

CITY OF GLADEWATER
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION
MINUTES
MARCH 18, 2010
6:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Walter Derrick, Mayor Pro-tem John Ussery, Jimmy Williams, Joe Derouen, Scott Owens, Margaret Bell

MEMBERS ABSENT: Judith Burlison

STAFF PRESENT: Jay Stokes, Melba Haralson, Richard Ross, Farrell Alexander, Larry Player

GUESTS PRESENT: Cisco Frierson, Kirk Rotramel, Mary J. Williams, Jimmy Davis, Haskell Ballew, Curtis Smalley, Marsha Valdetero, Diane Turner, Mark Carpenter, Karen Morgan, Bob King, Chris Meeks, Steve Hoover, Pat Myers, John Choice, Don Beale, Trecia Hodges, Glynn King, Brent Bailey, Colleen Bailey, Ryan Bailey, Leon Watson, Gene Keenon, Alfred Lacy, Norma Lacy, Kevin Bush, Walter Gordon, James Thomas, Elijah Anderson, David Cleveland, NuNu Zaw

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Derrick called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

- a) Invocation – Mayor Derrick
- b) Pledge of Allegiance – City Manager Jay Stokes

II. OATH OF OFFICE for newly appointed Council Member Margaret Bell

City Secretary Melba Haralson administered the Oath of Office to Margaret Bell for City Council Place 7.

III. CITIZENS COMMENTS

None

IV. CONSIDERATION of Consent Agenda

- a) Minutes – February 18, 2010 and March 8, 2010
- b) Proclamation - Fair Housing Month
- c) Water Tap outside the City limits on Union Grove Road
- d) Ordinance for City Officers Special Election – May 8, 2010

Councilmember Williams moved to approve, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Ussery. Carried 6-0.

V. CONSIDERATION of support for East Texas Council of Governments Broad Band Initiative

ETCOG Director David Cleveland gave a presentation on the Broad Band Initiative and asked for a letter of support and monetary support of \$1 per capita spread over a 5-year period. He explained this would allow them to apply for a \$20-40m grant with a 20% minimum match. In order to be competitive, the match should be 30%, a portion of which could be in-kind.

Mayor Pro-tem Ussery moved to issue a letter of support, seconded by Councilmember Derouen. Carried 6-0.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING regarding condemned properties located at;

- a) Lot A, Block 134-135, Wood Heights, more commonly known as 706 Virginia Street
- b) Lot 1, Block 2 Ragsdale, more commonly known as 316 Ragsdale
- c) Lots 2A & 3, Block 1 (E 12.5' Lot 2), Johnson Addition, more commonly known as 404 White Street
- d) Lots 9 & 10, Block 1 Stokes, more commonly known as 420 W. Gay
- e) Abstract 56 Martha Dillard Tract 13, more commonly known as 502 Riverside

Mayor Derrick opened the public hearing at 6:31 p.m.

NuNu Zaw, owner of 502 Riverside said she believes the house is still fixable and she now has the resources to take care of it. She asked for more time. City Inspector Larry Player stated he has already given her two extensions. He said if approved by the Council, she will have 30 days to demolish it before the City has it done and places a lien on the property. Mayor Derrick said he has seen the house and it's in bad shape. Mr. Player is doing his job to protect the health and welfare of the community and we support his expertise. City Manager Stokes stated that everyone will have 30 days to bring the buildings up to code or they will be demolished. Councilmember Owens said he did not believe a professional could bring it up to code in 30 days and she would be wasting her money to start on it.

Edward Glynn King, owner of 316 Ragsdale and 404 White, said money has been holding him back, due to a false arrest and Hurricane Ike damage. He stated he has a house in Tyler scheduled to sell on March 26th and he should have funds from that sell to start improvements. City Inspector Player said he has heard that same story for two years.

With no further public comments, Mayor Derrick closed the public hearing at 6:48 p.m.

VII. CONSIDERATION of demolition orders for properties located at;

- a) Lot A, Block 134-135, Wood Heights, more commonly known as 706 Virginia Street
- b) Lot 1, Block 2 Ragsdale, more commonly known as 316 Ragsdale
- c) Lots 2A & 3, Block 1 (E 12.5' Lot 2), Johnson Addition, more commonly known as 404 White Street
- d) Lots 9 & 10, Block 1 Stokes, more commonly known as 420 W. Gay
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Councilmember Williams received affirmation from Inspector Larry Player that he's done everything he can. Mr. Player said he's heard the same stories over and over again.

