Users with the \$2.00 increase on the MCF for both residential and commercial users, **seconded by Council Member Hodges. The vote was unanimous.**

WATER DEPOSITS RESOLUTION

The City of Pelham is capable of providing water to its customers, and due to the increase in costs involved with providing water to its customers it is necessary that the deposit fee be increased to \$150.00. **Council Member Parker made a motion** to adopt Resolution for New Water Deposit Fee from \$80.00 to \$150.00, **seconded by Council Member Brown. The vote was unanimous.**

GAS DEPOSITS RESOLUTION

The City of Pelham is capable of providing gas to its customers, and due to the increase in costs involved with providing gas to its customers it is necessary that the deposit fee be increased to \$200.00. **Council Member Parker made a motion** to adopt Resolution for New Gas Deposit Fee from \$130.00 to \$200.00, **seconded by Council Member Taylor. The vote was unanimous.**

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROJECT-PHASE III

The information received from the Georgia Department of Transportation regarding Pelham's TE project which had been deemed to be in the assigned readiness status due to GDOT had not heard from Pelham in over a year. The GDOT has inquired whether the City of Pelham is no longer interested in going forward with the project. City Manager Hedges and Stephen Rakestraw project engineer have met and decided the project needs to be revitalized as far as the scope of the project is concerned and those parties that initially were involved need to revisit the design and scope of work. **Council Member Parker made a motion** to adopt the resolution to endorse going forward with this project, **seconded by Council Member Taylor. The vote was unanimous.** A reminder the project cost is \$312,500 of which \$250,000 is paid by GDOT and the balance of \$62,500 is paid by the City of Pelham's SPLOST funds.

CBV COLLECTION RESOLUTION

The City of Pelham currently has outstanding utility bills for services rendered and it is necessary that a contract be entered into CBV Collection to collect the outstanding utility bills. **Council Member Parker made a motion** to adopt the Resolution Authorizing Contract with CBV Collection, **seconded by Council Member Brown. The vote was unanimous.**

PUBLIC WORKS REPORTS

Water Department:

Water leak repairs-Liberia Street, School Street, Cotton Avenue, Lee Williams Drive, Vernon Street, Glausier Street, and installed a water tap on Glausier Street for the Poultry Store.

Sewer Department:

Proctor Street, Sapp Avenue, and repaired 4' line at the spray field.

Gas Department:

Inserted gas line on Peachtree Street, Curry Street, Assisted Harp and Associates in repair of valve at the gas yard on GA 93, assisted water and sewer departments with backhoe and shovel work, mapped out gas lines inserted on McDonald Street.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council Member Brown made a motion to close regular session and go into executive session at 7:14 p.m., seconded by Council Member Hodges. The vote was unanimous. Mayor Pro-Tem Eubanks stated the purpose of the executive session is to discuss legal matters.

RECONVENE REGULAR SESSION

Council Member Hodges made a motion to reconvene regular session at 7:37 p.m., seconded by Council Member Parker. The vote was unanimous. Mayor Pro-Tem Eubanks stated no votes were taken in executive session.

ACTIONS BASED ON EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Pro-Tem Eubanks stated there was not action taken during executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Pelham City Council, **Council Member Hodges** made a **motion to adjourn** the meeting, **seconded by Council Member Parker**. **The vote was unanimous**. **Mayor Pro-Tem Eubanks declared the meeting closed at 7:40 p.m.**

Mayor Pro-Tem, James Eubanks

AUTHENTICATED:

This 16th Day of March 2015.

City Clerk, Lisa Austin