

CITY OF GLADEWATER
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION
MINUTES
MAY 17, 2007
6:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor John Paul Tallent, Mayor Pro-tem Walter Derrick, Jerry Williams, Scott Owens, Richard Parrish, Jr., Jimmy Williams

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Derouen

STAFF PRESENT: Jay Stokes, Melba Haralson, Wayne Smith

GUESTS PRESENT: Olin C. Smith, Cathy Smith, Beverly Tallent, Katherine Bowen, Joe Bowen, Jim St. John, Jimmy Davis, McDel Cainen Lopez, George R. Smith, Dee Dee Williams, Linda Patton, Deborah Pike, Elijah Anderson, D. Mark Carpenter, Yolonda McNeeley, Raymond L. Johnson, Charla Givens

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Tallent called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The invocation was given by Mayor Pro-tem Derrick and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Jimmy Williams.

II. PROCLAMATION declaring May as Elder Abuse Prevention Awareness Month

At the request of Mayor Tallent, City Secretary Haralson read the proclamation declaring May as Elder Abuse Prevention Awareness Month.

III. OATH OF OFFICE for newly elected City Council members

City Secretary Haralson administered the Oath of Office to Jerry Williams, Scott Owens and Richard Parrish, Jr. and presented each of them with a Certificate of Election.

IV. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENT of Mayor Pro-tem

Councilmember Jerry Williams moved to reappoint Walter Derrick as the Mayor Pro-tem, seconded by Councilmember Jimmy Williams. Carried 5-0-1, with Mr. Derrick abstaining.

V. CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Minutes – April 23 and April 30, 2007
- b) Resolution to accept bids for struck off property at P007 (R74108) and P018 (R74144) in the James M. Tallent Survey, as requested by the Upshur County Tax Assessor-Collector
- c) Ordinance adopting the S-11 Supplement to the Code of Ordinances
- d) Ratification of Tax Abatement Guidelines

Councilmember Jimmy Williams moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Owens. Carried 6-0.

VI. CONSIDERATION of Cemetery Board recommendations

- a) Revision to Gladewater Memorial Park Cemetery Rules and Regulations
- b) Discontinue payment plan option for purchase of cemetery lots

Item a) City Secretary Haralson explained the recommended revisions to the rules and regulations. Councilmember Jerry Williams asked for discussion regarding the proposed requirement for a burial vault. He questioned whether it is appropriate for us (the City) to intervene in a personal family choice. He said he is not in favor of making another regulation on a bereaved family or adding an expense that some families can't afford. Councilmember Jimmy Williams said there are a lot graves that continually need to be filled, especially after a rain, a burial vault will eliminate a lot of sinkage, making it easier to maintain. Mayor Tallent added that families become

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very emotional when their loved one's grave starts sinking. City Secretary Haralson relayed some of the discussion leading to the Cemetery Board's recommendation. According to Cemetery Board Member Tim York, who worked many years in this business, the cost of a minimum perpetual standard concrete or steel vault is approximately \$600. In the Cemetery Board meeting, Mr. York explained that over a relatively short period of time, the less expensive caskets will collapse just from the weight of the dirt, causing a great amount of sinkage. Rainfall, mowers, and backhoes, used to open and close graves, intensify the problem. Mr. York said that most cemeteries already require a burial vault. Councilmember Owens raised questions about how this would affect those that have already prepaid their funeral expenses; whether they would be "grandfathered in". Councilmember Jerry Williams said we need more information regarding the prices, advantages and disadvantages, whether prepaid arrangements would be grandfathered in, and what percentage of cemeteries in recent years require burial vaults.

Mayor Pro-tem Derrick moved to table until the next meeting, seconded by Councilmember Jerry Williams. Carried 6-0.

Item b) City Secretary Haralson explained the payment plan guidelines, accounts in default, and problems with collections on these accounts. The Cemetery Board recommended that we discontinue providing a payment plan option for the purchase of cemetery spaces.

Councilmember Jimmy Williams moved to approve the recommendation of the Cemetery Board and discontinue payment plans, seconded by Councilmember Parrish. Carried 6-0.

VII. CONSIDERATION of Lake Board recommendations

- a) Stocking bass at Lake Gladewater
- b) Forbidding animals in park, picnic and pavilion areas of Lake Gladewater

Item a) James St. John, Lake Board member explained the Lake Board's request to use approximately \$6,000 from the existing budget to stock Lake Gladewater with 10,000 Florida bass. He requested that a like amount be budgeted each year, on a 5-year plan to add 10,000 Florida bass each year to Lake Gladewater.

