

City of Tifton  
Regular Council Workshop/Called Meeting  
February 26, 2015  
5:00 p.m.  
Tifton Municipal Courtroom  
130 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street

**ATTENDEES:**

J. G. "Jamie" Cater, Jr., Mayor  
Johnny Terrell, Vice Mayor  
Wes Ehlers, Council Member  
Chris Parrott, Council Member  
Julie Smith, Council Member

Larry Riner, City Manager  
Rob Wilmot, City Attorney  
Rona Martin, City Clerk

Mayor Cater called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m.

**REQUEST BY MANDY YOUNG WITH AFFORDABLE EQUITY PARTNERS TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THEIR WEST HAVEN PROJECT**

City Manager Larry Riner stated this is a request for the expansion of the existing senior living facility on E. B. Hamilton Road known as West Haven. He stated this is a letter of support for that proposed expansion. He stated Mandy Young is available for questions. Council Member Ehlers asked about a dual letter of support. Ms. Young stated this is an annexed property and Mr. Riner is the represented for GICH and that it would not be necessary. Mr. Riner stated there will be many letters of support for this project.

**EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH – CHIEF BUDDY DOWDY**

Chief Dowdy recalled the recent bomb threat that affected all of the schools in Tift County. He stated many folks were involved that were phenomenal and did a great job. He stated the EOC command staff was set up in our training room. He stated with 10 minutes' notice, our IT folks, Steven Henderson and Truett Starkey were able to set up the EOC with phones, computers, radios, etc., making them fully operational. He stated they were his MVP's for this operation. Mayor Cater then presented plaques to each of them for Employees of the Month.

**RESOLUTION AND DISCUSSION OF RECOMMENDED FY 2015 BUDGET REVISIONS**

Mr. Riner stated this budget revision is the forerunner to beginning the FY2016 budget. He stated this is a mid-year revision thru 12/31/2015. Lois Love, Finance Director, provided a handout of the revised budget. She stated the revision process includes a financial review based on prior year audited numbers and six to seven months of actual revenues and expenditures in the current year. She explained the need for budget revisions. She stated the General Fund includes an increase in LOST revenues by \$200 thousand and other increases/decreases that created an overall increase of over \$300 thousand. Expenditure increases consist of adding a public defender, prosecutor, and court clerk to Municipal Court. She stated Fire Department increased \$215 thousand due to reallocation in retirement, personnel and benefit costs, radio upgrades and repairs and maintenance. She stated on October 1, 2014, the Public Works and Parks and Cemetery departments were outsourced to ESG and currently remains in transition. She stated Service Fund revenues and expenditures increased approximately \$154 thousand. She stated this is due to the addition of two new positions – IT Director and a customer service/reception position. She stated a temporary position in Finance will be converted to a full-time accountant position with no bottom line change. She stated there were also increases in retirement for Human Resources and merchant fees for Customer Service. She stated the Building Maintenance and Shop Departments were outsourced to ESG in October, 2014 and remain in transition as well. She stated

funds are available in the current operating budget to fill these positions contingent on Council approval. She stated these positions are being recommended due to the need for operational consistency and to maintain knowledgeable employees due to the complexity of the organization in critical areas of the City. She stated all capital projects have been reviewed for completion and the financial condition has been updated to current status. Funds have been increased to complete various renovations under way such as City Hall. She stated there was an increase to the Senior Center project due to area site improvements and an addition for paving at the Chula Fire Station. She stated the Hunt Road project has been added along with contributions from various sources (she named those sources). She stated there are plans to start 20<sup>th</sup> Street in FY2016 as SPLOST V funds are collected. SPLOST IV funds are available to fund projects that have been reallocated and added as budgeted. She stated we will have to carefully watch SPLOST V spending throughout the remainder of the year due to utilizing most of those collections for the recently paid off debt. She stated we expect by June 30<sup>th</sup> there will be enough funds in SPLOST V to cover all of the projects budgeted in 2015. She stated this is a proposed budget for your review. Council Member Smith asked about the 20<sup>th</sup> Street project, and if it includes the paving. She stated yes, if collections come in as projected. Council Member Ehlers asked what the figure was for collections vs. budgeted amount. Ms. Love stated it is about an 18% decrease on average. Mr. Riner stated total SPLOST collections are about \$300,000 per month for city and joint projects. He stated our SPLOST revenues are about 80% of the actual referendum. Council Member Ehlers asked if there is a plan in place. Mr. Riner stated the capital projects budget has a schedule for FY2016 and as SPLOST funds come in, we will prioritize them as Council sees fit. Council Member Smith asked about a hotel/motel tax increase that was considered a few years ago and if that is anticipated to come back to the table to discuss. Mr. Riner stated this is up to Council. Ms. Smith stated the Hotel Motel Association was ok with it, and it didn't go thru. He stated if Council wants to entertain that again, legislation can be drawn up for next year. Council Member Smith stated the hotels were ok with what was proposed at that time, but we need to meet with the County.

