

REGULAR MEETING – CAIRO MAYOR & COUNCIL - MAY 29, 2018

The May 29, 2018 Regular Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Room at 101-B North Broad Street by Mayor Booker T. Gainor. Present were Council Members Demario J. Byrden, Jerry L. Cox, James H. Douglas, and Lannis Thornton. Mayor Pro Tem Robert L. Gwaltney was absent from the meeting due to illness. Staff Members present were City Manager Chris Addleton, City Attorney Thomas L. Lehman, City Clerk Carolyn Lee, and Marketing Director Celeste Tyler. Also in attendance was Cairo Messenger Editor Randy Wind.

INVOCATION: The Invocation was given by Councilman Douglas.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1.) Regular Council Meeting- May 14, 2018; Budget Workshop – May 14, 2018; Special Called Meeting – May 23, 2018. Motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Councilman Byrden, seconded by Councilman Thornton, and approved unanimously by all Council Members present.

Mayor Gainor announced that there would be a time for public comments which would be limited to three minutes per person, not to exceed a total of 30 minutes allotted to this item; and the Mayor and Council would not be required to speak or answer questions. There were no comments offered.

DELEGATIONS:

SPECIAL EVENTS:

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Public Hearing – Proposed FY 2018-2019 Budget – Receive Citizen Input. There were no public comments offered, and the hearing was closed.

FY 2016 CDBG Street and Drainage Project Contract Agreement (15th St., SW, Westbrooks, Legion Blvd. Project). City Manager Addleton stated that the bid had been awarded to HTS Construction at the last meeting, and the contract was ready for approval. It was pointed out that the amount had not been filled in on the contract, and City Manager Addleton responded that he would see that it was added. After review, motion to approve the contract was made by Councilman Thornton, seconded by Councilman Douglas, and unanimously approved by all Council Members present.

Salvage Yard Ordinance Enforcement. Council Members reviewed a letter prepared by Atty. Lehman as of result of numerous complaints that a business was being operated within the 20th Street right-of-way. It was addressed to Mr. Jimmy Hammett of A&R Metals regarding property he had purchased in 2005 which was located south of the railroad on the west side of 20th St., SE. The letter was to serve as notification that the Mayor and Council intended to enforce that part of the ordinance currently in effect and applicable to salvage yards which required a fence or wall not less than eight feet be constructed around the perimeter of the salvage yard, applying immediately to the property described. A period of one year had been permitted in which to construct a fence, but it had not been done. Also the ordinance required that no salvage be higher than seven feet in height, but that was being violated. He was being given 15 days from the date of the letter to cure the violations. If

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found in violation after that time, he was to be cited to appear in Municipal Court. Council Members did not express any objections to the wording of the letter, so it was to be mailed to Mr. Hammett.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Reports:

1. Celeste Tyler, Marketing Director – Director Tyler reported on a City-wide Clean-up Day that had been scheduled for June 13th on which some City employees would meet at Davis Park, either from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. or from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., and pick up equipment and maps to designated areas where they would pick up litter. They would then return to Davis Park afterwards to return equipment and have refreshments. Director Tyler suggested that this event could possibly be conducted quarterly and invite the public to participate. She added that she had worked with Mr. Albert Ball with the MLK Collaborative every year to clean-up after the M.L.K. Parade. An application for the Dr. Pepper/Snapple grant had been submitted but had not been awarded this year. She planned on trying again as she believes the chances would be better with the next application. This specific grant supplied recycling receptacles for athletic fields and parks. Annually, she conducts a one-mile radius litter index for all the Grady County Schools where observation of illegal signs, graffiti, and abandoned vehicles is made. An annual river clean-up with members of the Golden Triangle and Ochlockonee River Water Trail groups as co-sponsors has been tentatively scheduled for September 22nd. This event begins at Davis Park, heading to the Ochlockonee River access point on Hwy. 93 North, on to the Hadley Ferry access point, and returning to Davis Park for a picnic lunch. Other groups participating in clean-up events were the Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, church groups, school clubs, and youth groups. Various business and industrial representatives were working on an adoption project for litter clean-up. Beautification projects included a group of volunteers working on a memorial garden and the opening of another area (Plot B) of Forest Lawn Cemetery. Updates to the pocket parks on Broad Street were also being planned. Cigarette receptacles and pet litter stations had already been added there as well. Director Tyler added that she conducts a clean-up on 17th Ave., NW, as she lives in that area; and there were other neighborhood groups that did the same. Mayor Gainor inquired as to what events were being planned for downtown, with Director Tyler responding that the DDA had committed to a concert/music venue event. She was asked if the County participated in the river clean-up, responding that they did, as well as other counties. She was also asked if there were plans for promoting downtown. She responded that the Main Street Program was a good resource for what can happen, and it requires a huge commitment on the City's part to maintain the designation every year, including the requirement of 30 hours continuing education, annually. She added that most Main Street Programs had events with sponsorships and memberships. She acknowledged that some of the events and ideas were not supported by the current city ordinances and the review, modification, and addition of ordinances was a process. She also stated that the vision of the DDA was to have a viable retail mix for downtown. Mayor Gainor stated that he would like to see more retail in the downtown area versus service-related businesses. Councilman Byrden expressed that he would like to see the DDA be more pro-active and host more events. In closing, Director Tyler added that the City had an excellent façade grant program with a matching grant of up to \$5,000 which had helped a lot of store-fronts downtown, and a Mural Project and branding campaign were also being considered.