Councilmember Owens moved to issue demolition orders for all five properties, seconded by Councilmember Derouen. Carried 5-1 with Councilmember Bell opposed.

VIII. CONSIDERATION of contract with Gladewater County Line Independent School District for tax collections

City Manager Stokes explained the city and school jointly share expenses on tax collection and the school hasn't asked for an increase in several years. Tax collector Trecia Hodges has saved the city considerable money by combining statements.

Mayor Pro-tem Ussery offered words of appreciation for Trecia, echoed by Councilmember Williams who said the requested increase is \$5,000, but she has saved us \$10,000 over the last 3 years.

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

IX. DISCUSSION of potential animal control ordinance

Police Chief Farrell Alexander presented a rough working draft of an animal control ordinance he put together using examples from other cities.

This will be brought back for consideration at a future meeting.

X. CONSIDERATION of scoring Request for Proposals for privatization services and authorizing negotiations with contractor

Three bids were received as follows;
Southwest Water Company - \$1,294,148
Severn-Trent Services - \$1,049,625
Veolia Water NA - \$947,201

Steve Hoover of Severn Trent Services presented a handout and gave an overview of their pricing; stating it was all inclusive with no cap for chemicals, sludge disposal at both plants, utilities, insurance and staffing expenses.

Veolia Water Area Manager Curtis Smalley said anytime you go out for bid you open yourself up to competitors. He said regardless of what happens tonight we will be here until September and provide good service.

Mayor Pro-tem Ussery questioned Veolia's provision in the proposal regarding health insurance and stated the City expects the private company to take the risks, for possible increases in health insurance, etc.

City Manager Jay Stokes asked Curtis Smalley if the Council votes to negotiate with Veolia will their price stay at \$947,201. Mr. Smalley assured him it would.

City Manager Stokes presented the Council a sample budget for the streets and parks department.

Mayor Pro-tem Ussery expressed appreciation to Severn-Trent Services for touring them around the facilities in Cameron.

Councilmember Owens said whether it is our own people or privatization, it still has to be managed. The lift stations are deteriorated and we have to stay on top of them to make sure they do their job.

Mayor Pro-tem Ussery moved to enter into contract negotiations with Veolia Water, seconded by Councilmember Derouen. Carried 5-1, with Councilmember Owens opposed.

Councilmember Owens said he would like to see a 2-year deal with a 1-year option. City Manager Stokes said they bid according to the RFP, which was 3-years.

XI. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- a) Grants update
- b) Special projects update

City Manager Jay Stokes gave the following report;

- a) 1. Phase II of Weldon-Bumblebee Park has started.
2. We still need 2 applicants on the latest round of HOME grants and we have a very narrow window of time.
- b) 1. Steve Epperson reported 126 buzzards and 6 pigeons have been eradicated.
2. Our City Attorney is sending a demand letter to Dual Construction for not honoring guarantee of work on Gay Avenue.
3. Upshur County Commissioner Lloyd Crabtree is working inmates to clear away brush from Gay-Haggans Cemetery.
4. The first FLAG tour will be March 30th at 1:00 starting at the Chamber of Commerce.
5. The spring TML Region 15 meeting will be March 30th in Henderson. Mayor Pro-tem Ussery said they will be honoring Jay Stokes.
6. The downtown public restroom restoration was finished on Saturday and was trashed by Sunday.

XII. PRESENTATION to City Manager Jay Stokes

With mixed emotions Mayor Walter Derrick presented Jay Stokes with a plaque of appreciation from the City for his 6 ½ years of exceptional service to the City. He said he is so sorry that Deer Park found out about him and wished him well. Jay received many accolades from all in attendance.

With an emotional thanks, Jay said it's hard to believe it's been 6 ½ years and he will miss Gladewater.

City Secretary Melba Haralson added that it has been a joy to work with Jay and he has left some tough shoes to fill.

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XIII. ADJOURN

Councilmember Bell moved to adjourn at 7:47 p.m., seconded by Councilmember Williams. Adjourned by consensus.

WALTER DERRICK, MAYOR

ATTEST:

MELBA HARALSON, CITY SECRETARY