

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 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 Councilwoman Sandra Tooley, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Regular Meeting held on March 21, 2024 were approved by unanimous consent (7-0) of the Council.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-8, AN ORDINANCE FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) FOR A PERSONAL SERVICE SHOP IN A RESIDENTIAL-PROFESSIONAL (R-P) ZONING DISTRICT

Consideration of an Ordinance for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Personal Service Shop in a Residential-Professional (R-P) Zoning District as requested by Scott Shalek (File No. CU-2024-03). The property is located at 2704-B2 North Oak Street. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 25, 2024 Regular Meeting and recommended approval subject to two conditions (9-0 Vote).

Jeff Brammer, Special Projects/Historic Preservation Planner, stated that Scott Shalek is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a proposed Personal Service Shop in a Residential-Professional (R-P) Zoning District. The property is located at 2704-B2 North Oak Street which is along the west side of the street immediately across from Valdosta Middle School and is more specifically located behind Hogan's Pharmacy. The applicant and his wife currently operate their "No Filter Club" Salon in the Summit Pointe commercial complex at 3338-C1 Country Club Road where the property is zoned C-H and personal service shops are a permitted use. The applicant is proposing to relocate their business to the existing office building (1,728 square feet) on the subject property where it is zoned R-P and requires CUP approval. The building contains six private clinician rooms whereby two of them will be occupied by licensed aestheticians, and the remaining rooms will be occupied by licensed practitioners related to skincare and wellness services. The property is located within a Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The property is part of an area along North Oak Street that includes a mixture of residential and professional office uses. All properties located adjacent to the subject property are zoned R-P which allows both professional offices and high-density residential uses; however, there are no residential uses in the block in which the subject property is located. Instead, it is a collection of professional offices, including medical, pharmaceutical, and insurance services. Staff believes the proposed use as a multi-tenant office with personal medical and aesthetic services will operate similarly to the existing uses of neighboring properties; however, because the applicant's business is classified as a personal service shop, it requires a Conditional Use Permit to operate in R-P Zoning unlike other medical-related offices. It is important to note that this area already functions as a professional office park, without residential uses, and the proposed use would be permitted by right if this area was zoned O-P instead. As residential uses are unlikely to ever locate in this office park, Staff could support a future rezoning to O-P for this office park area. Staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review Criteria, and recommended approval subject to the following conditions: (1) Approval shall be granted for a Personal Services Shop in R-P Zoning in the name of the applicant or "No Filter Club" only, as a multi-tenant office that provides medical-related haircare/skincare services which may include medical clinicians, aestheticians, wellness counseling, or similar related services as described in the Letter of Intent (no tattoo parlors or sauna/spa related services). (2) Conditional Use approval shall expire after two years from the date of approval if no Business Licenses for any of these approved use(s) have been requested by that date. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 25, 2024 Regular Meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review Criteria, and recommended approval subject to the same two conditions as recommended by Staff (9-0 Vote).

Scott Shalek, Applicant, 5650 Griffin Drive, Hahira, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Shalek stated that they purchased the property in August of 2024 and started to remodel it. They are currently renting property next to Friends Grille & Bar and they would like to have something that has more value to it and that they own. When they went to get the Business License, that is when the zoning issue came up. The property is in line with the pharmacy in the area, a speech therapy business next door, and a spa that does massages a few doors down.

Councilman Howard stated that one of the conditions is that they would not be using the property for a spa or sauna and inquired as to whether that was something they may want to do in the future. Mr. Shalek stated that his wife is a certified Esthetician so the business is for esthetics.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION was made by Councilman Carroll to approve an Ordinance for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Personal Service Shop in a Residential-Professional (R-P) Zoning District for property located at 2704-B2 North Oak Street as requested by Scott Shalek with the following two conditions: (1) Approval shall be granted for a Personal Services Shop in R-P Zoning in the name of the applicant or “No Filter Club” only, as a multi-tenant office that provides medical-related haircare/skincare services which may include medical clinicians, aestheticians, wellness counseling, or similar related services as described in the Letter of Intent (no tattoo parlors or sauna/spa related services). (2) Conditional Use approval shall expire after two years from the date of approval if no Business Licenses for any of these approved use(s) have been requested by that date. Councilman Gibbs seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2024-8, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-9, AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE A TOTAL OF 1.64 ACRES FROM RESIDENTIAL-PROFESSIONAL (R-P) AND SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-10) ZONING TO ALL HIGHWAY-COMMERCIAL (C-H) ZONING

Consideration of an Ordinance to rezone a total of 1.64 acres from Residential-Professional (R-P) and Single-Family Residential (R-10) Zoning to all Highway-Commercial (C-H) Zoning as requested by Thomas Rowell (File No. VA-2024-05). The subject property is located at 4507 Inner Perimeter Road. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 25, 2024 Regular Meeting and recommended approval (9-0 Vote).

