

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the City Commission of the City of Auburndale held May 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Commission Room of City Hall, after having been properly advertised, with the following members present: Mayor Tim Pospichal, Commissioners: Dorothea Taylor Bogert, Keith Cowie, Richard Hamann, and Jack Myers. Also present were: City Manager Robert Green, Finance Director/City Clerk Shirley Lowrance, City Attorney V. Patton Kee via the telephone, and Lieutenant Andy Moore.

Mayor Tim Pospichal declared a quorum present and the Meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Jarrod Brooks of Lakes Church and a salute to the flag.

Motion by Commissioner Keith Cowie, seconded by Commissioner Dorothea Taylor Bogert, to approve the Minutes of April 20, 2020, Regular Meeting. Upon vote, all ayes.

City Manager Green recognized Brian Toune for a presentation.

Brian Toune, 503 E. Moore Drive, Pickleball Director for the City, said we started this seven years ago. This City has made pickleball one of the fastest growing sports in America. We are sending people out from all over the United States who come here to learn how we do it. He said they talked about what they could do to show their appreciation to the City and the first year they donated \$619, to the fireworks fund. He said they had \$2,100 donation that could be used for fireworks, but if they do not have it this year use it to best use or put it back for next year. He said they thanked the City so much for letting them use the facility. He said he appreciates the City staff and City Commission. He said their pickleball council has met and they are purchasing non-contact thermometer to be used once pickleball starts back. They will check everyone before they go into the gym and will require masks and social distancing. He said they want to do anything they can to help this City.

City Manager Green said we have started opening things up. On Friday, we opened the Tennis Facility the Butterfly Garden, and Dog Park. The boat ramp and trail has always been open. We are going to start phasing in per the Governor's executive order and the President's phasing in program. One discussion we had today was the July 4th Fireworks and we know Lakeland has cancelled theirs. He said it is a big undertaking to have the all day long event there. If we have the green light to open up in July, maybe we do not have the day long event, but still have the fireworks to suggest our community comes together. He said the City appreciated the Fireworks donation money.

Mayor Tim Pospichal asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

1. ORDINANCE NO. 1635 ANNEXING PROPERTY INTO THE CITY LIMITS – HAVENDALE BLVD

City Manager Green said the City has received a petition from Angel Feliciano, to annex 0.73 acres of property into the City limits. The property is located on Havendale Blvd, east of Lake Blue Drive NW and adjacent to the BB&T Bank, which is inside the City limits. The property is contiguous with existing City limits and the annexation does not create an enclave. The property is currently vacant. The proposed annexation is a result of the owner's request for city utilities and proposed development of the property for a plant nursery. Establishing a Future Land Use designation and Zoning classification on the property will come before the Planning Commission and City Commission at later dates. The action currently before the City Commission is only on the annexation of the property into the City. The proposed Ordinance was prepared by the Community Development Department and reviewed by the City Manager and City Attorney. If approved on first reading, the proposed Ordinance will be presented for second and final reading on May 18, 2020. He displayed the location of the four parcels on Havendale Blvd. He said it pushes our City limits closer to Dr. Sterling's old office. He showed where the Roger Barfield property was located near this property. We have talked with Mr. Barfield and Dr. Sterling and will be looking to bring both those parcels into the City at a later date. Staff recommended approval of the Ordinance.

Mayor Tim Pospichal asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Finance Director/City Clerk Shirley Lowrance read Ordinance No. 1635 entitled: **AN ORDINANCE EXTENDING THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF AUBURNDALE, FLORIDA, SO AS TO INCLUDE THEREIN ADDITIONAL TERRITORY LYING CONTIGUOUS AND ADJACENT TO THE PRESENT BOUNDARIES OF THE CITY; DESCRIBING SAID ADDITIONAL TERRITORY REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HERewith, AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE** General Location: Havendale and Avenue Z NW), title only.

