

**MINUTES**  
**MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL**  
**5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, JULY 25, 2024**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL**

**OPENING CEREMONIES**

Mayor Scott James Matheson called the Regular Meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. Council members present were: Thomas McIntyre, Eric Howard, Sandra Tooley, Andy Gibbs, Tim Carroll, Nick Harden, and Vivian Miller-Cody. The invocation was given by Councilman Andy Gibbs, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the Regular Meetings held on June 6, 2024, June 20, 2024, and July 11, 2024 were approved by unanimous consent (7-0) of the Council.

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2024-17, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 6 – ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, ARTICLE II – LICENSE, AND ARTICLE III – OPERATIONS OF THE CITY OF VALDOSTA CODE OF ORDINANCES AS IT PERTAINS TO CERTAIN PROVISIONS FOR THE DOWNTOWN VALDOSTA ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT (SECOND READING)**

Consideration of an Ordinance to amend Chapter 6 - Alcoholic Beverages, Article II – Licenses, and Article III – Operations of the City of Valdosta Code of Ordinances as it pertains to certain provisions for the Downtown Valdosta Entertainment District (DVED). (Second Reading)

Kym Hughes, Main Street Manager, stated that this is the Second Reading in regard to a proposed Ordinance change. In April of 2021, the Alcohol Ordinance was amended to define and add provisions for the Downtown Valdosta Entertainment District (DVED) which allows off-premises consumption of alcoholic beverages within the DVED-defined area. The following year, there was a proposal from Downtown area property owners and businesses to amend the DVED portion of the Alcohol Ordinance to allow Beer Only Establishments within this area and also to exempt them from the food service requirements in much the same manner as Wine Only Establishments being exempted from food requirements City-wide. In September of 2022, the City Council amended the Alcohol Ordinance to add these exemptions for both wine-only and beer-only establishments in the DVED. Now, there is additional discussion and a proposal from Downtown area property owners and businesses to add Distilled Spirits (liquor) to this exemption for the DVED. There was some additional language that has been added (green highlights) to clarify and make things more organized so that people can understand. In Section (A) – DVED Exemption, the green highlights were added for Wine, Malt Beverage, and Distilled Spirits. We also added the 150 feet between property lines (yellow highlights) to make sure that they were not door-to-door. In Section (B) – Wine Establishments Only, we added the wording “Not Located in the DVED.” In Section (C) – Wine Tastings, we added the wording “City-Wide.” In Section (D) – Retail Tobacco Establishments, the wording “Not Located in the DVED” was added. They also cleaned up the language in Section 6-84 – Off Premises Consumption, (2) Boundaries, you will see where the District was added in yellow highlights and the streets along with a map.

Councilman Howard stated that he would like to make some changes to the proposed Ordinance. He would like to change the 150 feet radius to 50 feet linear side-by-side so we will not have to worry about having bars on one side of the street and not on the other. He would also like to make the amendment that they can start serving alcoholic beverages at noon on Sunday and close at the same time that the State allows them to close on regular days. Tim Tanner, City Attorney, stated that there is a section that specifically talks about Sunday Sales and we many need to amend it there too. Councilman Gibbs inquired as to whether you want the Brunch Bill to reflect alcohol sales as well as far as liquor sales on Sunday. The Brunch Bill allows them to do it at 10:30 a.m. Councilman Howard stated that we have a lot of churches in the Downtown area so we want to try and push that back to noon. Councilman Gibbs inquired as to whether that was for liquor only. Councilman Howard stated that it would be for all of it. Tim Tanner, City Attorney, stated that was a different section. Councilman Gibbs stated that if it was an actual bar without food requirements, then you could put the stipulation on the bar that they could