Jeff Brammer, Special Projects/Historic Preservation Planner, stated that Thomas Rowell is proposing to rezone a combination of 1.42 acres from Residential-Professional (R-P) plus 0.22 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-10) Zoning to all Highway-Commercial (C-H) Zoning. The property is forested and undeveloped. It is located at 4507 Inner Perimeter Road which is at the southeast corner of the intersection of Inner Perimeter Road and East Park Avenue, and immediately behind the existing convenience store. The property consists of a total 7.37 acres and is currently split-zoned C-H, R-P, and R-10. Approximately 5.73 acres is already zoned C-H, and the applicant is simply proposing to rezone the remaining portions (1.64 acres total) so that all of the property is C-H. The applicant has no immediate plans for development and is simply wanting to market the entire tract as being eligible for commercial development. The property is located within a Community Activity Center (CAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan which allows the possibility of C-H zoning. This property is also located within the Inner Perimeter Road Corridor Overlay District (IPRCOD). The property is currently split-zoned C-H, R-P, and R-10. This application request concerns only the R-P and R-10 portions located in the eastern part of the property. The overall property was part of the very large Bray Land annexation in 1989, which established much of the current zoning pattern of the area; however, many parcels were later subdivided without regard to the original zoning boundaries and this has resulted in them having a split-zoning situation such as with the subject property. Being in the CAC Character Area and located at the intersection of two major roadways, Commercial Zoning is very logical and appropriate here. Rezoning these remnant portions to C-H establishes a clear and logical pattern to facilitate future commercial development. Staff believes the intersection of Inner Perimeter Road and East Park Avenue has great potential as a robust future commercial node and establishing a consistent zoning pattern is an important first step. Staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommended approval. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 25, 2024 Regular Meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommended approval of all C-H Zoning as proposed (9-0 vote).

Tommy Rowell, Owner of the property, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Rowell stated that it is great to see Valdosta growing by leaps and bounds. With Inner Perimeter Road being one of the focus areas of growth, he would like to clean up the zoning on this property so that can have the entire tract of land set for commercial. They think this will be an important commercial intersection and will provide good services and retail shops for the residents of Valdosta. Mr. Rowell asked for Council's consideration in approving the request.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2024-9, an Ordinance to rezone a total of 1.64 acres from Residential-Professional (R-P) and Single-Family Residential (R-10) Zoning to all Highway-Commercial (C-H) Zoning as requested by Thomas Rowell, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-10, AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE 6.34 ACRES FROM CONDITIONAL SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-6)(C) TO MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-M)

Consideration of an Ordinance to rezone 6.34 acres from Conditional Single-Family Residential (R-6)(C) to Multi-Family Residential (R-M) as requested by Park-Hawthorne LLC (File No. VA-2024-06). The property is located along the east side of North Forrest Street Extension, between Knights Academy Road and Branch Pointe Drive. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 25, 2024 Regular Meeting and recommended approval (7-2 Vote).

