

REGULAR SESSION

April 24, 2017

The City Council of the City of Athens met in Regular Session on Monday, April 24, 2017, 5:30 p.m. in the Derek D. Daniels Conference Room of the Athens Partnership Center, 201 W. Corsicana St., Athens, Texas with the following members present, to-wit:

Jerry D. Vaught, Mayor
Tres Winn, Mayor Pro-Tem
Joe Whatley
Ed McCain
Aaron Smith

Philip Rodriguez, City Manager
Bonnie Hambrick, City Secretary

others present: Ryan Adams, Thanasis Kombos, Barbara Holly, Gary Whittle, John McQueary, Marty Coursey, Adrianna Hinds, Chet Patel, Mary Francis Eggleston, Tom and Lynn Leathem, Carol Morton, Mary Waddell, Geneva Jaffa, Gail Chock, Chris Tinsley, Toni Clay, Rich Flowers, Jess Laird, Monte Montgomery, Lacy Lowery, Tara Rigsby, Michael Hannigan, Lisa Denton, Daniel Casey, William Sekel, Charles Luna, Will Traxson, Kevin and Jeaneane Lilly, John Trent, Cliff Barrett, Carmen Hunt, Maurice Cox, and other interested citizens;

constituting a quorum at which time the following proceedings were enacted, to-wit:

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Gary Whittle.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No action was taken.

PROCLAMATION – FIREFIGHTERS RECOGNITION DAY

Mayor Vaught read aloud a Proclamation for Firefighters Recognition Day.

PROCLAMATION – EAST TEXAS GIVING DAY

Mayor Vaught read aloud a Proclamation for East Texas Giving Day.

CONSENT AGENDA

- a) CONSIDER APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 10, 2017 REGULAR SESSION
- b) CONSIDER APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 11, 2017 SPECIAL SESSION
- c) CONSIDER APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 18, 2017 SPECIAL SESSION
- d) CONSIDER A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ATHENS AUTHORIZING SIGNATORIES FOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FOR GRANT # 7216122
- e) MARCH 2017 FINANCIALS
- f) INVESTMENT REPORT ENDING MARCH 31, 2017

A motion was made by Councilmember Winn, seconded by Councilmember Smith to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

CITIZENS COMMUNICATIONS

There was no discussion.

DISCUSSION REGARDING FREEPORT TAX EXEMPTION

Lisa Denton, Athens Economic Development Corporation Executive Director, presented information regarding Freeport Tax Exemption. Ms. Denton explained, the Freeport Tax Exemption as being an exemption from business inventory tax that is in Texas for a short period of time (175 days or less) and will be transported outside of the State of Texas. Ms. Denton stated that Moak Casey & Associates were engaged by AEDC on behalf of the taxing entities, to show the potential impact, if the exemption were granted.

Ms. Denton presented a list of several local companies that could potentially qualify for the Freeport Tax Exemption, if it was granted. It was noted that the implementation of PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) agreements were critical to protect from immediate loss of revenues for the taxing entities. Ms. Denton stated that agreements could be structured as a phase-in for a set period of time or until such time as the tax base recovered to the point of exemption.

After the presentation, there was discussion regarding the Freeport Tax Exemption. Mayor Vaught stated that the Freeport Tax Exemption is a tool used by many other cities.

Councilmember Whatley stated the Freeport Tax Exemption aides AEDC in remaining competitive with businesses.

It was the consensus of the City Council to continue to pursue the possibility of a Freeport Tax Exemption.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ALL MATTERS RELATED TO APPROVING ATHENS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS' (AEDC) BUSINESS ASSISTANCE GRANT APPLICATION FROM MWCSTFP, LLC IN THE AMOUNT OF \$9,208

Ms. Denton explained the Business Assistance Grant application was submitted by Tony Stafford, owner of MWCSTFP, LLC. She stated the property owner proposes to repair and overlay the parking lot at Pitt Grill. She stated the total improvement bid was \$18,416 and the AEDC Board approved the reimbursable grant in the amount of \$9,208.

A motion was made by Councilmember Whatley, seconded by Councilmember Winn to approve Athens Economic Development Corporations' (AEDC) Business Assistance Grant application from MWCSTFP, LLC in the amount of \$9,208. The motion carried unanimously.