not open until 12:00 p.m.; however, as far as a restaurant like Downtown Social or Southern Cellar where they sell food, they could continue underneath the Brunch Bill. Councilman Howard stated that was fine. Councilman Gibbs asked about the 50 feet left and right and not in front and behind. Councilman Howard stated that was correct. Councilman Gibbs stated that right now it was radius. Councilman Howard stated that if it is a circle it could pretty much knock people out from opening up another establishment if they want to because you could have one on this side of the street if it was within the 150 foot radius. Councilman Harden stated that most of the storefronts in the Downtown area are 30 or 40 feet so if you did 150 feet that is six buildings down. That is a long way and if you have a future business owner who wants to open something Downtown they would have to go six stores down. He thinks it should be reduced as well. Councilman Carroll inquired as to whether there could be some compromise on that. His only fear is that potentially we could end up with seven bars on one side of the street and then seven bars on the other side of the street. Mayor Matheson stated that if you take it down to 50 feet it would be every other building. Councilman Gibbs inquired as to what the compromise would be. Councilman Carroll stated that he would like to see 100 linear feet. Councilman Gibbs stated that if you do 100 linear feet and if it is 35 to 40 feet like Councilman Harden was saying it would be three buildings before the next one could go in. Councilman McIntyre stated that if you do two buildings that would be 70 feet which may be better. Councilman Carroll stated that every Ordinance we have is amendable. If we go too loose on this and somebody opens a bar, then we could have 82 bars Downtown which would be way more than we want. Downtown Valdosta is supposed to be family-friendly. Councilman Harden stated that bars are not necessarily un-family friendly. Councilman Carroll stated that it is harder to pull it back if you open the gate too much in the beginning. It is easier to come back and go we are having too many problems so let's give some more room for more buildings to convert. Councilman Howard stated that he could amend his suggestion if that is what would be acceptable. He would like to keep the part about removing the Brunch Bill except for restaurants which would still be able to do it at 10:30 a.m. and bars would be able to serve at noon. He would like to change it from 50 feet to 70 feet. Would that be acceptable to everyone and still be able to close at whatever time the State law requires. Mayor Matheson asked if there was any further discussion. Councilman Carroll inquired as to whether they were doing 70 linear feet. Councilman Howard stated that was correct. They would be taking the radius out and not include that in any of the language. Councilman Gibbs stated that if you do radius then you cut the people across the street out. Councilman Carroll stated that he would yield to the majority of Council but all he was thinking is that it would be easier to come back and loosen it up and lower the distance than it is to come back later and increase the distance because once it is done it is done. Councilman Howard stated that his only thing was that someone could have a building down here that someone wants to rent or buy and you are potentially taking a customer away from them. These Ordinances that were put in place were put in place a long time ago and they are not put into place to hamstring it or to stop us from growing. That was for the time when it was put in place. Right now, we are at a different time. Valdosta is growing and we do not want to limit the growth because we are saying you can't. We want to give people an opportunity to come down here and start a business if they want to. We definitely do not want to stop someone with real estate from putting a building on the market if we say they are 5 feet too close. That is a lot of money and people are paying taxes on buildings. Councilman Carroll stated that this Council put restrictions on how many liquor stores we could have. Councilman Howard stated that we did but it was lifted. Mayor Matheson stated that 70 feet is actually three buildings. Tim Tanner, City Attorney, stated that we could do a couple of things. There are additional sections that need to be amended to take out the Brunch Bill so you could either do all of it together, you could postpone it for one Council Meeting, or you could make this effective to a later date such as September 1, 2024 to give us time to make that change too. That way you don't want to issue a license and then come and say you can't have something. Councilman Gibbs stated that you want to do 70 linear feet and for the Brunch Bill, only a bar can't open. Councilman Howard stated they can open but just not serve alcohol until noon. The reason why he did not want to force a time on them to close was because this is a military area and you have people from all over. Not everybody watches the Bulldogs. You have people from California and they want to watch USC and they don't come on until 10:30 p.m. and then at midnight you have to tell to get up and leave. We need to be flexible with the entire community. Mayor Matheson stated that the recommendation is to move on feet of separation and effective date only. Tim Tanner stated that the motion would be to approve as presented with the exception of changing the 150 feet to 70 linear feet and make it effective September 1, 2024.