Jeff Brammer, Special Projects/Historic Preservation Planner, stated that Park-Hawthorne LLC is requesting to rezone 6.34 acres from conditional Single-Family Residential (R-6)(c) to Multi-Family Residential (R-M). The property is located along the east side of North Forrest Street Extension between Knights Academy Road and Branch Pointe Drive. This last received Planned Development approval on April 20, 2023 for a 42-unit non-conventional townhouse style development in R-6(c) Zoning (File No. VA-2023-04). The applicant is now proposing a more conventional multi-family residential development with 48 dwelling units, fewer onsite amenities, but still keep a general townhouse style to the buildings. The applicant is seeking the conventional R-M Zoning in order to have more flexibility as their layout design details continue to evolve. The property is located within a Suburban Area (SA) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan which allows the possibility of R-M Zoning. The property is currently undeveloped (farm field). The applicant is proposing to develop this property as one residential complex with 48 townhouse-style apartments divided into eight buildings. Each unit will be two-story and contain a two-car garage and a shared internal access drive; however, the complex will now have clustered buildings that all face each other, with the front sides of the buildings facing a shared internal courtyard and the rear sides facing a shared driveway/alley system. There will still be shared visitor parking, mailboxes, playgrounds, general open space, as well as a 25' landscaped buffer along its east boundary line. The surrounding development pattern is dominated by the existing single-family residential subdivisions to the east, as well as the vacant land in between which is still planned for additional single-family development. The undeveloped properties to the west across North Forrest Street Extension, are very likely to be developed (long term) with intensive commercial uses due to its frontage along Bemiss Road on the other side. This is reflected in the more intensive Community Activity Center (CAC) Character Area on that side of the road. North Forrest Street Extension is also planned to be eventually widened to four lanes with a significant increase in traffic. Therefore, under these long-term scenarios, higher density residential development along this eastern portion of the road frontage seems to make more sense than continued additional single-family development. Staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommended approval. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 25, 2024 Regular Meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP), and recommended approval of R-M Zoning (7-2 vote).

Councilman Carroll stated that this will be Jeff Brammer's final Council Meeting and thanked him for all that he has done for the City and the Department. Jeff Brammer thanked the Mayor and Council and Matt Martin, Planning Director, for being a great mentor. He has learned a lot and will always appreciate that. He has enjoyed his time here in Valdosta.

Matthew Inman, 4560 Val North Drive, Suite E, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Inman stated that the Developer from Atlanta gave them a much better concept and layout, but they backed out of the deal primarily because the property was going to cost too much to develop per unit due to the Clubhouse and pool area. It was just small a number of units to put those amenities in this type of development. There will now be eight units instead of seven which will be a better use of the property. One of the concerns at the Planning Commission Meeting was the number of parking spaces. The Code requires two parking spots per individual space which would be 96 spaces on the property. They have 165 parking spaces on the property which is 69 spaces over what is required. They feel they have plenty of space for the property. They are also planning to have a regional lift station along with the Fire Department property so they will share the cost with the City.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION by Councilman Howard, seconded Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2024-10, an Ordinance to rezone 6.34 acres from Conditional Single-Family Residential (R-6)(C) to Multi-Family Residential (R-M) for property located along the east side of North Forrest Street Extension between Knights Academy Road and Branch Pointe Drive as requested by Park-Hawthorne LLC, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-6, A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AN UPDATED CONTRACT ITEM AGREEMENT WITH THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE ADJUSTMENT/INSTALLATION OF WATER AND SEWER FACILITIES FOR THE FIVE POINTS ROUNDABOUT INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

Consideration of a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute an updated Contract Item Agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation for the adjustment/installation of water and sewer facilities for the Five Points Roundabout Intersection Improvements Project.

Ben O’Dowd, City Engineer, stated that the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is performing the design and construction of two traffic round-abouts at the Five Points intersections. Part of that work involves the necessary relocation of City water and sewer mains in the construction area. While the original Contract Agreement was provided to the City in early 2023, a revised and updated Agreement has been provided following review and revision of the proposed relocations of the City’s utilities. GDOT has provided this updated Contract Item Agreement which sets forth the conditions under which the State agrees to have its Contractor perform the work and by which the City of Valdosta will reimburse GDOT for this work. As outlined in Article 8, the non-binding Pre-let estimate for this work is \$705,283.06 of which the City of Valdosta will bear \$705,283.06 or 100%. Also, attached is a cost estimate supporting the Agreement. To keep this Project on schedule, and to support these needed traffic improvements, Staff recommends approval of the Resolution that has been prepared authorizing the Mayor execute the Contract Item Agreement for the Project (No. P.I. 0015445). Ben O’Dowd, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve the Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute the Updated GDOT Contract Item Agreement for Water and Sewer Facilities for the Five Points Round-About Project in the amount of \$705,283.06.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to enact Resolution No. 2024-6, a Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute an updated Contract Item Agreement with the Georgia Department of Transportation for the adjustment/installation of water and sewer facilities for the Five Points Roundabout Intersection Improvements Project, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book VII.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of bids for the repair of a Caterpillar Front Loader for the Public Works Department.

