

REGULAR MEETING – CAIRO MAYOR & COUNCIL – FEBRUARY 22, 2010

The February 22, 2010 Regular Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Room at City Hall with Mayor Richard VanLandingham presiding. Present were Mayor Pro Tem Lannis Thornton, Council Members Ernest W. Cloud, Jr., James H. Douglas, Kermit V. Gilliard, Jr., and Robert L. Gwaltney. Staff Members in attendance were City Manager Chris Addleton, City Attorney Thomas L. Lehman, Human Resources Director Carolyn Meades, and City Clerk Carolyn B. Lee. Cairo Messenger Editor Randy Wind was also in attendance.

INVOCATION: The Invocation was given by Mayor Pro Tem Thornton.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Regular Meeting – February 8, 2010. Motion to approve minutes as submitted was made by Councilman Cloud, seconded by Councilman Gilliard, and unanimously approved by all Council Members.

Strategic Planning Workshop – February 8, 2010. Motion to approve minutes as submitted was made by Councilman Douglas, seconded by Councilman Cloud, and unanimously approved by all Council Members.

DELEGATIONS:

1.) Carolyn Meades, Human Resources Director – Safety/Workers Compensation Update. Presenting a Loss Data graph comparing worker's compensation claims paid over the last five years, Ms. Meades reported on the success of the Safety Awareness Program through reduction of claims. With a total of 364,000 hours worked between November 2008 and December 31, 2010 there had not been any lost time and only minor claims filed. She briefed Council on the activities of the Safety Committee which consisted of eight employee members, adding that monthly meetings, departmental inspections, and programs such as Safety Bingo/Bowling helped to constantly remind employees of the need for safety. Council Members discussed worker's compensation claims as well as healthcare costs and commended Ms. Meades on the success of the program. Also discussed was a recent employee health screening, as well as the possibility of a City self-insured employee health plan, with City Manager Addleton commenting that he wanted to see what was going to happen on the national level with healthcare before giving further consideration to such a plan.

2.) Scott Higginbotham – Downtown Development Authority Update. Mr. Higginbotham presented profit and loss information on the Grady Cultural Center (GCC) and the Zebulon Theatre showing a small profit on both for the year 2009 (\$8,873.76 for the GCC and \$5,481.36 for the Zebulon). He reported that prior to turning operations over to the Chamber of Commerce in June 2008; both entities had collectively experienced a loss of \$25,000. The Zebulon was being operated totally by volunteers to keep it open. He noted that the change in profit for the GCC was due in part to drastically reducing costs, including using City employees for making some of the repairs. A paid custodian was also replaced with City personnel performing minor custodial work. Monthly debt reduction in the amount of \$750.00 was being made for each operation. The rental fee had been increased from \$750 to \$850, which had not affected the number of rentals; and the back portion of the GCC had been rented to Pearson Auction Co. for \$500.00 per month. He attributed the turnaround to the Chamber taking over the operation and praised Carol Lehman, Pam Forrester, and Luann Maxwell for their services. Repairs of \$8,000 had been made to comply with requirements of a fire inspection report, and a new roof was needed due to numerous leaks. When questioned by Councilman Cloud about the rental fee, he reported that in comparing charges for other locations, he believed the fee was very reasonable. With regard to revenue from hotel-motel tax, it was pointed out that the tax could

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only be used for certain things. Council also discussed the high-interest unsecured loan (\$127,000) for the GCC, noting that since the City was liable for the debt, Municipal Competitive Trust Funds might possibly be used to pay down the debt to relieve pressure on the GCC. City Manager Addleton had roughly estimated the roof to cost \$25,000 to \$30,000. Using unspent façade funds to cover some GCC costs was also discussed, with City Manager Addleton adding that he was expecting one more façade application for the Roddenbery building renovation. It was requested that an estimate for the GCC roof be obtained and all options considered for repayment of the debt.

SPECIAL EVENTS: None

OLD BUSINESS:

Appointment of Member to the Cairo Planning Commission to Fill the Unexpired Term of Mr. J. D. Stephens (to expire December 31, 2011). Discussion was held in Executive Session on February 8, 2010 to consider the three applicants. Mayor VanLandingham and City Manager Addleton had met with Mr. Nickerson and recommended his appointment. He had already attended the two training sessions held for Commission members. After review, motion to appoint Mr. Donald James Nickerson to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Stephens was made by Councilman Cloud, seconded by Councilman Douglas, and unanimously approved by all Council Members.