Kym Hughes, Main Street Manager, inquired about along the streets only or alleys as well. Matt Martin, Planning Director, stated that if they do it linear along the street we could include alleys in that as a public right-of-way. He could not imagine the length of our alleys being way beyond 70 feet with the length of these buildings. He did not see that cropping up but during the interim, they could look and see. Some of the storefronts are wide and some are small and 70 feet would be several small ones. Those buildings are 100+ feet deep so even on a

corner building with an alley 70 feet down the alley would still be next to the same building. Councilman Gibbs stated that they need to do front. Matt Martin stated that they should do 70 feet along the public right-of-way, linear along a right-of-way line. Councilwoman Tooley inquired as to alleys were included when you say public right-of-way. Matt Martin stated that then we do not have to define what a street is because alleys are public rights-of-way just like the street is. They are just small. They are trying to keep the radial spacing from jumping across the street and grabbing the storefronts over there so linear takes care of that. Councilman Howard stated that his motion would be 70 feet including alleys along public rights-of-way.

Councilman Carroll stated that they did not address closing times. Currently, they would be allowed to stay open until 2:00 a.m. Councilman Howard stated that his suggestion was that they be allowed to stay open until 2:00 a.m. Councilman Carroll stated that this is a residential area. Mayor Matheson stated that it does not change the Noise Ordinance which is 10:00 p.m. Councilman Howard stated that 2:00 a.m. is 2:00 a.m. and it is up to the business owners to regulate the noise. Councilman Harden stated that they are growing. If you go to any other city that is growing and has any kind of nightlife, you are going to get some of that. It is not always a bad thing to have these places Downtown. We have to grow and change. People are looking for things to do and live a little bit. Councilwoman Tooley stated that Downtown is part of her District and she has listened to a lot of people. She has told them that the reason we do not have activity is that it is residential. We have a lot of people who do not want a lot of noise. They say the Downtown will not grow or be anything. If you want Downtown then you want what happens. People are going to have to expect to have some noise. We are never going to have a Downtown that is thriving and inviting. We want it to grow and have some life Downtown. We have not had any really big complaints and we should expand the time. Councilman Carroll stated that he would yield on that challenge.

**A MOTION** was made by Councilman Howard to approve the Ordinance to amend Chapter 6 - Alcoholic Beverages, Article II – Licenses, and Article III – Operations of the City of Valdosta Code of Ordinances as it pertains to certain provisions for the Downtown Valdosta Entertainment District (DVED) with the following additional changes: (1) remove the radius and put 70 linear feet along public rights-of-way, (2) make the Ordinance effective September 1, 2024. The motion was seconded by Councilman Gibbs. The motion was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2024-17, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-11, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF THE TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT ACT (TIA) SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT NO. 1 BETWEEN THE CITY OF VALDOSTA AND THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO PROCEED WITH CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER**

Consideration of a request from the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority to approve a Resolution authorizing acceptance of the Transportation Investment Act (TIA) Supplemental Agreement No. 1 between the City of Valdosta and the Georgia Department of Transportation to proceed with construction of a new Air Traffic Control Tower.

Ben O’Dowd, City Engineer, stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority desires to proceed with the construction of a new Air Traffic Control Tower at the Valdosta Regional Airport. There are various sources of funding for this Project that include Transportation Investment Act (TIA) funds, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (FAA) funds, Airport Authority funds, and Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) funds. On May 9, 2024, Council approved a Resolution (No. 2024-7) authorizing the acceptance of a Grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in the amount of \$3,000,000 to partially fund construction of the new Air Traffic Control Tower. There will be no City of Valdosta funds required for this Project other than those through the TIA. On March 21, 2022, the City Engineer Ben O’Dowd requested additional TIA funds for this Project due to inflation. The original TIA Budget for this Project was \$2,705,000. After review of the Project’s initial TIA Budget, bid amount, and projected tax collections for TIA, the TIA Office agreed to provide additional TIA funds in the amount of \$2,030,000 to the TIA Budget. The revised TIA Budget is now \$4,735,000. A Supplemental Agreement (No. 1) for the new Air Traffic Control Tower (PI #0016284) has been prepared for this revision in the TIA funding. The Supplement Agreement will need to be executed by the Mayor and returned to the Georgia Department of Transportation State TIA Administrator Kenneth Franks. Ben O’Dowd, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve the Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute the TIA Supplemental Agreement No. 1 for the new Air Traffic Control Tower.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman Carroll to approve the Resolution authorizing acceptance of the Transportation Investment Act (TIA) Supplemental Agreement No. 1 between the City of Valdosta and the Georgia Department of Transportation to proceed with construction of a new Air Traffic Control Tower. Councilman Harden seconded the motion. The motion was adopted (7-0) to enact Resolution No. 2024-11, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book VII.

**BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES**

Mayor Matheson stated that if there was no objection from Council, Agenda Items 4(a) through 4(c) would be considered under a Consent Agenda. There were no objections from Council.

John Burton, Motor Pool Superintendent, stated that all of the items up for bid were approved by Council in the current year Budget and asked Council's consideration in following his recommendation if all of the following bids were accepted at one time: (1) Item 4(a) Consideration of bids the purchase of seven (7) Rear Wheel Drive Pursuit Vehicles for the City of Valdosta Police Department (Bid No. 01-24-25) - the low bid was submitted by Cass Burch in the amount of \$39,977 for each vehicle for a total of \$279,839, (2) Item 4(b) - Consideration of bids for the purchase of three (3) Rear Wheel Drive Investigation Vehicles for the City of Valdosta Police Department (Bid No. 02-24-25) – the low bid was submitted by Cass Burch in the amount of \$39,977 each for a total of \$119,931, and (3) Consideration of bids for the purchase of three (3) SUV Vehicles for the City of Valdosta Police Department (Bid No. 03-24-25) – the low bid was submitted by Cass Burch in the amount of \$43,947 for a total of \$131,841.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman Gibbs to follow the recommendation of the Motor Pool Superintendent and approve the low bids under a Consent Agenda for Agenda Items 4(a) through 4(c). Councilman Carroll seconded the motion. The motion was adopted (6-1) with Councilwoman Tooley voting in opposition.

Consideration of a request to approve the dedication of a public Ingress/Egress Easement Agreement on the City of Valdosta Five Points property for the Georgia Department of Transportation Roundabouts Project.

Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, stated that the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Roundabouts Project has been fully designed and GDOT desires to let the Project as quickly as possible and with as few complications as possible. The primary entrance to the City's property at Five Points off of Ashley Street is currently split between property owned by the City and property owned by Gene Seago. As part of the Roundabouts Project, the entrance will be completely renovated and located entirely upon the City's property which affects Mr. Seago's access to his property. GDOT has reached out to the City to request that we grant a 30 foot ingress/egress easement along the western frontage of Mr. Seago's property. GDOT is requesting that we grant the easement to reduce possible obstacles to the rapid delivery of the Project. Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve the Ingress/Egress Easement Agreement to assist the GDOT

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to the dedication of a public Ingress/Egress Easement Agreement on the City of Valdosta Five Points property for the Georgia Department of Transportation Roundabouts Project.

**BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AUTHORITIES, AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

Consideration of the determination of the City of Valdosta Ethics Complaint Board.

Richard Hardy, City Manager, stated that the City of Valdosta Mayor and Council first adopted a Code of Ethics Ordinance in 1995. This Ordinance serves as a guide for governing authority and reinforces the basic principle that elected officials are holders of public trust. The Ordinance, which has been amended several times since its creation, deems it essential that for the creation of a democratic government, all elected officials of the City of Valdosta should conduct themselves so as to not create any question or concern as to the appropriateness, legality, or sincerity of any actions or conduct as a member of the governing authority. On May 21, 2024, an official Ethics Complaint was issued against Councilwoman Vivian Miller-Cody by Anetra Riley, Neighborhood Development/Community Protection Manager, for the City of Valdosta. The Ethics Complaint is attached for your review. The Ethics Complaint was officially delivered by the City Clerk, Teresa Bolden, to Councilwoman Miller-

Cody on May 22, 2024 in person to garner her signature for receipt of the document. The Ethics Complaint was then officially delivered to the Mayor and each Council Member electronically on May 22, 2024. At the May 28, 2024 Special Called Meeting of the Valdosta, City Council, Council voted to approve the nomination of J. D. Rice to the Ethics Complaint Board. The Mayor then appointed former City Councilman and Mayor Pro Tem Alvin Payton, Jr. to serve. Those two nominees submitted the name of Attorney Roy W. Copeland, Copeland, Haugabrook & Walker, as their selection for the third person to serve on the Ethics Complaint Board. The Mayor and Council approved that nomination at the June 6, 2024 City Council Meeting. The Ethics Complaint Board met on July 16, 2023 and selected Attorney Roy W. Copeland to serve as Chairman of the Ethics Complaint Board. They reviewed the Ethics Complaint and heard testimony at that Meeting. The Ethics Complaint Board then announced that they would meet again in seven days as per the Ethics Ordinance to present their determination. The Ethics Complaint Board met on July 23, 2024 and presented their determination.