Motion by Commissioner Jack Myers, and seconded by Commissioner Dorothea Taylor Bogert, to approve Ordinance No. 1635, as read by title only on first reading.

Commissioner Jack Myers asked if Dr. Sterling's property was annexed without the Barfield property, would it create an enclave.

City Manager Green said it could be annexed; however, we would probably not annex it without the Barfield property, as it does have the appearance of an enclave.

Upon vote, all ayes.

2. PRESENTATION OF ARTIFICIAL TURF BIDS – DOWNTOWN PARK

City Manager Green said we are only putting on Agenda items that need to come forward, such as the two bid items from Parks and Recreation Department. The artificial turf in the playground area of the Downtown Park was installed in 2008 as part of redeveloping the Downtown Park area. The Parks and Recreation Department's 5-year Capital Improvement Program includes replacement of the artificial turf this year. Funding for this project is allocated in the FY 2019/20 Budget at \$120,000. An invitation to bid was advertised in the local media on Sunday, April 12, 2020. The City received the following two bids for the artificial turf:

- Pelland Construction, LLC. Haines City - \$121,254.00 and
- Turf Pro Synthetics, LLC., Land O Lakes - \$128,050.00.

Pelland Construction, Haines City, was the low bid to replace the artificial turf in the Downtown Park in the amount of \$121,254. The bids were reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Director and City Manager's Office. They have done several projects for the Polk County School Board and received favorable responses from the reference checks. The new artificial turf replaces the original turf and meets all the safety guidelines of the playground equipment. We have been working with the Contractor as the playground equipment is closed and is one of the areas that will stay closed until we get into farther phases to re-open. Now is a good time to get in there and replace the turf. We will try to expedite the turf replacement. Staff recommendation was to award the bid to Pelland Construction of Haines City in the amount of \$121,254.00 to replace the artificial turf.

Mayor Tim Pospichal asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Dorothea Taylor Bogert, and seconded by Commissioner Keith Cowie to award the bid to Pelland Construction of Haines City in the amount of \$121,254.00 to replace the artificial turf in the Downtown Park.

Commissioner Jack Myers asked if any of the CARES money would be coming to the City of Auburndale and if they will be partnering with the City with any projects. He said this project would be a big stretch, but we have been doing the disinfection.

City Manager Green said the turf would not qualify, but we are working with County on the CARES act funding.

Upon vote, all ayes.

3. PRESENTATION OF SOCCER FIELD DRAINAGE – LAKE MYRTLE SPORTS COMPLEX

City Manager Green said one of the soccer fields at the Lake Myrtle Sports Complex (Field 8) has historically had drainage issues, especially during the summer months. The problem has resulted in the field not being available for use during tournaments and other events at the Complex. The Parks and Recreation Department's 5-year Capital Improvement Program or CIP includes drainage improvements to the field. Funding for this project is allocated in the FY 2019/20 Budget at \$47,000. An invitation to bid was sent to three contractors and advertised in the local media on Sunday, April 12, 2020. The City received the following six bids for the Lake Myrtle North Field 8 Drainage:

- **XGD Systems., Stuart, FL** **\$ 31,396.91**
- Cathcart Construction Co.-FL., Oviedo \$ 39,175.00
- Central Concrete Products, Inc., Bartow \$ 65,925.00
- Close Construction, LLC., Okeechobee \$ 81,620.00
- Tucker Paving, Inc., Winter Haven \$ 82,761.78
- Garner Completesite, Inc., Polk City \$115,817.93

He said XGD Systems was the low bid at \$31, 396.91. There was quite a range in the bid and we did touch base with the low and high bid to ensure their understanding of the project description and bidding apples to apples. The project was engineered by Chastain Skillman and reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Director, City Manager's Office, and Chastain Skillman. They verify the understanding of the low bid, on the work that was specified and they meet the specs of the bid and are capable of doing the work. Staff recommended awarding the bid to XGD Systems of Stuart in the amount of \$31,396.91 to perform the drainage work on soccer field eight.