Revision of City of Cairo Utility Billing Extension Policy. City Manager Addleton recommended three changes to the current policy which would remove the ineligibility for City employees, and elected and appointed officials; put in place extensions for commercial customers; and require that commercial extension agreements be signed by the owner or officer of the business. After review, motion was made by Councilman Cloud to approve the recommended changes, seconded by Councilman Gilliard, and unanimously approved by all Council Members.

NEW BUSINESS:

Award of Bids for Trailer and Mini Excavator to Replace the Sewer Department Backhoe. Bids for the excavator were received from five vendors, with the low bid from Flint Equipment in the amount of \$27,873.00. City Manager Addleton reported that the bid was much lower than other bids; but the specifications had been met, with the bidder communicating that they needed to sell this piece of equipment. He stated that previous rental costs that would no longer be incurred could pay for the equipment, adding that a second excavator might also be justified. Low bidder on the trailer was from James' Trailer in the amount of \$6,250.00. Purchase of a ditching bucket from Flint Equipment in the amount of \$975.00 was also requested. After review, motion was made by Councilman Cloud to approve the awarding of bids to the two low bidders and also to approve the purchase of the excavator bucket (Grand Total - \$35,098.00), seconded by Councilman Gilliard, and unanimously approved by all Council Members.

Consider Contracting with Engineering Consultant, Watkins & Associates, for Engineering Services for Bidding for Three Directional Bores for Water and Sewer System Repair and Improvements – Task Order No. 10 - (\$14,375.00). City Manager Addleton advised that he recommended contracting for engineering services to bid for directional bores for three projects collectively to lower the cost. Projects would be to replace the 8" sanitary sewer line near the Alan Parks residence, to replace and reconnect an out-of-service 12" water main along the CSX railway from 20th St, NE extending behind Peebles Dept. Store, and to do work

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on installing the Northwest water loop near the Cairo Country Club (all three projects estimated to cost \$161,500.00). He added that bidding the three bores simultaneously would be the most cost-effective; but bids did not have to be accepted, as either one, or all three, could be done. After review, motion was made by Councilman Thornton to approve the Task Order to contract for bids, seconded by Councilman Gwaltney, and unanimously approved by all Council Members.

Finance Report – January 2010. Councilman Douglas reported that the Finance Report had been reviewed. However, an answer was still being sought for an accounting problem that was revealed in the recent audit report; but it had been learned that something that caused the problem had occurred in the month of January 2009. Motion was made by Councilman Douglas to approve the report, seconded by Councilman Cloud, and unanimously approved by all Council Members.

Other Business: None

City Manager's Report:

- 1.) Presented a letter from DOT verifying that they were reviewing a request to consider revisions in the downtown area (City take-over of portions of South Broad for streetscape plan).
- 2.) Presented information on the upcoming 2010 census.
- 3.) Announced that renovation of the Council Chambers in the Roddenbery building had started, adding that decreasing the size of the restrooms had been considered. Council discussed the change and whether to open them to the public for parades, etc.

Reports:

- 1.) Cairo Police Department - Reports for the Month of January, 2010
 - a.) Monthly Workload
 - b.) City Citations & Tickets
 - c.) YTD
- 2.) Cairo Fire Department - 1/1 to 1/31/2010 (Modified)
 - a.) Incident List by Alarm. Council discussed the medical assist calls and use of the ladder truck in responding to those calls. It was noted that the response made to the same address several times during the month was to provide help with lifting a severely over-weight person who was now in a care facility. The truck was used in case of a fire call-out while on these response calls.
 - b.) Total Calls for the Month

Reports from Mayor & Council:

Councilman Thornton inquired about the progress on beautification of the east triangle at 1st Ave., NE & Highway 84, with City Manager Addleton responding that he was waiting for announcement of award of the grant which would be in March or April.

Councilman Cloud announced that he would like to attend training at the end of March to obtain 12 hours credit.

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Councilman Douglas asked that residents who do not roll in garbage cans in compliance with the ordinance be reminded of the regulations. He also requested that candidates for upcoming elections be notified of the sign ordinance regulations.

Mayor VanLandingham reported that he and City Manager Addleton were identifying potential areas that might qualify for possible housing improvement programs through the CHIP Grant Program, and possibly involve Habitat for Humanity. He also informed Council Members that he would be sending out a form to be used for evaluation of City Manager Addleton.

Executive Session: None

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

APPROVED:

RICHARD VANLANDINGHAM, MAYOR

ATTEST:

CAROLYN B. LEE
CITY CLERK