Mayor Matheson entertained a motion to adjourn the July 25, 2024 Regular Meeting and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the July 25, 2024 Regular Meeting at 6:05 p.m. and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel.

Mayor Matheson reconvened the July 25, 2024 Regular Meeting at 6:51 p.m. and asked if there was any further discussion on the determination of the City of Valdosta Ethics Complaint Board. There was no further discussion.

**A MOTION** was made by Councilman Howard as a result of the findings of the City of Valdosta Ethics Panel, we move to publicly reprimand Councilwoman Vivian Miller-Cody as required by the City Ethics Ordinance. Councilman Gibbs seconded the motion. Mayor Matheson asked if there was any discussion on the motion.

Councilwoman Miller-Cody stated that she would like to read something to everyone: “Good evening – To the distinguished Panel of the City-appointed community leaders that have taken the Panel to address an issue that has brought me to this space. I am grateful to have the opportunity to hear the concern of those that may have been offended by her questioning and being overly proactive in attending the needs of District 1. To the City of Valdosta, the City of Valdosta is responsible for the welfare of the citizens of Valdosta; therefore, it has always been my purpose to serve both the citizens in their quest for information and the City’s personnel response to issues and concerns that I may have had in the past regarding my need to be present, involved, and actively addressing the issues that I promised to address when I was sworn in to serve my District as well as concerns of the citizens that approach me for information that are not in my District. Today I stand before a Panel of my peers to clarify my actions, words, or suggestions that may have resulted in me asking questions and/or seeking information as I continuously have done in the past. It is important to me that my position as the City Council Member has never presented as a negative influence on any employee of our City. I am proactive and involved in making not only District 1 but being a part of the system that supports Valdosta’s continuous growth and development. If doing my journey as a City Councilwoman, Vivian Miller-Cody, have offended anyone, please note that it was not my intention nor a selfish goal on my behalf. To those that felt put-upon by me, please note that my only intentions have been to retrieve information that could be utilized to further my personal growth and development and the same for the City’s growth and development that will positively ensure at some point I will be able to pass the baton to the upcoming official in a manner that will warrant his or her willingness to step in my shoes. To the Members of this great Panel, I thank you for your patience, your willingness to hear all sides of this issue, and to note that I do not declare myself to be perfect because every day I awake knowing that I have much more to learn and to serve many. To Anetra and employees that I have may have offended in my efforts to get information that could assist me in further understanding my obligations, I sincerely apologize to each of you in your respectful positions. In closing, I thank each of you for your un-bias approach to handling this issue and I can certainly assure you that we will not meet again in this forum regarding anything of this nature again. I have learned that when things go wrong in your command, start searching for the reason and increasingly large circles around your desk. Respectfully, District 1, Councilwoman Vivian Miller-Cody.”

Councilman Carroll stated that as they built consensus during the Executive Session regarding the well-done apology and acknowledgement that the Councilwoman has provided to us and in particular, that she has provided to Ms. Riley as well as other Department Heads with the City of Valdosta, he does accept her apology on behalf of this body and that our pledge will be that she said she will never do it again and it will be our job to step forward if she does.

The motion was unanimously adopted (7-0) to give a public reprimand to Councilwoman Miller-Cody for the Ethics Complaint that was filed against her.

