

CITY OF TALLADEGA
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
16 February 2009

The City Council of the City of Talladega met in a regular meeting on Monday, 16 February 2009 at 5:30 p.m., in the City Hall Auditorium, the regular place for such meetings. The meeting was called to order and the following were present: Councilman Eddie Tucker, Council President Horace Patterson, Councilman Donnie Miller, Councilman Lance Grissett, Councilman Jimmy Davis, Mayor Brian York and City Manager Michael Stampfler.

Motion by Councilman Grissett with a second from Councilman Miller to approve invoices and expenditures. AYES: All.

Total Invoices & Expenditures for 2/03/2009 to 2/13/2009	\$472,557.51
General Fund	431,494.60
Corrections Fund	39,868.53
Municipal Court Fund	200.00
Senior Nutrition Fund	503.88
Oil Trust Fund	490.50

Motion by Councilman Grissett with a second by Councilman Miller to approve the minutes of the Called Meeting of January 30, 2009, regular meeting of February 2, 2009 and the Called Meeting of February 4, 2009 with corrections. AYES: All.

Mayor Brian York swore in Ms. Brenda Brooks to the Talladega Heritage Commission.

Motion by Councilman Davis with a second from Councilman Grissett to adopt the Fundraising Report Policy which states “the City of Talladega will no longer entertain petitions to conduct roadblocks from groups that are comprised of minors effective February 16, 2009.” AYES: All.

Manager Stampfler indicated that repairs to street cuts on Avenue H have been completed and that if the weather holds Steel City Railroad will complete their repairs to the railroad crossings on Battle Street.

The City’s tire collection policy was presented to the Council. Tires collected by the Community Appearance Department are hauled away twice a year by a local vendor for a fee per load.

The Manager presented a memo by Police Chief Watson concerning the closing of restaurants during certain basketball tournaments held at Talladega High School and a copy of the City’s current crowd control ordinance. There was some discussion as to the best way to handle these large crowds and Chief Watson stated that the police will continue to work with the restaurants and businesses on this issue.

Manager Stampfler indicated that letters concerning the matter of flood insurance and the McMillan Street project would be sent out by the Community Development Director Chris Stone to the property owners by the end of the week.

Councilman Miller asked for an update on the closure of Costner Street. Manager Stampfler indicated that he would talk with Mr. Sisk and have a full report at the next meeting.

Announcement that Congressman Mike Rogers would be in the City Council Chambers for a town meeting at 2:00 pm on Wednesday, February 18th and that Senator Richard Shelby would be at the same location on Friday, February 20th at 10:00 am for a public meeting.

Manager Stampfler announced that the City had received its Tree City USA status for 2008. The Mayor had received a letter dated February 3rd from the Arbor Day Foundation stating that “The Arbor Day Foundation applauds you for building

community health, community pride, and community investment into Talladega's future through effective tree care and management." On February 24th the City has an Arbor Day Celebration planned which includes the presentation of the Tree City USA flag at 10:00 am at the Municipal Golf Course where over 100 trees have been planted during the recent renovation. From there the celebration will continue to the Heritage Hall where trees have been planted along South Street with the donation from the Talladega Pilgrimage Council in memory of Billy Bliss. A dogwood tree will be planted at Jemison Park by students from Talladega High School's horticulture class and the final stage of the celebration will be the planting of a tree purchased by the Bemiston Council at the Bemiston Recreation Center in honor of resident Peggy King.

Council President Patterson acknowledged receipt of several phone calls concerning the proposed annexation and the correspondence of Lester and Betty Veach who do not want to be annexed into the City of Talladega. President Patterson asked for patience on this matter and further stated that the issue will be revisited at the next Council Meeting on Monday, February 23rd at 5:00 pm. The City Manager was asked to do some additional research on the annexation proposal and possible adjustments. Manager Stampfler presented a memo to the Council that laid out three areas of concern from citizens who may be annexed into the City. The memo stated that the proposed annexation has the potential to translate into significant savings on insurance for local residents, as the ISO rating for the City (5) is currently higher than the County's (9). Water and Sewer rates within the City are lower than outside the city limits. Also, the City of Talladega's millage rate is lower than any other City in the area and only slightly higher than the County's. Manager Stampfler indicated that an individual annexed into the City could potentially have their overall expenses reduced. Council President Patterson also indicated that approximately 97% of the proposed area already falls within the City's police jurisdiction.

Councilman Grissett stated that he wished to lay to rest the notion the awarding of the Coosa River Storage Annex property had anything to do with this proposed annexation. A Citizens Committee had been formed in December 2007 to start the annexation process so that in the spring everything would be together for the legislative session. Recommendation was made to pull the newspaper advertisement and submit a revised proposal with a less ambitious annexation plan. Councilman Davis, Council Miller, Councilman Grissett and Council President Patterson supported the recommendation. Councilman Tucker did not, stating that he did not feel the annexation was too ambitious and that for the future of Talladega the Council needed to stick to the plan and not pull back.

Resolution # 1803 which rescinds Resolution #1799 and authorizing application to the State Legislature for enactment of a local law relative to establishing a Civil Service System by Amendment to Act 2004-436.

Motion by Councilman Grissett with a second by Councilman Miller to approve Resolution #1803. Roll Call. AYES: All.