HEAR REQUEST FROM EAST TEXAS ARBORETUM CONCERNING FUNDING TO OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS FOR PUBLIC PURPOSE

Mary Francis Eggleston, Executive Director of East Texas Arboretum, informed the Council that the Arboretum as a nonprofit agency, relies heavily on donations and grants. She provided the Council with a calendar of 2017 activities at the Arboretum. She stated their largest event is the "Spring Fling" which is being held on Friday, May 5, 2017. Ms. Eggleston stated she is asking the City of Athens to support the fund raiser by purchasing a table of eight (8) for \$400.00.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ALL MATTERS RELATED TO A REQUEST FROM EAST TEXAS ARBORETUM REGARDING FUNDING FOR PUBLIC PURPOSE

A motion was made by Councilmember Winn, seconded by Councilmember Whatley, to purchase one (1) table for the "Spring Fling". The motion carried unanimously.

HEAR REQUEST FROM HENDERSON COUNTY GIRLS SOFTBALL
ASSOCIATION CONCERNING FUNDING TO OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS
FOR PUBLIC PURPOSE

Chris Tinsley informed the Council that on Thursday night the concession stand was broken into and all food and equipment was taken. He stated between \$7,500 and \$10,000 was taken in food supplies and equipment. He stated the Henderson County Girls Softball Association had asked to be on the agenda to seek emergency funding. He further stated the HCGSA no longer needs emergency funding. He stated as of 3:00 p.m. the association had raised \$16,000. There was a round of applause.

Mr. Tinsley asked the Council to please discuss security at both Cain and Coleman Parks.

There was discussion regarding security cameras. Philip Rodriguez, City Manager, stated staff would bring back to Council a plan for security at the parks.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ALL MATTERS RELATED TO A
REQUEST FROM HENDERSON COUNTY GIRLS SOFTBALL
ASSOCIATION REGARDING FUNDING FOR PUBLIC PURPOSE

No action was taken.

MANAGING DIRECTORS – REPORTS AND PROJECT UPDATES
a) ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Ryan Adams, Managing Director of Administrative Services, provided the following updates:

1. Request for Proposal for a Compensation Study was completed. Eight (8) proposals were received
2. Civil Service Testing will take place on April 25, 2017. Thirteen (13) signed up for the written test. Chief Hill stated there are eight (8) openings in the police department
3. Senate Bill 2 (Revenue Caps) passed the Senate and is now in the House, however activity on the bill is fairly quiet
4. Budget season is near, staff building internal budget
5. Community Budget Forum on May 15, 2017
6. A & M Construction is mobilizing to begin sandblasting this week on the Faulk Street Storage Tank, projected to be a 150 day project
7. 1800 ft. water line being replaced on N. Prairieville water taps should be complete by the end of the week

b) DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Barbara Holly, Managing Director of Development Services, provided the following Year to date updates:

1. 95 building permits, 72 plumbing permits, 41 electrical permits, 1 curb cut, 14 fence permits, 10 HVAC permits, 22 sign permits, 6 demolitions, and 13 new businesses
2. \$16,290,353 in new construction value

c) COMMUNITY SERVICES

Thanasis Kombos, Managing Director of Community Services, provided the following updates:

1. Opening bids for 2017 Seal Coat Program on April 25, 2017
2. 2017 Overlay and Street Renovation Program four (4) of the nine (9) streets completed; project 50% complete
3. Seal Coat Program five (5) of seven (7) streets completed
4. Waiting on final agreement from Texas Parks and Wildlife to execute the grant for O.D. Baggett Park

5. Beginning preparation for Kiwanis Park swing project and lighting improvements at Cain Park
6. Mayor Vaught, Mr. Rodriguez, Steve Grant, and Thanasis Kombos attended the 35th Annual TxDOT Aviation Conference
7. Nine (9) proposals from engineers received for the Pavement Maintenance Project at Athens Municipal Airport

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ALL MATTERS RELATED TO APPOINTMENTS TO THE SUBSTANDARD BUILDING COMMISSION

- a) CODY CRAIG
- b) NICK ROSENBERG

Bonnie Hambrick, City Secretary, explained there are currently two (2) vacancies on the Substandard Building Commission. She stated that Cody Craig and Nick Rosenberg both have expressed interest in serving.