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Avery Ann Calhoun, 9 Sharper Circle, stated that on Saturday, June 9, 2024 she was in her bedroom next to her office that she had walked out of. She heard gunshots but did not realize what it was and that it was in her home that she used as an office. At the time, her granddaughter, Kiera Smith, was driving up with her granddaughter and great grandson when all this was taking place. She went to the door to let them in and when she went to get her cell phone from the bedroom, she noticed that the TV in the office was damaged. She called her granddaughter and asked if that looked like a bullet hole. They both agreed so she called the Police. An Officer came in and confirmed that it was a bullet. He also noticed that it had damaged her bookcase that was in the office. He then went outside and came back in and said there were two bullet holes in the side of the house. Officer Brooks had her to write down what happened and he gave her a case number. Her daughter and her husband, David and Shondra Hall, came over and her daughter pulled up the sound of the gunshots on her phone. On Monday, a Detective called her and asked about the cameras around her home. She told him that they were there before the incident. Her next door neighbor who has lived there for 27 years told her that she could not live in that area any longer because she has grandkids and does not feel safe anymore. Also, a couple of months before that and before school was out, there was a daily shooting in the apartments behind her home in broad daylight during school hours. She was on her lunch hour going home and she remembered that they put the school on lock down. The body of the young man was covered up in the parking lot at the apartments. Her question to the City of Valdosta is what are we doing about the violence in Valdosta? Is there any way we can put cameras in Scott Park? She has seven copies of the bullets that were shot into her home and the damage that was done.

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Richard Hardy, City Manager, stated that the Back to School Community Block Party will be held on July 27, 2024 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Unity Park. They will also be having free haircuts for the young boys in the City Hall Annex Multi-Purpose Room. On July 29, 2024 at 4:00 p.m., there will be a Performing Arts Center Focus Group Meeting at the Rainwater Conference Center. On August 2, 2024, the First Friday event will be held from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Downtown area. On August 10, 2024, there will be a sidewalk sale all day in the Downtown area.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilman Gibbs thanked everyone in attendance at the Council Meeting tonight. He wanted to address the fact that we cannot go into a lot of details as far as the Executive Session goes but he wanted to let everyone know that as far as the Department Heads go, he feels that they work very hard for us and do everything that we need for them to do. He is in their corner. Based upon the decision that the Ethics Committee came back with, four out of five with no merit, it put us in a situation to where the step that he felt needed to be taken was not warranted at this time. He wants them to understand that with the fact that Councilwoman Miller-Cody did call him last night and apologized to him for it and then the letter that she read as well. With that being said, the one thing is that our whole goal is to make sure you all feel that you can be open with us and talk to us. You can express how you feel to some degree but at the same time you do not have to feel that you have to walk on eggshells. He hopes that is the case and that they understand that the decision they made tonight is a decision of the first step. He hopes that we are not in this situation again and that this will be the last of it. He has been on Council for seven years and we have not been in this situation before. He wants the Department Heads to keep doing the job you are doing, do what you are supposed to do, and do it within the means of your guidelines of what is needed. Councilman Gibbs thanked them and asked them to keep moving forward. He appreciates everything they do for us and the extra that

they go beyond what is needed. A lot of them do way more than what you are supposed to do and speaking for himself, he appreciates that a lot. It means a lot to him.

Councilman Howard thanked all of the 650 plus City employees for what they do and not just the Department Heads. These employees make the Department Heads look good. He wanted to go back and talk about the shooting incident. These Judges who try these cases are elected just like we are. Once our Police Officers go out and arrest these guys who are doing the shooting, they are granted a bond. Our Police are doing the work by arresting them. He guarantees that if Sheriff Paulk could keep them in jail until it is time to go to trial he would. Someone is giving these guys a bond to get out. Sometimes it is hard to think not my Judge, but sometimes their hands are tied. It is not our Police Officers who are not doing what they are supposed to do. These guys get bonds so talk to the Judge or vote them out. He does not think we should let people out who shoot up houses and shoot at people. They should be held in jail until it is time to go to trial. We feel your pain. His house was shot up. He knows how painful that is. They discussed the Alcohol Ordinance but they want to make sure they get it right because we do not want to hinder people from doing business in our City. We want to make sure that we maintain our City's family atmosphere.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Matheson entertained a motion for adjournment.

**A MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Howard, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the July 25, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 7:08 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, August 8, 2024.

---

City Clerk, City of Valdosta

---

Mayor, City of Valdosta