Larry Ogden, Public Works Administrator, stated that the Public Works Department needs to move forward with repairs to a 1984 Caterpillar Front Loader. The Front Loader is used at the Compost Site for daily moving and

stacking of yard debris. The Caterpillar-Certified transmission change will accompany a 3-year, 5000-hour warranty. This repair aligns with the Council-approved Budget (Motor Pool/Sub-Let Labor Repairs - \$97,702.74 Remaining) for the current Fiscal Year. A single source bid was received on February 23, 2024 and it was submitted by Yancey Caterpillar in the amount of \$67,868.27. Larry Ogden, Public Works Administrator, recommended that Council approve the bid submitted by Yancey Caterpillar in the amount of \$67,868.27 for the repair of a Caterpillar Front Loader for the Public Works Department.

A MOTION by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the bid submitted by Yancey Caterpillar in the amount of \$67,868.27 for the repair of a Caterpillar Front Loader for the Public Works Department.

Consideration of bids for a new Valve Exercising Machine for the Utilities Department.

Jason Barnes, Assistant Utilities Director, stated that the Utilities Department needs to purchase a new valve Exercising Machine due to the age and serviceability of an existing valve exercising machine. The valve exercising machine is used to exercise valves and to clean out valve boxes to get access to the valve. This purchase is in the Council-approved Budget for the current Fiscal Year. Three sealed bids were received on March 21, 2024 with the low bid submitted by Industrial Systems in the amount of \$79,360. Jason Barnes, Assistant Utilities Director, recommended that Council approve the low bid submitted by Industrial Systems in the amount of \$79,360 for a new Valve Exercising Machine for the Utilities Department.

A MOTION by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Howard, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the bid submitted by Industrial Systems in the amount of \$79,360 for a new Valve Exercising Machine for the Utilities Department.

Consideration of bids for three traffic control cabinets for the Engineering Department (Bid No. 23-23-24).

Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, stated that every year the City must make specialized purchases to maintain its inventory of required traffic management equipment. Traffic cabinets are integral to the safe and efficient movement of vehicles throughout the City and are necessary for the operation of our transportation network. Throughout the year, traffic cabinets can sustain damage due to severe weather, hit and runs, or collisions involving uninsured motorists. SPLOST VIII funds are budgeted each year for the purchase of traffic management equipment. For this fiscal year, we budgeted \$48,900 for the purchase of three traffic cabinets at a unit cost of \$16,300 (based on last year's bids). The invitation to bid was advertised in accordance with State law as well as our local purchasing policy. Sealed bids were received on March 21, 2024, and Temple, Inc. was the sole bidder. No other companies responded to the invitation to bid. The invitation to bid solicited prices for the City's option to purchase up to four traffic cabinets which meet or exceed our specifications. The only bid that was received was submitted by Temple, Inc. in the amount of \$13,400 for each cabinet for a total amount of \$53,600. The Engineering Department is seeking to purchase three cabinets at a unit cost of \$13,400 each for a total cost of \$40,200. Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve the bid submitted by Temple, Inc. in the amount of \$40,200 for three traffic control cabinets.

A MOTION by Councilman Gibbs, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the bid submitted by Temple, Inc. in the amount of \$40,200 for the purchase of three traffic control cabinets for the Engineering Department.

Consideration of bids for a new Fiber Optic Splicing Trailer for the Engineering Department (Bid No. 27-23-24).

Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, stated that the Engineering Department needs to purchase a new Fiber Optic Splicing Trailer due to the age and serviceability of current City owned equipment. The Fiber Optic Splicing trailer will be used to splice fiber optic cable throughout the City. This purchase is in the Council-approved Budget for the current Fiscal Year. Four sealed bids were received on March 19, 2024 with the low bid submitted by Intech Trailers in the amount of \$36,975.20. Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve the bid submitted by Intech Trailers in the amount of \$36,975.20 for a new Fiber Optic Splicing Trailer for the Engineering Department.

A **MOTION** by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the bid submitted by Intech Trailers in the amount of \$36,975.20 for a new Fiber Optic Splicing Trailer for the Engineering Department.

Consideration of a Professional Design Services Contract Agreement for the construction of the new Fire Station 8.

Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, stated that the City of Valdosta purchased the property at 4434 Forrest Street Extension in 2023 with the intent to renovate the building and site to serve as the Fire Station for this portion of the City of Valdosta's Urban Service Area. To achieve that purpose, the Engineering Department requested Proposals for Professional Engineering and Architecture Services for the Fire Station #8 Site Improvements and Building Renovation. Our Request for Proposals and selection process complies with Georgia law regarding Professional Services selection, having been posted on Georgia Procurement Registry and locally. These Professional Design Proposals include both Architectural and Engineering Services to accomplish the necessary design for multiple construction phases to support the Fire Station operations and response data collection starting in January, 2025. Two proposals were received and a Selection Committee composed of City Staff from several Departments (Fire, Building Inspections, Planning, and Engineering) reviewed the firms based upon the following: (1) experience with similar projects, (2) technical approach, (3) past performance, and (4) resource availability (workload capacity). The Selection Committee recommends engaging Ellis, Ricket and Associates Architects & Planners (ERA) for the Architectural and Engineering Design Services for this Project. The ERA fee and contract are in the format of Design as Percentage of Total Cost of Construction and the total estimated fee is \$90,000 based on an estimated Project Budget of \$1.5M. The work includes the development of construction drawings and specifications as needed for advertisement to bid and to satisfy City permitting regulations. The design work and the construction will be done in stages so that the Valdosta Fire Department can begin operations from this location in January, 2025. Given the current construction environment and inflation experienced over the past few years, plus the format of the design contract and for materials testing, Staff recommends a 25% contingency (\$22,500) for design of this project, bringing the project design budget to \$112,500. Upon Council approval, the Design Consultant will be engaged, and upon completion of each phase of their work, the Construction Project Phases will be advertised for competitive bidding. Those bids will be presented to Council for consideration to complete this Building Renovation Project. Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve Design Services Contract Agreement submitted by Ellis, Ricket and Associates Architects & Planners (ERA) for a design project budget of \$112,500 which includes a 25% contingency.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Howard, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the Professional Design Services Contract Agreement submitted by Ellis, Ricket and Associates Architects & Planners (ERA) in the amount of \$90,000 plus a 25% contingency (\$22,500) for a total amount of \$112,500 for the construction of the new Fire Station 8.

LOCAL FUNDING AND REQUESTS

Consideration of a request to approve the Declaration of Takings for the final property acquisition for the Dogwood Circle Pedestrian and Drainage Improvements Project.

Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, stated that the Dogwood Circle area (Dogwood Drive, Dogwood Circle, Cason Street, and Dogwood Lane) was annexed into the City in 2005. It is one of the oldest subdivisions in the City. There are 60 residential and commercial lots. The streets' rights-of-way are 36-feet wide to 40-feet wide. Street pavement widths are 16 feet. Storm drainage is conveyed in roadside ditches, some of which are 3-feet deep with very steep slopes. The combination of narrow streets, lack of shoulders, and drainage ditches makes it necessary for pedestrians to walk within the streets along with vehicular traffic. Mayor and Council considered this issue in the summer of 2020 and determined to design pedestrian improvements for the purpose of safety. The scope includes filling stormwater ditches, building shoulders, sidewalks, curb and gutter, and installing stormwater drainage inlets and pipes. In the design process, it was determined that in order to meet National Engineering Design Standards, it was necessary to acquire easements for yard drainage inlets on the lots and right-of-way at intersections for safe vehicle movement. Design has been completed, plats for right-of-way and easements were prepared, and the Engineering Staff and the City Attorney's Office have pursued property acquisition over the past two to three years. To finalize the acquisition of parcels for the Dogwood Drainage Improvement Project, we have

to condemn three small portions of land. Summary of these three parcels are as follows: (1) .0121 acres of land owned by Gamberla Jenkins for permanent drainage and construction and maintenance of slopes. Tax parcel is 0152 023 A. The City secured an independent Appraiser who valued the needed property for \$400.00. (2) .0241 acres of land owned by Ralph Hall for permanent drainage and construction and maintenance of slopes. Tax parcel is 0152 012. The City secured an independent Appraiser who valued the needed property for \$700.00. (3) .013 acres of land owned by Preston Burns, Jr. permanent drainage and construction and maintenance of slopes. Tax parcel is 0152 010. The City secured an independent Appraiser who valued the needed property at \$800.00. This Improvement Project required the total examination, negotiation, and closing of approximately 57 separate parcels. Previous attempts to acquire the above three parcels were not successful. The services of the City Attorney were enlisted to finalize the acquisition of the last three parcels. Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, recommended that Council approve the Declaration of Takings for three final property acquisitions for the Dogwood Circle Pedestrian and Drainage Improvements Project

A MOTION by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Howard, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the Declaration of Takings for the final property acquisition for the Dogwood Circle Pedestrian and Drainage Improvements Project.