A motion was made by Councilmember Whatley, seconded by Councilmember Smith to appoint Cody Craig and Nick Rosenberg to the Substandard Building Commission. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ALL MATTERS RELATED TO THE APPOINTMENT OF KELLEY TOWNSEND TO THE TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL

Ms. Hambrick, explained Ms. Rae Priestley resigned from the Tourism Advisory Council and Ms. Kelley Townsend expressed interest in serving on this Council. A motion was made by Councilmember Winn, seconded by Councilmember McCain to appoint Kelley Townsend to the Tourism Advisory Council. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ALL MATTERS RELATED TO THE APPROVAL OF THE CITY OF ATHENS ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVES

Mr. Adams, explained this item is to approve the Administrative Directives/Personnel policies. He stated the policy had not been updated in quite some time. He further stated it was a large undertaking for the Interim HR Director. A motion was made by Councilmember Whatley, seconded by Councilmember Winn to approve the City of Athens Administrative Directives. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ALL MATTERS RELATED TO AWARDED BID FOR REMOVAL OF SLUDGE AND SOLIDS FROM THE NORTH WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT (2) IMHOFF TANKS

Mr. Adams explained this item is to accept the bid from AAA Sanitation for cleaning of the smaller Imhoff tank. He stated staff will budget for cleaning the larger tank in FY 2018. He further stated cleaning the smaller tank will greatly help the operations of North Wastewater Treatment Plant.

After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Councilmember Whatley, seconded by Councilmember Smith to award the bid for removal of sludge and solids from the North Wastewater Treatment Plant (1) Imhoff tank to AAA Sanitation. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ALL MATTERS RELATED TO THE PURCHASE AND REPLACEMENT OF EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

Chief McQueary explained \$200,000 was appropriated for the Athens Warning System. He explained the City's coverage as currently having seven (7) systems and staff is proposing an addition of one (1) new system which will make a total of 8 systems in place for the City's warning system.

He stated a proposal from Federal Signal Safety and Security System was received in the amount of \$173,634.80.

Mr. Rodriguez stated this will save approximately \$26,000 and will fall to the general fund "fund balance" and roll to 2018.

A motion was made by Councilmember Winn, seconded by, Councilmember Whatley to authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement with Federal Signal Safety and Security System in the amount of \$173,634.80 for the purchase and replacement of Early Warning System. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rodriguez asked to make a clarification regarding Agenda item #17 Discussion and consideration of all matters related to awarding bid for removal of sludge and solids from the North Wastewater Treatment Plant (2) Imhoff tanks. Councilmember Smith asked if that project was within the budget. Mr. Rodriguez stated it was not earmarked in the budget in the sense of Imhoff tanks, however it is within the budget meaning the City will use FY 2017 funds and staff will not have to request supplemental funding for this item.

MAYOR, CITY COUNCIL AND/OR CITY MANAGER UPDATES INVOLVING COMMUNITY EVENTS AND ISSUES OF PUBLIC SAFETY

1. Mayor Vaught stated the TxDOT Aviation Conference was an incredible conference, and there was a huge turn out
2. Mayor Vaught stated the city would be going to the county to discuss a city/county partnership for a regional airport
3. Councilmember Smith stated the "Go Tell Crusade" is taking place at Bruce Field through Wednesday, he recommended everyone go and invite a friend
4. Councilmember McCain stated he attended the annual review of the Athens Independent School District's Strategic Review Plan, and stated the schools are succeeding in great ways
5. Ms. Hambrick explained early voting began on Monday, April 24 and runs through Tuesday, May 2nd at the Henderson County Elections Center located at 201 E. Larkin Street, with Election Day being May 6th
6. Mr. Rodriguez stated Chief McQueary and the Fire Department are true professionals. He stated he watched them in action during the recent fire and thanked Fire and Rescue for all their hard work. He also thanked Chief Hill and his department
7. Chief McQueary commended Chief Hill and his officers for all their assistance during the recent fire

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no requests for future agenda items.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS THE 8th DAY OF MAY, 2017.

City Council Regular Session
April 24, 2017
Page 6

Jerry D. Vaught, Mayor

ATTEST:

Bonnie Hambrick, City Secretary