

A regular meeting of the City Commission of the City of Apalachicola was held on Tuesday, January 3, 2012 at 6:00 PM in the Apalachicola Community Center, #1 Bay Avenue, Apalachicola, Florida.

Present: Mayor Van Johnson, Commissioner Jimmy Elliott, Commissioner Brenda Ash, Commissioner Mitchell Bartley, Commissioner Frank Cook, City Administrator Betty Webb, City Clerk Lee Mathes, Chief of Police Bobby Varnes, City Attorney Pat Floyd

Visitors: Elinor Mount-Simmons, Liz Kelsey, Annette Fagan, Vernice Watson, Mary Cawthon, George Coon, Eula Rochelle, Mike Standley, Arnold Tolliver, Gracie O'Neal, Geoffrey Hewell, Fonda Davis, Bobby Miller, Joe Taylor, Link Bwditz, Ron Driver, Anita Grove, David Adlerstein, Clarice Powell, Carrie Kienzle, Susan Richardson, Tom Daly, Shirley Walker, Caty Greene, Susan Clementson, Sandi Hiegle, Gladys Gatlin, David Stewart, Willie Mary Joseph, Betty Stephens, Rosa Tolliver, Lillie Turrell, Carol Barfield, Curt Blair, Leon Bloodworth, Fonda Davis, Charlie Kienzle, Robin Vroegrop

Regular meeting opened by Mayor Johnson followed by prayer and pledge.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

* Elinor Mount Simmons – African American History Festival – Ms. Simmons requests the use of the Franklin Square Facility Area for the annual African American History Festival to be held on February 18-19, 2012.

Motion to authorize use of the Franklin Square Facility Area for the annual African American History Festival to be held on February 18-19, 2012 made by Commissioner Bartley, second by Commissioner Cook.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

Voting Aye: Elliott, Ash, Bartley, Cook, Mayor Johnson

Voting Nay: None

* Yvonne Tolliver – Holy Family Concerns – Ms. Tolliver, speaking on behalf of concerned Apalachicola senior citizens, requests a public meeting to discuss Holy Family. Ms. Tolliver stated the general public would like to get involved and have several questions and issues regarding Holy Family.

Ms. Webb stated there are two aspects of Holy Family – one for the senior citizens and one for the African American museum. H'Cola will be overseeing the museum and the rental of the facility. H'Cola will not be involved in the senior center.

Ms. Tolliver stated that senior citizens want to be part of the dedication ceremony.

Ms. Webb stated that the senior program has not yet been planned out. A ground breaking ceremony will be held in February, but a public meeting will be held before this event. Donations for Holy Family

were solicited because the City had to show public support for the grant, but all donations that been collected at this point are sitting in the bank account. No agreement has been signed between the City and H'Cola. Ms. Webb stated a meeting to get everyone involved is a great idea, and maybe the seniors can create a board to organize senior activities but nothing has been finalized at this point.

Curt Blair presented to the City, on behalf of Water Street Hotel, historic panels to be displayed in Holy Family.

Mayor Johnson stated the H'Cola has TDC funds to frame the panels.

Ms. Webb stated the public meeting for Holy Family would be more productive if the meeting would be held on site. Ms. Webb stated she feels that she, Cindy Summerhill, Commissioner Ash, and Joe Taylor should be the individuals to conduct the public meeting because they are the ones most involved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve December minutes made by Commissioner Ash, second by Commissioner Bartley.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

Voting Aye: Ash, Bartley, Cook, Elliott, Mayor Johnson

Voting Nay: None

APPROVAL OF BILL LIST

Motion to approve November bill list made by Commissioner Ash, second by Commissioner Cook.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

Voting Aye: Bartley, Cook, Elliott, Ash, Mayor Johnson

Voting Nay: None

OPEN CDBG GRANT ADMINISTRATION SERVICES PROPOSALS

Ms. Webb stated an advertisement was done previously for CDBG grant administration services and was awarded to Debbie Belcher, but due to incorrect language in advertisement, grant required the City to re-advertise with the correct language.

Mayor Johnson opened the proposals.

Motion to proceed with Debbie Belcher for CDBG grant administration services made by Commissioner Ash, second by Commissioner Bartley.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

Voting Aye: Cook, Elliott, Ash, Bartley, Mayor Johnson

Voting Nay: None

PLANNING & ZONING REPORT

No report given.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Ms. Webb submitted written department reports.

Motion to authorize payment for Attorney Floyd's invoice made by Commissioner Ash, second by Commissioner Bartley.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

Voting Aye: Elliott, Ash, Bartley, Cook, Mayor Johnson

Voting Nay: None

ATTORNEY FLOYD REPORT

Attorney Floyd stated he has been working on a policy regarding board and committee appointments, Revolving Loan issues, and ACOE issues.

OTHER VISITORS & COMMENTS

1. Anita Grove stated a group of antique car owners want to display cars in the downtown area on April 17th. Ms. Grove requests permission to close off a couple of streets so cars can be displayed.

Ms. Webb stated the old Ford car lot might be a good location to display cars.