#### **ORDINANCE UPDATING THE RETIREMENT PLAN REGARDING DISCONTINUANCE OF THE 4% INTEREST RATE; CLARIFICATION OF THE DEFINITION OF COMPENSATION, AND OTHER MATTERS**

Carla Cooper, Human Resources Director, discussed the 2<sup>nd</sup> option placed in the retirement plan. She stated an interest rate of 4% was included at that time. She stated, due to the market, we will no longer be giving the 4% interest on the 5% contribution after July 1, 2015. She stated anything contributed prior to July 1, 2015 will still receive the 4% interest rate. She stated the definition of "compensation" needed to be clarified by removing the word "bonuses" as they are not part of compensation. She stated the most recently outsourced employees with the eight year vesting will be included and also accommodate the outsourced employees who are vested and want to retire under the 25/55 plan or anything prior to 65. She reviewed other matters of the plan.

#### **ORDINANCE UPDATING THE RETIREMENT PLAN REGARDING THE MAKEUP OF THE RETIREMENT BOARD**

Mrs. Cooper stated this ordinance changes the makeup of the board due to the outsourced departments. The board will now be the Mayor and his appointee, the City Manager, Human Resources Director, Finance Director, one from police and fire, one that is board appointed and two from all other areas of the city. She stated it also changes the annual meeting from October to November.

#### **DISCUSSION OF TRANSFER OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSES FROM ONE LOCATION TO ANOTHER UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES**

Rona Martin, City Clerk, stated there is a provision in the code of ordinances providing for the City Manager to allow a transfer of alcohol licenses under certain conditions. She explained those conditions.

#### **USE OF MYON AND OTHER CITY VENUES**

Rona Martin discussed the possibility of the city's venues such as the Myon being used for weddings, etc. as rental properties and open them up to the community. She discussed marketing all of the City's venues under one umbrella wherever possible. She asked Council if they would be amenable to opening up the Myon and other properties to the community for rentals. Robert Reid Goodson discussed features of the marketing process. Ms. Martin mentioned the possibility of allowing alcohol at certain events. She stated a plan will be formulated and brought back to City Council.

#### **RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CITY OF ETHICS RECERTIFICATION**

Mr. Riner stated we've been a city of ethics since 2002. He stated the GMA model requires recertification every four years, and this is the fourth year. He stated the resolution presented is to provide for that recertification. He mentioned the criteria and standards.

#### **DISCUSSION OF ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE RELATING TO RIGHT-OF-WAY SIGNAGE (AMENDING CHAPTER 6) (T15-000-001)**

Mr. Crowe stated that about a year ago a committee was put together which included local realtors to come up with a sign that everyone could agree on. He stated this ordinance amends Chapter 6 to correct the inconsistency between the language of the text contained in Section 6.01.05(C) and the "visibility at intersections" diagram. He explained the discrepancies. A general discussion was held regarding signage heights.

#### **DISCUSSION OF ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE RELATING TO RIGHT-OF-WAY SIGNAGE (AMENDING CHAPTER 7) (T15-000-001)**

Mr. Crowe stated this ordinance amends Chapter 7 to add a new section 7.09.01 to be titled "Permitted Signs in the Right of Way" to permit directional real estate signs at certain locations with the City of Tifton Right of Ways. He explained where the signs will be allowed.

#### **DISCUSSION OF ORDINANCE REQUESTING A TEXT AMENDMENT TO THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE RELATING TO DISTANCE BETWEEN TATTOO PARLORS AND RESTAURANTS WITH ONSITE ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION (T1-000-002)**

Mr. Crowe stated this ordinance is to amend Chapter 4, Section 4.03.31(e) of the Land Development Code so as to allow the location of tattoo parlors and body piercing establishments within 300 feet of a restaurant and to prohibit the location of a tattoo parlor or body piercing establishment within 300 feet of a bar or entertainment establishment. He stated we currently have a restaurant who wants to come into the location of a previous restaurant which is within 300 feet of a tattoo parlor. He stated this keeps from limiting restaurants coming in and are in close proximity to a tattoo parlor. Mr. Wilmot stated this does not apply to businesses selling package retail alcohol, but does apply to bars or entertainment establishments.

#### **DISCUSSION OF ORDINANCE REGARDING BUILDING CODE VIOLATIONS AS THEY RELATE TO OCCUPATION TAX CERTIFICATES (T15-000-003)**

Attorney Wilmot recalled when a business license was revoked because the person did not comply with the construction permitting process. He explained the current process wherein if one had their business license revoked by municipal court, they would have to come before Council to seek reinstatement. He stated council was not in favor of that. He stated an ordinance has been developed to determine whether a license should be revoked. He explained the due process in the proposed ordinance. He stated this ordinance is meant to take action on habitual violators.