2. Reports from City Manager:

- Plans to attend a GMA City Managers' meeting in Albany on Friday.

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- Reported major power outages on Memorial Day for the City and Ga. Power. There was a minor accident involving Rick Kines when a limb fell, but he was doing well.

3. Reports from Mayor and Council:

- Councilman Byrden reported that a sign at the end of 1st St., SW (at 13th Ave.) was still leaning and had no reflectors on it.
- Councilman Douglas asked that the City Attorney and City Manager bring back a policy for adding a public comments item for meetings, and he preferred them to use GMA as a source.
- Councilman Thornton reported that water was not draining off at 4th St., and 1st Ave. SW, and it was causing potholes. There was also a railroad sign bent over at 1st Ave., NE.
- Councilman Cox reported a stop sign turned around at 11th Ave., NW and 5th St., NW.
- Mayor Gainor read information from the Code on utility billing, penalties, and cut-offs that he said conflicted with what was printed on the bill. Attorney Lehman was to look into it. He did not think the penalty should be added to an account until after it was actually cut-off. He also stated that a person's unpaid bill had been added to their mother's account. He believed that the City was setting people up for failure. Councilman Cox stated that the Charter should be followed. Councilman Douglas added that there might have been a change by resolution since then. Mayor Gainor also asked that lowering the deposit amounts for downtown commercial businesses be looked at in order to promote new business.

Mrs. Sondra Jones, 2848 Bark Ave., NE, stated that she did not understand that she should have asked to speak earlier in the meeting. She stated that she was a 43-year resident and was disappointed that Mayor Gainor was not allowed to have a key and office at City Hall, and she did not care that previous mayors had not, and asked why he could not. Mayor Gainor responded that he was told that it was due to security purposes; and in the Charter, the Council doesn't have a say, it falls under the City Manager who did not have a problem with it, but the Council did not see it really conducive to City business. He added that he could have an office during normal working hours which was the main problem, as he worked in Thomasville and Tallahassee and was going back and forth signing documents trying to keep up but could not do it anymore and did not want to keep taking advantage of his job. He stated that he had brought the subject of an office up again because he had a recent meeting where he used the conference room and had learned that a contractor had a key to a door going up the stairs, but he was made to believe that no one else had a key. He added that, in doing his job, he was trying to stay in line with the Charter. Mrs. Jones asked why the Mayor could not have a key if a contractor did, with Mayor Gainor responding that the Council did not have to respond to her question. In closing, she added that she was embarrassed and would continue to fight for what was right. Councilman Byrden expressed his opinion that some people who did not use networking skills did not see the importance of an office, and he had used restaurant settings to meet with people; but that was not professional. He felt that elected officials should be given the tools they needed to be successful, and if not, it would stay in the same mediocre state that it was now. He added that data showed that the population of Cairo would decline by 2020-2022 because there was no growth; and without the proper tools, there would be no growth. He felt that if the people wanted the officials to have an office, they should have one since they represented the people.

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At 6:50 p.m., motion was made by Councilman Douglas to go into Executive Session, seconded by Councilman Cox.

Mr. Wilbert Young, 323 4th Ave., SE, requested to speak before the vote was taken to enter into Executive Session. He asked what the protocol was for the Mayor to get an office, noting that protocol and codes could be changed or altered, also asking what kind of security clearance was needed to have an office. He added that if he had to buy an office or a desk or a building, he would, but it shouldn't be that way. He offered the Mayor funds to help with an office.

The vote was taken to enter into Executive Session and motion was approved unanimously by all Council Members present.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 6:50 p.m., Councilman Douglas made motion to go into Executive Session. The Session was called to meet with Attorney Lehman to discuss a potential lawsuit or administrative proceeding or other judicial action brought against the City as well as to discuss or deliberate on the periodic rating of a public officer or employee. Motion was seconded by Councilman Cox, and passed unanimously by all Council Members present.

At 7:50 p.m., motion was made by Councilman Douglas to end the Session, seconded by Councilman Thornton, and passed unanimously by all Council Members present.

There was no action taken as a result of the session, and Council entered back into the Regular Session.

4. Mayor's Committee Appointments.

a. Mayor Gainor announced his appointment of Dr. Mary Weaver Anderson to the Grady County Board of Health. Motion to approve the appointment was made by Councilman Byrden, seconded by Councilman Douglas, and passed unanimously by all Council Members present.

b. Mayor Gainor appointed Mr. John Jackson as Chairman of a new Public Safety Committee and Dr. Aretha Hill to the Finance Committee.

ADJOURN: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

CAROLYN B. LEE, CITY CLERK

APPROVED:

BOOKER T. GAINOR, MAYOR