Chief Varnes will get with Ms. Grove to finalize parking arrangements of cars.

2. Charlie Kienzle asked the status of selling the old fire station property.

Mayor Johnson stated no decision has been made on that property at this time.

3. Geoffrey Hewell asked for an update on the Commercial Revitalization Project.

Ms. Webb stated she hope to put the project out for bid the first part of March.

Mayor Johnson asked on approximate completion date.

Ms. Webb stated the project should take 6 months to complete.

4. Cathy Greene stated the Library is in need of volunteers if anyone is interested. Ms. Greene that Jeanne Koran will no longer be volunteering after doing it for 30 plus years.

Mayor Johnson stated that Ms. Koran should be recognized for her volunteer efforts for the Library.

MAYOR & COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

1. Commissioner Ash thanked citizens for coming to the Commission meeting and expressing their concerns over Holy Family. Commissioner Ash stated she is an H'Cola member, and we are all working towards a common goal, and if anyone ever has any questions about anything, please just give her a call. Commissioner Ash stated that citizens are the City.

Annette Fagan asked if there was any way to get information out to the public. There is no method of letting people know what is going on.

Ms. Webb stated the first thing to get accomplished is to get the Meals on Wheels program relocated to Holy Family, and then the other programs can grow.

Ms. Fagan stated the seniors are ready to get active in organizing programs and such.

Ms. Webb stated the City has several projects going on, and when the public meeting is held, let's figure out the best way to keep communication going between the City and the citizens.

Cathy Greene stated she is hoping the Library will get some computers through a grant to have available at Holy Family.

Clarice Powell stated the seniors do need to be on part for the activities of Holy Family.

Gracie O'Neal asked if the City was going to provide transportation to Holy Family for those who can't drive.

Ms. Webb stated she is working on that issue.

David Adlerstein asked how much more funding is needed to get the building up and running.

Ms. Webb stated funds are needed for furniture and operation.

Mayor Johnson stated the goal is to get Holy Family self-supporting but it will take time.

Ms. Webb stated getting some chairs is the biggest thing at this point.

2. Mayor Johnson stated at the last meeting it was presented to have the Commission appoint members to boards and committees. Mayor Johnson stated Attorney Floyd has designed a policy.

Attorney Floyd outlined appointment policy for subordinate boards, commissions, and committees.

Commissioner Ash stated the purpose of the policy was to open the door so that more community individuals could get involved. It is hard for new people to get on committees and boards if there are never any openings.

Attorney Floyd stated after policy adoption, each member to every board will have to reapply within 30 days upon time policy starts. Each person can only be assigned to one board/committee, and each person has to certify that they are qualifying residents.

Mayor Johnson stated the Library Board and CRA Board are the only 2 boards that are made by ordinance or resolution.

Citizen comments received.

Mayor Johnson stated the Commission is responsible for the actions of all City boards and committees.

Leon Bloodworth stated there is a lot of negativity in the community over this proposed policy.

Discussion further continued.

Commissioner Bartley stated he feels there is nothing wrong with the way it is now.

Commissioner Ash stated if you keep the same individuals on the same boards, then you don't open the door for others to get involved. There are people who want to get involved, but there are no openings. Commissioner Ash stated she is in favor of term limits.

Motion to stay with current system on how Commission appoints boards and committees made by Commissioner Bartley, second by Commissioner Cook.

Motion carried 3 to 2.

Voting Aye: Bartley, Cook, Elliott

Voting Nay: Ash, Mayor Johnson

3. Mayor Johnson stated it was presented at last meeting to discuss pool of architects for Planning & Zoning. Mayor Johnson stated local architects need to perform this duty or do away with it all together. Mayor Johnson stated people are paying extra to get someone's opinion, and he feels the architects should be done away with all together.

Geoffrey Hewell stated Planning & Zoning doesn't have the expertise to review the plans.

Anita Grove stated it weighs heavily to have an appointed architectural board for historic grants.

Commissioner Ash stated she agrees with doing away with the architectural review. People already have a hard enough time to build a home without the added expense.

Mayor Johnson stated the Commission can appoint a volunteer board if needed.

Ms. Webb stated this is just for the Planning & Zoning architects.

Commissioner Cook asked if the City was doing away with architectural review.

Mayor Johnson stated that either Planning & Zoning can do it, or the Commission can appoint someone to do it.

Commissioner Cook stated mistakes are made.

Mayor Johnson stated the City can't continue to make people pay more for wanting to build or improve.

Commissioner Cook stated maybe just make architects review things in the historic district instead of everything.

Mayor Johnson stated if an architect needs to review things in the historic district, there are local architects that can do the job.

Commissioner Ash stated there are general contractors who are qualified who can be a part of this board that are local and live here that can give advice if needed.

Motion to discontinue the use of Planning & Zoning architects made by Commissioner Ash, second by Commissioner Elliott.

Motion carried 4 to 1.

Voting Aye: Elliott, Ash, Bartley, Mayor Johnson

Voting Nay: Cook

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There being no further business, meeting adjourned.

Van W. Johnson, Sr., Mayor

Lee H. Mathes, City Clerk