Councilmember Owens moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Parrish. Carried 6-0.

Item b) City Manager Stokes said the Lake Board also recommends prohibiting pets within 50 feet of the pavilion, picnic tables and playground areas. They are already prohibited on the beach. If approved, an ordinance will be on the consent agenda next month.

Councilmember Parrish moved to approve, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Derrick. Carried 6-0.

VIII. CONSIDERATION of possible Telecommunications Lease at Allison Street water tower

Joe and Katherine Bowen from Union Grove explained that they have a wireless internet company. Their current antenna is at the top of the Lee Building. They requested to lease space on the Allison Street water tower, which is about 100 feet higher. City Manager Stokes said the lease is patterned after another recent cell tower lease at \$300 per month for 6 years. There is a trial 3-month period, which will allow them time to test out the system to make sure there is no interference or technical problem.

After questions were answered regarding space requirements and weight of equipment, Councilmember Jimmy Williams moved to approve. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Owens. Carried 6-0.

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- IX. PUBLIC HEARING regarding a request to subdivide a 1.471 acre tract located in A-179, Lewis J. Rigsby Survey, Tract 13, more commonly known as the vicinity of 1214 Lynn Street

Mayor Tallent opened the public hearing at 6:37 p.m.

Olin "Chuck" Smith, 138 Woodland Trails, said that he bought a small parcel of land on Lynn Street and would like to subdivide it into four lots with a street and cul-de-sac, to build four small homes. He then offered to answer any questions.

With no other public comments, the public hearing was closed at 6:37 p.m.

- X. CONSIDERATION of request to subdivide a 1.471 acre tract located in A-179, Lewis J. Rigsby Survey, Tract 13, more commonly known as the vicinity of 1214 Lynn Street

Mayor Tallent confirmed that Mr. Smith understood that he is responsible for the cost of building the street and putting in utilities.

Councilmember Jerry Williams moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Jimmy Williams. Carried 6-0.

- XI. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- a) FY 2007 Street paving
- b) FY 2008 Budget update
- c) Ferry Street railroad crossing
- d) Moore Lift Station update
- e) Recent use of First Call Emergency Notification System
- f) Lake Warden Police Academy graduation
- g) Update on grant proposals

City Manager Stokes gave the following report;

- a) Street paving – So far on the list of streets to be repaved this year, is Money, S. Sheppard and W. Gay. Also, Mr. Stokes said he would like to take about \$20,000 of the street paving money and use the roller we recently purchased to do some spot repairs. He said the Council should let him know if they knew of a street that needed to be looked at.
- b) 2008 budget - The preliminary values this year came in lower than the final values from last year. The final values are always higher than the preliminary, so hopefully we will break even this year.
- c) Railroad crossing – The concrete work will be done soon. The chip and seal and brick work looks great. We have almost used all the original brick. We bought 10,000 bricks (32 pallets), one pallet covers 100 square feet. The patches are taking more than we thought. Veolia Water Project Manager Chris Meeks, will check on the cost of replica brick.
- d) Lift station – The new lift station is up and running. We are still in the process of abandoning the old lift station.
- e) First Call – Fire Chief Smith set off the First Call system recently. It made 1400 calls in 18 minutes. There are some glitches being worked out so that it only makes calls within the city limits. The invoice, based on the number of calls made, has been revised from \$1,371 to \$134.75. We have had great compliments from citizens and the newspaper.
- f) Lake Warden – Congratulations to our Lake Warden, Richard Ross, who is graduating from East Texas Police Academy tonight.
- g) Grants – Gary Traylor has not received the formal notification yet, but it appears that we will be funded on the Master Fund grant. There's nothing to report yet on the Parks grant. On the Texas Capital Fund grant there is a lot of administrative work to be done above our capabilities, so we are looking for someone to administer that grant.

XII. CITIZENS COMMENTS

Yolonda McNeeley, #5 McKaig, said that an off duty Gladewater Police officer and his wife isolated and harassed her daughter at Gladewater High School without a school official. She said the harassment continues as the officer's wife continues to drive by the house where her daughter lives. She asked what can be done regarding his actions.

Mark Carpenter, 2301 Woodbine, complimented the election workers and candidates, who were cordial, polite and helpful to one another. He said citizens who want to run for public office should be encouraged to do so, and he has a problem with the council endorsing candidates.

XIII. MAYOR'S REPORT

None.

XIV. ADJOURN

Councilmember Parrish moved to adjourn at 6:58 p.m. Adjourned by consensus.

JOHN PAUL TALLENT, MAYOR

ATTEST:

MELBA HARALSON, CITY SECRETARY