Consideration of a request to authorize payment of an invoice for emergency generator repairs at the Withlacoochee Water Pollution Control Plant.

Jason Barnes, Assistant Utilities Director, stated that the generator was built in 2011 and has been installed at the Withlacoochee Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) since 2016, beforehand it was located at the Mud Creek WPCP. On January 8, 2024, SOGA Industrial Diesel Repair, LLC was servicing the Withlacoochee generator and discovered that the diesel engine would not hold more than a 25% load, citing that the injectors on one side of the V 12 engine had gone bad. Yancey Caterpillar in Valdosta was contacted to make the necessary repairs and to provide a back-up generator. The Withlacoochee generator failed to start January 24, 2024, during its normal weekly exercise. Without this generator, the Withlacoochee WPCP cannot function in a power outage or storm. This would cause millions of gallons of wastewater to leave the system every day the Plant is without power. All 12 fuel injectors for the generator need replacing as well as new fuel lines and fuel rails. A back-up generator has been provided by Yancey and will also need to be paid for. The scope of work for Yancey Caterpillar included an emergency generator rental during the down time caused by the part failure, as well as the parts and labor to repair the Withlacoochee WPCP generator. The cost for the emergency generator rental was \$30,844.28. The cost for the parts and labor to fix the Withlacoochee WPCP generator was \$31,629.25. The total final cost of was \$62,513.53. Jason Barnes, Assistant Utilities Director, recommended that Council authorize payment of \$62,513.53 to Yancey Caterpillar for the Withlacoochee back-up generator emergency repair work and rental of the emergency generator.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to approve the request to authorize payment of an invoice in the amount of \$62,513.53 to Yancey Caterpillar for emergency generator repairs at the Withlacoochee Water Pollution Control Plant.

Consideration of a request for funding to cover the cost for the removal of 10,000 cubic yards of storm debris from the City of Valdosta's right-of-ways.

Larry Ogden, Public Works Administrator, stated that the City of Valdosta experienced a major windstorm on March 28, 2024 leaving significant damage and widespread debris in its wake. The City is now faced with the collection and disposal of approximately 10,000 cubic yards of debris removed from blocked streets caused by heavy winds. These trees were removed from the streets and placed on the City's right-of-ways. This debris constitutes a hazard to public health and safety and needs to be removed expeditiously. We are currently faced with a pressing issue that requires immediate attention and financial support. The aftermath has resulted in a significant amount of storm debris, which poses a severe threat to public safety and the environment. In our ongoing cleanup efforts, we have encountered an unforeseen challenge which is the need to remove 10,000 cubic yards of storm debris that was produced by this storm. Given the urgency of the situation and the potential risks associated with leaving the debris untreated, we are seeking financial authorization in the amount of \$90,000 with a 10% contingency (\$9,000) to cover the cost of Ashbritt (under contract) to safely remove this storm debris. We are requesting the funding to be re-allocated from ARPA's \$1.5M designated for property acquisition on S. Patterson

Street to fund the cost associated with the debris removal. Larry Ogden, Public Works Administrator, recommended that Council approve the funding re-allocation in the amount of \$90,000.00 plus a 10% contingency fee (\$9,000) for a total of \$99,000 from ARPA’s \$1.5M designated for property acquisition on South Patterson Street for removing this storm debris.

Councilwoman Tooley inquired as to whether we contacted any other companies to do a comparison with the one we used before. Larry Ogden stated that we did not because we have a current contract with Ashbritt to remove the debris. Councilwoman Tooley inquired as to whether this was a Codicil or an Amendment. Larry Ogden stated that this is something different. Richard Hardy, City Manager, stated that when we had the last storm in August, we requested bids. Ashbritt came in with the lowest bid so we had a contingency for two years so that if we have any issues or storms coming in the future that they would be able to handle those incidents. They are still under contract based off of the last bid process. Councilwoman Tooley stated that we would have to use Ashbritt if any other storm came along next year. Richard Hardy stated that we could go out and use someone else but we felt the price Ashbritt provided was a good price. Councilwoman Tooley inquired about the mulch cleanup because we were going to have to find a place to take that. Councilman Gibbs stated that was a separate Contract for removal of the mulch and then there were three locations. Richard Hardy stated that the locations had to be approved by the Environmental Protection Division and be authorized to store and grind that material up at those locations. Councilwoman Tooley inquired as to whether we had to change the Contract in order for them to remove it. Richard Hardy stated that there was no Contract with Ashbritt but with the final disposal. Councilwoman Tooley inquired as to whether we were currently covering all of that this time. Richard Hardy stated that everything was covered. Councilman Tooley stated that she saw one of our trucks pick up a big boat and if they can move that then they could pick up large amounts of debris.