Mayor Tim Pospichal asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Keith Cowie, seconded by Commissioner Richard Hamann, to award the bid to XGD Systems, of Stuart in the amount of \$31,396.91 to perform the drainage work on the soccer field number eight.

Commissioner Dorothea Taylor Bogert thanked Staff for the clarification on the bid ranges.

Commissioner Keith Cowie asked since we have to do this work, is this something that was done wrong initially that caused that problem.

City Manager Green said this is the final field on the back that drains into the wetlands. He said there was probably some final ditch system that may have been put in. He said this was the intent to fix it.

Commissioner Jack Myers asked if they did geotech work before they did the construction, as some land by the swamp may not be as sandy.

City Manager Green said the field stayed wet and did not perc.

Commissioner Jack Myers said that for projects in the future, possibly the football fields, we may have the same type of problem and might consider geotech work.

City Manager Green said good point.

Upon vote, all ayes.

4. PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED PAYROLL FOR FY 2020-2021 AND FY 2021-2022

City Manager Green said normally we present the Payroll section of the Budget in April, with the two-year budget. The Payroll section of the budget is an expense and will be added in with the expense section. By law, we are required to present a balanced budget. We will be presenting Capital Improvements at the next meeting, Operating Expenses in June, and Revenues in July. In September, we will hold two Public Hearings, with Ordinances to adopt related to the Budget. He said there is no question that as a result of Covid there is a lot of uncertainty in the economy. As we present anything to the Commission tonight, we realize it may be subject to change given circumstances we may not know about going forward with the economy situation in our country. He displayed photos of City Staff working during the Covid time frame – videos prepared by staff, library staff putting together face shields for the Fire Department, Police department at the food give aways, and Sanitation Department stepping up for the month long Spring Clean Up. He said these are the faces of our payroll, as displayed on the City's website. We have had two conference calls related to Covid today – the County call where Dr. Jackson from the Health Department updates on Covid for Polk County, discussion of the CARE's act, and how other cities are working together to open up facilities. He said City staff has truly stepped up during this event. The FY 2019-2020 Budget and the second year budget the FY 2020-2021 were approved in September 2019. In the FY 2020-2021 Budget, there are two Service Worker II positions added in Parks and Recreation at Lake Myrtle for the baseball fields coming on line this year and one Part-Time Secretary position in the Police Department. In FY 2021-2022, we make the Part-time Secretary a full-time position. There is a reclassification of the Utility Clerk II in Utility Billing. We have 180 employees, which is up from 172 in 2010. Over the last three years we added four Police Officers to put in a new zone in the north Auburndale area. He displayed the count of staff by departments. The proposal has a 3% COLA increase for all employees and no COLA in the second year, which is consistent with the past years. The proposed 3% will most certainly be monitored to ensure this can be sustained as we go forward and at this time, we feel we can. We have longevity pay - \$10 a month x 12 x the number of years of service. In our first year budget, 98 employees or 55% will receive longevity and in the second year, 115 employees or 63% will receive longevity. We have a Step Plan for an automatic 2% adjustment in pay for one year, 4 years, 6 years, and 8 years. In the first year, 45 employees will receive the automatic 2% and in the second year, 40 employees will reach those milestones. Each year we contract with Creative Insights and Dr. John Daly from the University of South Florida to do a salary survey. He said this has proven to be so beneficial, as we are able to compare every position to comparable cities. He said he copied the Commission on some of the narrative from the salary survey. We look at the salaries of different Cities for the comparison and select cities that are 10% above and 10% below our population. He displayed the comparable cities, which included Belle Glade and Zephyrhills. We also compare our City with the local market: Bartow, Haines City, Lake Wales, and Winter Haven, which is a larger city with more than twice the population. This salary comparison has worked out well through the years and even during the bargaining unit period, when we had to go to mitigation. The hearing officer even suggested that including Winter Haven in the comparison validated the study to make sure the employees are taken care of. From the 2020 pay study, the results show a limited number of employees are in positions that need adjusting. Each position is looked at and compared to the 10 above the average salary, 10 below the average salary, and a threshold of 15% below the average in the statewide comparison, the local market comparison, or the combined statewide and local market. Creative Insights found that one position consistently fell below all three comparisons, the local market, the overall pooled sample, and the statewide comparison. The position was the Deputy Police Chief position. The Assistant City Manager position was out in two of the comparisons. He displayed salary comparisons for employees. He said Lake Wales was the only city that was in the State comparison and the local comparison. He referred to the Payroll Budget sheets on page 3 for the Deputy Police Chief position and proposed 6% adjustment. As we start in February with requests to the Department Directors for payroll positions or reclassifications, this is one of the positions the Police Chief identified for an adjustment. We started noticing in exit interviews for Service Worker I and Service Worker II that the employees were going somewhere else than to other cities. They were going to Coke, Saddle Creek, and Medline. He displayed a newspaper article of Amazon's Fulfillment center with 500 plus jobs and where their starting salaries will be. They now become our competition, whether we like it or not. He said he does not have firefighters, police officers, and finance directors bailing to go to work in the fulfillment centers, but in those service worker positions, we do have that. Last year when we were meeting with Dr. Dailey, we discussed this and it was before the Amazon article came out. This year he notes, "As Polk County and the entire area continues to

