

May 10, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Vice Mayor Lewis with prayer and salute to the flag. In attendance: Lewis, McClendon, Harden, and Edwards.

Richard Harden made a motion to approve the April 12, 2021 minutes as presented by the Clerk, second by McClendon, 3/0.

Jamie and Nelson Martin updated the Council on the progress of the Sopchoppy RiverPlace Park. The group has begun clearing a trail from Camellia Street to the river. The Sarracenia Native Plant Society is tracking native plants, FAMU Department of Architecture is developing a site plan, and they have met with the adjacent property owner. The group has also applied for a \$35,000 AARP grant and fundraisers will be held in the future.

Mayor Edwards joined the meeting during the Martin's presentation.

At the April meeting, the Council tabled the 2<sup>nd</sup> **public hearing for Ordinance 2021-03** until the property owner returned with a definite plan. Mr. Marshall and Mr. Dickson presented the Council with a new rendering. Clerk Schilling read the ordinance by title only; **Ordinance 2021-03 - An Ordinance Of The City Of Sopchoppy, Florida, Approving A Special Exception For Construction Of Multi-Family Dwellings On Lots 189-194, Inclusive, Sopchoppy West Side; And Providing An Effective Date.** After much discussion, the ordinance failed 2/2.

Alan Hart, Baskerville-Donovan, presented the 2 bids received for the new tank at Well 3 – Caldwell (\$1,045,000) and Phoenix Fabricators (\$1,145,876). BDI recommended awarding the contract to Caldwell. A motion to award the bid to Caldwell was made by Harden, second by Lewis, 4/0.

Attorney Dan Cox recommended using a local bank or SRF loan and keep the term to no more than 5 years. Clerk Schilling will contact Prime Meridian Bank and SRF to see what interest rates they offer as well as an estimated payment amount. Attorney Cox suggests spending \$600,000 from the Capital Improvements Fund and consolidating the City's current 2 SRF loans with the remainder of the tank cost. The City would finance approximately \$1.2 million.

A motion to proceed with financing from the Capital Improvements Fund and other funding sources was made by Harden, second by Lara, 4/0.

The City received 2 Engineering RFP's for the FBIP Grant (Dewberry and Baskerville Donovan). City staff ranked the proposals and Dewberry was the highest ranked firm. A motion was made by Harden to approve the engineering proposal and award project to Dewberry, second by Edwards, 4/0.

A motion was made by Lewis to authorize Mayor Edwards to sign the proposed engineering contract, second by Harden, 4/0.

Attorney Cox and Jim Sipes, Sand County Studios, submitted a revised cost associated with the Downtown Design Standards. The new proposal is \$27,600. Attorney Cox recommended approving the scope but include additional funds for unforeseen expenses. A motion to accept the scope of work as presented but not to exceed \$30,000 was made by Lewis, second by Harden, 4/0.

The financial and adjustments reports were approved by signature of the Council.

The WHS Cheerleaders submitted a sponsorship request for the Council consideration. The Council would like petitioners to present their requests to the Council in person. The Council declined the request, at this time.

City of Sopchoppy previously donated to the Wakulla Girls Softball Association to help off-set costs associated with their championship games. The games will be held May 18 & 20 at 6:30 p.m. and the Association would like a representative from the Council to attend and present the players with their championship rings. Mayor Edwards and Council McClendon will attend.

The City Park truck previously used by the park attendant is in disrepair. An employee has offered \$500 to the city for the vehicle. A motion to accept the \$500 for the truck was made by Lewis, second by Harden, 4/0.

Mayor Edwards suggested the City could benefit from purchasing a utility vehicle to be used at the parks; (i.e., gator, ranger, etc.). Clerk Schilling will get pricing for upcoming budget year.

Public Works Director, Leonard Tartt, brought the Council a sick leave donation request from Derek Allen. Mr. Allen is terminating his employment with the City effective May 31 and would like to donate his sick leave to Lori Allen. Attorney Cox stated the only portion that could be donated would be the 25% Mr. Allen would be paid for, however, that would go against policy. As written, when an employee has exhausted all leave, only the portion needed the current month can be donated, sick leave cannot be banked. The Council denied the request.

Mr. Tartt received several strong applicants for the Distribution Tech position. With permission, Mr. Tartt would like to interview 3 of the candidates and hire the successful applicant prior to the Council meeting in June. The Council authorized Mr. Tartt to make the hire, with a start date of June 1, with a salary of \$37,440/yr. (\$18.00/hr.).

Mr. Tartt also interviewed 3 applicants for the Plant Operator position. Each one shadowed Mr. Tartt for a day. The successful applicant, Seth Green, would have to relocate from Keystone Heights, and would like to shadow Mr. Tartt for a full week, before committing. The Council authorized accommodating Mr. Green at a local motel for a week. Mr. Tartt recommended a beginning salary of \$48,000, which is the maximum allowed with the current pay classification. Mr. Tartt feels it should be higher, but as of right now, policy does not allow it.

Attorney Cox stated the City needs to look at the current salary schedule and restructure it at the upcoming budget workshop, or sooner.

Councilman Harden would like to see plants placed around the gazebo at the City Park.

Mayor Edwards reported the Oyster Festival held May 15 was a success. There were a lot of vendors and visitors.

Leonard Tartt commended employees Mike Porter and Tommy Barton for prepping Depot Park for the event and removing the fence by CIVIC brewing.

Vice Mayor Lewis reported tarps from the stormwater project were thrown into Mr. Spears' yard when the project was finished. Mr. Tartt and Alan Hart (BDI) will address the issue.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m. Motion by Lewis, second by Edwards.