Motion by Councilman Grissett with a second by Councilman Davis to approve invoices and expenditures for the Water Department. AYES: Councilman Davis, Councilman Miller, Councilman Grissett, Council President Patterson; NAYS: Councilman Tucker.

Expenditures for 2/03/2009 to 2/12/2009

\$ 226,936.42

There was some discussion on the cost of the Civil Service Act. Council President Patterson indicated that there are places in the civil service act that are contradictory and that people don't realize how much the City has had to spend when dealing with problematic employees. He further stated that the City has some outstanding employees who operate with a sense of pride, but there are some employees who take advantage of being covered under the civil service board. Manager Stampfler presented a memo to the Council outlining costs to administer the Civil Service System with a specific reference to the recent department head removal which cost approximately \$20,000. Council President Patterson stated that "no one is talking about taking

anyone's rights away" - it is just that the current process is cumbersome and expensive. Resolution #1803 only exempts three employees in the City Manager's office from the Civil Service System and does not include department heads or any other employees. Manager Stampfler further stated that all employees of the City are protected under state and federal laws and that the Civil Service System is overkill. He commented that the expenses and time commitment are particularly tough on a community that is having a difficult time financially.

City Manager Stampfler presented his six month progress report covering the 10 goals that the Council had requested for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

1. Employee Benefits – A job classification study has gone out for bid. Retirees have been allowed to remain on the City Health Insurance at cost.
2. Infrastructure Improvements – Six items were listed including improvements to the Sports Complex, hydrant testing/repair program, renovation of the Municipal Golf Course, \$3.65 million bond issue for capital improvements, Honda Paving Bond and arrangements for a new parking lot at the North Street Alley downtown.
3. Selective Annexation - Increased water/sewer rates for those outside the city limits and the proposed annexation plan that was recently submitted to the Council.
4. Contractual Services – Centralized Purchasing system has been installed and substantial savings upwards of \$408,000 per year have already been realized.
5. Commercial Re-Development/ Industrial Development – Community Development Department has been created to centralize building inspection and code services to facilitate a coordinated approach to promoting/serving/ expanding the business community.
6. Area Marketing of the City – The City's website is being revised along with facilities upgrades throughout the City.
7. Downtown Revitalization – Creation of the North Street Parking Lot, inspection of street lights around the Square and the current review of alleyways in the downtown area for lighting and paving upgrades.
8. Quality of Life – This includes projects to be completed under the Capital Improvement Program such as playgrounds and the golf course. Numerous other grants have been applied for to improve the quality of life in the community.
9. Partner with the City School System – Services and funds to assist the school system include the annual appropriation, Pre-K program funding, garbage service and the donation of 8.8 acres of land for a bus/maintenance facility.
10. Promote City as Retirement Community – Refurbishment of the Municipal Golf Course and renovations to City recreation centers as well as other upgrades planned for tennis facilities and application for a grant to construct a community bikeway.

Resolution #1804 approves a contract with Neel-Schaffer for preparing a Master Plan for the Coosa River Annex property for a total cost of \$11,550.00.

Council President Patterson suggested that Resolution #1804 be tabled until after meetings with Senator Richard Shelby and Congressman Mike Rogers later in the week.

Resolution #1805 approval of contract with Hutto Construction for the North Street Parking Lot utility replacement project per bid specifications for a total cost of \$25,308.00.

Motion by Councilman Miller with a second by Councilman Davis to approve Resolution #1805. Roll Call. AYES: All.

A request was made to invite the President of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce to address the Council at its March 2nd meeting regarding the Chamber's refocused vision and plan of action.

During an update on the Coleman Circle Project, Manager Stampfler indicated that the deadline to get this project completed is February 2010. Letters to property owners concerning easements have already gone out and if necessary the easement process will proceed to court action.

Councilman Miller's comments included:

- Talladega High School boys and girls basketball teams are going on to Regionals.
- He had received some calls concerning the fees for parking at the sports complex. Fees will remain at \$2.00 per car.
- Requested the City Manager to check on a downed fence at the Jemison Park tennis courts.
- Stated that Charter Communication had filed bankruptcy.
- He would hold a Ward Meeting next Monday night at the Brecon Center.

Mayor Brian York wished to acknowledge the achievement of a son of City employee, Kenneth George. Jonathan George won an individual state wrestling championship and has signed a scholarship with the University of Kentucky.

Council President Patterson requested letters of commendation for the firemen who rescued a resident during the fire at the Pine View Landing Apartments.

Council President Patterson wished to make it clear that at no time did the City Council make demands on the Talladega City Board of Education and wanted it noted that the City of Talladega "gifts" many services to the Board of Education.

A request was made by Council President Patterson to look at reinstating the employee recognition program. Manager Stampfler indicated that he would like some time to review such a program and that he would have a recommendation by the summer.

Motion by Councilman Grissett for adjournment.

AUTHENTICATION

I, Elizabeth Cheeks, Acting City Clerk of the City of Talladega, Alabama, do hereby attest that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings of the City Council of Talladega, Alabama, which met in a regular session on Monday, 16 February 2009, at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall in the City of Talladega, Alabama.

Elizabeth Cheeks
Acting City Clerk