

A regular meeting of the City Commission of the City of Apalachicola was held on Tuesday, December 4, 2012 at 6:00 PM at 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: Geoffrey Hewell, Norma Hewell, Ashley Teat, Liz Kelsey, George Coon, Clarice Powell, Robin Vroegop, Anita Grove, Pansy McLaurin, Lee Smith, Charlie Kienzle, Carrie Kienzle, Caty Greene, David Adlerstein, Paulette Moss, Joe Taylor, Susan Clementson, Gail Johnson, Leon Bloodworth, Jim Bachrach

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

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPOSAL

Leon Bloodworth stated what is needed at this time is for Commission to give approval to move forward subject to Ms. Webb, Developer's Attorney, and Attorney Floyd working together to come to an agreeable contract. This is the process that we have to go through.

Motion to authorize Ms. Webb and Attorney Floyd to work with Developer's Attorney to come up with agreeable contract made by Commissioner Elliott, second by Commissioner Bartley.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

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

Voting Nay: None

Commissioner Ash asked if Mr. Bloodworth could give a synopsis of the meeting with the developers.

Mr. Bloodworth outlined details of the meeting.

Ms. Webb stated it is a process and if it's not funded in this cycle, then it will fall into the next funding cycle.

Attorney Floyd asked the results of the School Board's appraisal.

Mr. Bloodworth stated he has not received the appraisal at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

Motion carried 5 to 0.

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

Voting Nay: None

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Motion to approve October 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

PLANNING & ZONING REPORT

Motion to confirm October Planning & Zoning minutes made by Commissioner Bartley, second by Commissioner Elliott.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

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

Voting Nay: None

CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Ms. Webb stated each Commissioner now has their Ipads, and process has started to get agenda packets and reports on the Ipads.

Motion to approve payment for Attorney Floyd 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 gave update on RESTORE Act. Attorney Floyd stated public has been advertised for a joint meeting with Carrabelle Commission, Apalachicola Commission, and County Commission to be held on December 19th at 6:00 PM at the Apalachicola Community Center.

Mayor Johnson stated he feels that the City of Apalachicola should current course of action. Mayor Johnson stated that evenly distribution of the funds is very important.

Motion to continue with joint meeting with Carrabelle Commission, Apalachicola Commission, and County Commission to be held on December 19th at 6:00 PM at the Apalachicola Community Center made by Commissioner Bartley, second by Commissioner Elliott.

Motion carried 5 to 0.

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

Voting Nay: None

Attorney Floyd stated this is a process. The City is following the guidelines.

Mr. Hewell asked who is going to be involved in the joint meeting.

Attorney Floyd stated it is a joint meeting with the Apalachicola Commission, Carrabelle Commission, and County Commission.

OTHER VISITORS AND COMMENTS

* Pansy McLaurin addressed stop signs on 24th Avenue. Ms. McLaurin stated speeding is bad and it is dangerous for children.

Ms. Webb stated she was going to readdress this situation in January to the City Commission. Ms. Webb stated she would like to recommend proceeding with installing the stop signs that were recommended first which was the 24th Avenue, 22nd Avenue, and 9th Street areas.

Mayor Johnson stated to get the stop signs installed on 24th Avenue first.

Ms. Webb stated those stop signs will be installed, but would like to get with Chief Varnes and go over the list and get recommendation from Chief Varnes before any more stop signs are installed.

* Anita Grove thanked the City for helping with Christmas event.

MAYOR & COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

* Ms. Webb stated the Scipio Creek Project contracts have been finalized and signed. Andrew Boyette is getting ready to do pre-bid conference with subcontractors.

* Commissioner Ash asked the status of Harbormaster House lease.

Ms. Webb stated GSA sent a letter stating additional documents and information was needed, and she is in the process of getting information together to send back.

Commissioner Ash asked when lease was expired.

Ms. Webb stated the lease is up at end of January. Ms. Webb stated she would prefer not to lease Harbormaster House to GSA because the whole plan was to have the Harbormaster House available for the person managing the marina. Ms. Webb stated she would prefer Fish & Wildlife move to the building the City will acquire from the State.

Mayor Johnson informed Ms. Webb to do what is right.

Mr. Hewell asked if the Harbormaster House could be a selling point for the Scipio Creek Managing Company.

Ms. Webb stated absolutely. It is an asset to the project.

Mayor Johnson stated the Harbormaster House is part of the Scipio Creek Basin operation.

Commissioner Elliott stated that is what the Harbormaster House building was intended for.

Ms. Webb stated she has never been involved in a situation where the agency wanting to rent the facility is in charge of every detail of the rental agreement and that's been the hesitation. Ms. Webb stated she recommends we do not rent the Harbormaster House to GSA, but pursue that GSA take over the State building.

Commissioner Ash asked if the same process will apply.

Ms. Webb stated it is a different process due to the fact that GSA already occupies the Harbormaster House building. Ms. Webb stated GSA wants the City to get the State building ready at the City's expense and GSA repay the City back over a 5 year period. Ms. Webb stated she would rather GSA pay for the repairs needed for the State Building. Ms. Webb recommends the City negotiate with GSA and offer to let them stay at the Harbormaster House while the repairs are being done at the State building.

Commissioner Elliott asked if the rent would remain the same.

Ms. Webb stated the rent would be more at the State building because it's a larger facility and they pay per square foot.

Commissioner Ash asked if GSA has shown interest in the State building.

Ms. Webb stated that GSA has said they would rather have the Harbormaster House, but they certainly have shown interest in the building. Ms. Webb stated she has been moving forward with renewing lease at Harbormaster House because that was the impression she received from the Commission of what they wanted.

Commissioner Ash stated this process has definitely been going on for some time, and it is time for closure.

Ms. Webb stated she doesn't feel the City should rent the Harbormaster House to GSA.

Motion to authorize Ms. Webb to negotiate the process with GSA to lease the State building made by Commissioner Ash.

Ms. Webb stated that same motion would include approving an extension at current location until lease can be finalized for State building, maybe a 6 month extension.

Commissioner Bartley asked if GSA would accept the 6 month extension.

Ms. Webb stated that GSA has just pursued a change in the lease this year to go beyond our original agreement. The current lease has been extended for 2 years, and this year GSA wants to do a small term extension agreement.

Mayor Johnson recommends authorizing Ms. Webb to negotiate with GSA or back out of lease, whichever way she feels is in the best interest of the City.

Motion seconded by Commissioner Elliott

Motion carried 5 to 0.

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

Voting Nay: None

Commissioner Ash asked if the extension was for 6 months or a year.

Ms. Webb stated to let her see what GSA is requiring.

* Commissioner Ash asked if there are any interested parties for renting the Community Center.

Ms. Webb stated she has been approached by the Riverkeepers and Seafood Festival. Ms. Webb is working on details for renting Community Center, and will come back to Board with recommendations.

Attorney Floyd stated the Riverkeepers held an adversary position with the City before, the City needs to be careful of who rents the building.

Ms. Webb stated she has heard from several people that Riverkeepers should not be allowed to rent the Community Center. Ms. Webb stated at this time no management agreements or rental fees have been determined with anyone.

* Charlie Kienzle asked if the City planned on putting the old fire house property up for sale.

Commissioner Bartley stated he is not in favor of selling the property right now because the City would not get anything for it.

Commissioner Ash stated if the right offer was made, then the City should entertain the idea of selling the property.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned

Van W. Johnson, Sr., Mayor

Lee H. Mathes, City Clerk