grow the City also seeks to prepare itself for increased competition (Amazon). This could provide challenges for the City of Auburndale with the poaching of its talented employees, especially among Auburndale's Service Workers II, III, and IV's. Significant losses in talent from the City should be a concern, one which the leaders develop a strategy to mitigate". He explained the pay grade chart, which goes from pay grade 3 to pay grade 13. A study was done several years ago to determine where the positions would fall depending on the level of responsibility and education required for the position. Pay grade 7 currently has two employees in it: Property and Evidence Manager in the Police Department and the Administrative Secretary in the City Manager's Office. The Service Worker II position is in pay grade 3. We do not have any full-time employees in pay grade 1 or 2. He explained how the steps work within the grades and the 2% salary adjustment after the completion of probation, 4 years, 6 years, and 8 years. The steps increase by 2% and pay grades increase by 6%. The proposal we have come up with is to take the Service Worker II's that are in pay grade 3 and move them to pay grade 4, employees in pay grade 4 and move them to pay grade 5, take the employees in pay grade 5 and move them to pay grade 6, and employees in pay grade 6 and move them to pay grade 7. He said 75 employees fall into this proposal for the pay grade adjustment. The payroll proposal also includes the entire workforce receiving a 3% cost of living. He compared the proposed Service Worker II wage to the salary survey and said it compares well with the adjustment. The Central Florida Development Council provided the latest wages for the fulfillment centers like Coke, Amazon, Walmart and the salary is \$42,000. He said the SunTrax could be a factor in employment also, as they open their doors for the Research and Development. Our proposal is to eliminate the pay grade 1, 2, and 3 and go to pay grade 4 with a starting salary at \$29,458 and \$30,047 after eight years. We are not leading the pack, but we are not as far behind. We could argue benefits where in the private sector an employee may pay for health insurance and not receive tuition assistance or longevity. Our efforts address the concern we have been seeing and what is highlighted in the salary survey. As we see the Amazon open up, we are going to see it even more. The salary survey indicates the finding reflect favorably on Auburndale's pay structure and its approach for offering market competitive pay to City employees. With the anticipated arrival of Amazon Corporation in its local labor market, the City may seek to take pre-emptive steps in pay to ward off the local poaching of its staff. Also, the City must weigh the potential decreases in productivity, as new employees acclimate to their new jobs. He said yes, we can recruit, but we feel the efforts we are proposing to you tonight are addressing the retention, as we go forward. He referred to the Payroll Budget and went over the proposed changes:

- Assistant City Manager adjusted to the salary comparable to the Building Official and Police Chief,
- several employees were advanced one pay grade and not advanced in salary due to their step within the pay grade
- Service Worker employees advanced one pay grade and their 6 % salary adjustment,
- Police Officer salary at a starting pay of \$45,502 and the longest tenure officer at \$49,253.
- Police Department position changes in Accreditation Manager, Code Enforcement Officer, and Property and Evidence
- Two new Service Worker positions at Lake Myrtle
- Promotion for the Utility Billing Clerk

City Manager Green said during Covid we have not closed our doors, we have continued to patrol the streets, run the fire calls, pick up the trash, provide the drinking water, and when you flush, we take care of that too. He said it was our time to shine. He said he has been really pleased with the work product from the employees during this time. The total FY 2020-2021 Payroll Budget is \$9,926,541 with adding a 3% COLA and 6% for the pay grades discussed. The increase is 5.65% over our current budget. We will present the Capital Improvements at the next meeting, Expenses in June, and Revenues in July. We feel we will be able to take care of the Payroll plan. We will be sensitive to the economy and monitor that in regard to the Budget, we may move the payroll plan over two years versus doing it all in one year. We feel we are going to be okay with the revenues and still not need to raise taxes. The Public Hearings will be held September 3 and September 15. The Payroll section of the Budget provides the necessary funding for the staffing levels necessary to adequately deliver the levels of service. As the City continues to monitor and adjust to the impacts of Covid the City may alter the plans being presented at this time. He recommended tentative

approval of the Payroll, as presented by Staff. Formal adoption of the FY 2021 Budget and conceptual approval of the FY 2022 Budget will come after the scheduled Public Hearings in September.

Commissioner Keith Cowie said it was mentioned when we talked about the insurance benefit and things an employee might not get in the private sector. He asked if the City has put a dollar amount to the benefit to show employees. He said obviously being in the private sector, we fight the same battle with retention. He said the warehouse jobs are a different type of job and there are a lot of benefits we have to offer with the City above and beyond the pay numbers.

City Manager Green said the Assistant City Manager conducts employee orientations in the Commission Room. He said especially when there is a group of employees, there is always a comment that comes out about costs they incurred for benefits in their prior job.

Commissioner Keith Cowie said sometimes people do not recognize it initially until it is laid out for them.

Commissioner Richard Hamann said we have had employees leave for more money and wish they had stayed once they realized what they had to pay for insurance.

Motion by Commissioner Jack Myers, seconded Commissioner Keith Cowie, to tentatively approve the Payroll section of the FY 2020-2021 and FY 2021-2022 Budget.

Commissioner Jack Myers said reiterating the work that has been done. He said he thought it was genius how the City did not really furlough employees, but spaced out the workers. The City kept everything going, kept the employees fresh, and kept them going. There have been some warehouses with people working too close together and it was costing them. He said the jury so far has been excellent and we still will be judged on this thing – even Dr. Fauci. He said in the next 30 to 60 days it will be critical. He said he thought the City did a great job.

Commissioner Richard Hamann said he concurred with Commissioner Myers and thanked everybody. He said the Payroll Study has kept us close enough to the private sector and to cities of our size. He thanked the City Manager for the work.

Mayor Tim Pospichal asked the City Manager how long we have been getting COLA increases and for the last 5 years, we are averaging 2.8% - 14%. He said this was nothing short of remarkable and this is from the Department Heads working closely with their employees.

Commissioner Jack Myers said there were times when we had zero adjustment and times when we did not replace positions. He said there are times when we can do these things and times when we have to tighten our belts. He said when times are good; it is a whole lot easier to be a Commissioner or City Manager. He said it was not good to have to lay someone off.

Upon vote. All ayes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Minutes are true and correct.

Shirley A. Lowrance, Finance Director/City Clerk

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Upon vote. All ayes.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

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