A **MOTION** was made by Councilman Carroll to approve the request for re-allocation of \$90,000.00 plus a 10% contingency fee (\$9,000) for a total of \$99,000 from ARPA’s \$1.5M designated for property acquisition on South Patterson Street to cover the cost for the removal of 10,000 cubic yards of storm debris from the City of Valdosta's right-of-ways. Councilman Howard seconded the motion. The motion was adopted (6-1) with Councilwoman Tooley voting in opposition.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

There were no citizens to be heard.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

Richard Hardy, City Manager, stated that the Spring Electronics Recycling Event will be held on Saturday, April 13, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Public Works Department. There will be a Paint in the Park Event April 13, 2024 held from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Unity Park. The 2nd Annual Blueberry Festival will be held on April 19-20, 2024 at Unity Park. The Georgia Municipal Association’s Georgia Cities Week will be held on April 21-27, 2024 and we have several events taking place all during the week to celebrate. On April 27, 2024, there will be a community road cleanup at 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Marion Street from East Park Avenue to East College Street. The meeting location will be 607 East Park Avenue.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Matheson stated that there will be a Lunch on the Lawn tomorrow from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the old Historic Courthouse featuring Joe Smothers. That evening from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Gin, Chocolate, & the Bottle Rockets will be playing at the Turner Center Arts Park.

Councilwoman Miller-Cody stated that she had received some calls regarding the traffic controls that we have in some of the school zones now. The citizens said they received tickets at 8:00 p.m. at night. The cameras/radar should be cut off either 15 minutes or 30 minutes after school is out. Police Chief Leslie Manahan stated that they turn on an hour before school starts so if the school starts at 7:15 a.m. they will run from that time to 8:15 a.m. when the lights are flashing. That is when everyone needs to go 25 miles per hour. When the lights turn off, it runs through the school day until school lets out in the evening when the school zone picks back up again. When the school zone ends, they are shut off completely. Red Speed checks them and then they send them

to the Police Department and they check them to ensure that the times match up with the vehicle. They ensure that everything is shut off by a certain time. Councilwoman Miller-Cody stated that the citizen needs to come by the Police Department and speak with Chief Manahan because she is saying her child got a ticket at night. Chief Manahan stated that she would need to show them the ticket because when they are approving them they are not approving anything that comes in after the 3:15 p.m.

Councilman Harden stated that he wanted to commend Chief Manahan and her Staff because last night one of his employee’s house was shot up. The Police Officer was over there in the pouring rain trying to get evidence and he appreciated their assistance with the shooting.

Councilman Howard stated that cities are expensive to run and a lot of the equipment we purchased today came from SPLOST funds. This is how we pay for the majority of our equipment and we need to encourage citizens to continue to support SPLOST , ESPLOST, and TSPLOST. If we do not get that support, we will have to go without stuff being done or raise property taxes as an alternative. We need to be mindful when we say things or hear things on social media about SPLOST because our City runs off of it. We need to spread the word and help keep our City running properly.

Councilman McIntyre stated that he wanted to request speed bumps on Hightower Street at the Hallmark Heights School. Calls are coming in to more than one Council person because of speeding. We need to do something about that short area there even if it is not speed bumps. We need to make this happen as fast as possible. Councilman McIntyre stated that he would also like to see the Council Chambers remodeled.

Councilman Gibbs stated that the Miracle League Games will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. They have three weeks left and will have a football team to help with being buddies on Tuesday. He also thanked Police Chief Leslie Manahan and the Police Officers for doing a great job. Councilman Gibbs stated that he would also like to see the Food Trucks brought back each Thursday. That was a great success.

Councilwoman Tooley stated that she was at an event recently and someone mentioned to her that Valdosta is doing a good job with the social media. She thanked the Public Information Office for doing a great job.

Councilman Carroll thanked Police Officer Johnson for providing security at the Council Meeting tonight.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Matheson entertained a motion for adjournment.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman McIntyre, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the April 11, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:39 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, April 25, 2024.

City Clerk, City of Valdosta

Mayor, City of Valdosta