#### **DISCUSSION OF PERMIT FEES**

Bert Crowe presented and reviewed a proposed adjustment to the fees schedule for residential and commercial construction. He reviewed the current rates for the surrounding areas. A general discussion was held regarding the proposed fees. Council Member Parrott expressed concern over the bottom line fee level and suggested it be raised on both commercial and residential. Council Member Ehlers asked for a breakdown on the valuations and fees. Council Member Parrott asked for data on the cost of providing inspections, etc. After further discussion Mayor Cater appointed Council Members Ehlers and Parrott to a committee with Larry Riner and Bert Crowe for review of the proposed fees. He asked that they come back with a recommendation. Council Member Smith discussed the incentives available through the enterprise zone process and how we can have better awareness of the programs that are available.

**SURPLUS OF EQUIPMENT FOR THE SOLID WASTE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL DIVISION (SWCD) DUE TO OUTSOURCING**

Mr. Hobby stated this equipment is to be surplus due to the outsourcing of the sanitation function to Golden Environmental. He stated these are estimates and the equipment will be placed on GOVDEALS.com. He stated the value of assets will be used toward landfill closure-post closure. Mr. Hobby discussed the advertisement requirements.

**DISCUSSION OF GEORGIA CITIES WEEK**

Rona Martin reviewed proposed activities for Georgia Cities Week.

**RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE FOR J'S CONVENIENCE STORE LOCATED AT 1405 US HWY. 41 N**

Ms. Martin stated J's Convenience Store is requesting a malt beverage package retail license for the sale of malt beverages. She state a background check was done on Jose Hernandez, owner and manager, which revealed no violations during the past five years. She stated staff recommends approval of the license.

**RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE FOR LIL PANTRY LOCATED AT 1302 S. CENTRAL AVENUE**

Ms. Martin stated Lil Pantry is requesting a malt and wine beverage package retail license. She stated a background check was done in October of Mrs. Jeta Patel as owner/manager of J&J Food Mart which revealed no violations. She stated staff recommends approval of the license.

**RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE FOR SN FOOD MART LOCATED AT 127 TIFTON ELDORADO ROAD**

Ms. Martin stated SN Food Mart is under new ownership and requesting a malt and wine beverage package retail license. She stated a background check was done on Pragna Patel, owner and manager which revealed no violations. She stated staff recommends approval of the license.

**RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE FOR DICK'S WINGS LOCATED AT 3310 W. US HWY. 82**

Ms. Martin stated Dick's Wings is requesting a malt, wine, and distilled spirits onsite consumption retail license. She stated the background check on the manager has not been completed but will be by the meeting next Monday.

**RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE FOR BRITANIC DISCO RODEO LOCATED AT 1101 S. MAIN STREET**

Ms. Martin stated Britanic Disco Rodeo is opening where Santos Lounge used to be located. She stated they are requesting a malt beverage consumption retail license for the sale of malt beverages. A

background check was done on Rebecca Zuniga, owner and manager, which revealed no violations. She stated staff recommends approval of the license. Discussion was held regarding noise complaints. Mr. Wilmot stated if you have a location that is permitted in that zoning, he did not think we could have an ordinance or resolution one cannot locate at that location. He stated his recollection is that if an establishment is not operating their business in accordance with our code, then they can be brought before Council for removal of their alcohol license. He stated if there is a noise problem, then it is an enforcement issue, and needs to be brought before Council. He stated if one operates the business in a lawful manner, then we cannot take action not allowing the business. He stated once again, if they are not in compliance they can come before Council who can then revoke their alcohol license. He stated he would look at the location issue once again.

### **BOARD REPORT**

Ms. Martin reviewed the members of the Tree Board and Tifton Housing Authority whose terms are up for expiration effective 3/31/2015. She stated the Tree Board consists of Brenda Douce who does not wish to be reappointed and Al Potts, who does wish to be reappointed. She reminded Mayor Cater that Luz Marti's appointment on the Tifton Housing Authority is expiring as well. Mr. Riner stated they will be submitted.

### **DISCUSSION OF NOMINATION FOR DISTRICT 11 GMA OFFICERS**

Mr. Riner stated three of our elected officials wish to be considered for nomination to the District 11 Officers. Mayor Cater stated he has been trying to be on this board since he became Mayor. He expressed concern for the smaller towns being represented. Mr. Riner stated the names are Mayor Cater and Council Members Parrott and Ehlers. It was the consensus that all of their names will be submitted for consideration.

### **CALLED MEETING**

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL, REAL ESTATE AND/OR LEGAL MATTERS**

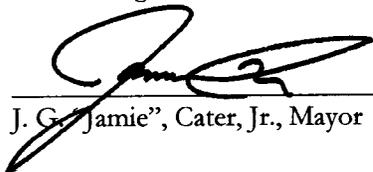
Council Member Parrott moved, seconded by Council Member Ehlers and unanimously carried to enter into Executive Session to discuss Real Estate and Legal Matters.

### **RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Council Member Smith moved, seconded by Council Member Parrott and unanimously carried to adopt a resolution providing for executive session.

Council Member Ehlers moved, seconded by Council Member Terrell and unanimously carried to come out of executive session.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

  
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J. G. "Jamie", Cater, Jr., Mayor

  
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Rona Martin, City Clerk