

October 9, 2023

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

A motion to approve the September 11, 2023, minutes was made by McKenzie, second by Harden, 4/0.

City Clerk Ashley Schilling recognized Deputy Clerk Page Evans for receiving her MMC Certification.

Assistant County Administrator Somer Pell, Fire Chief Louis Lamarche, County Commissioner Ralph Thomas, and Emergency Management Director Jennifer Nagy attended. Mrs. Pell addressed the Council regarding property the County owns at the corner of Gulf Street and Park Avenue. They would like to place a 300' communication tower on it to upgrade the failing countywide radio communication system. Prior to approval, Attorney Cox would like the property to be rezoned to public use from residential. The Council and County staff discussed other location options as well, i.e., city park, DOT yard, Mom's Restaurant, etc., including swapping a portion of one of these properties for the lot owned by the County on Park Avenue. The County will check with their consultants and see if any of the properties as well as any other city owned property will work for the tower placement.

The Council held the **2nd Public Hearing for Ordinance 2023-05** - An Ordinance Of The City Of Sopchoppy, Florida Vacating The City's Interest In Those Portions Of The Alley Lying Between Wakulla Street And The Abandoned Portions Of Mill Street In The Block Bounded By Municipal Avenue And Railroad Avenue, As Shown On The Map Of The Town Of Sopchoppy West Side, As Recorded In Plat Book 1 Of The Public Record Of Wakulla County, Florida. – The Ordinance was read by title only by Clerk Schilling. A **motion** to approve Ordinance 2023-05 was made by McClendon, second by McKenzie, 4/0.

The city received two construction bids for the SCOP Grant for resurfacing Park Avenue; North Florida Construction \$398,359.80 and Capital Asphalt \$237,991.20. Dewberry was present at the bid opening, reviewed the bids and recommended to proceed with Capital Asphalt. A **motion** to award the bid to Capital Asphalt was made by McKenzie, second by Harden, 4/0. Councilman McKenzie asked what happens to the millings and if it can be used to stabilize dirt roads in Sopchoppy.

The city received one bid from Southeastern Consulting for CEI Services for the Park Avenue SCOP Grant. A **motion** to proceed with negotiating a contract with Southeastern Consulting was made by McKenzie, second by Harden, 4/0.

The Council discussed location placement of the Florida Trail Gateway Community sign. Councilman McKenzie recommended Mom's Restaurant property and Vice Mayor Rudd suggested using the existing posts located outside of the right-of-way. Council members agreed.

The financials and adjustments were approved by signature of the Council.

Operation Santa contacted Clerk Schilling regarding the City adopting a family again this year. The Council approved a budget of \$600.

City Hall has received complaints regarding the wildflowers and plants at Depot Park creating a safety issue by not being able to see past them. The council would like Mayor Edwards to contact the committee and address the concerns, asking them to clean up the park and cut the plants back no higher than the top of the fence.

Public Works Director Seth Green reported the city is waiting on the Phase 1 Environmental Study and survey for the Harvey Pitman property. The appraisal came back at \$160,000, higher than the asking price. Mr. Green stated the city is still waiting for the County to meet DEP standards to resolve the setback issue for the property. Attorney Cox asked PWD Green to contact BDI for a conceptual site plan for the property.

Attorney Dan Cox stated the city needs to send a formal request to the County to have them act on the setback issue. Attorney Cox will call Somer Pell and send a letter requesting to be placed on the November 6 County Commission meeting agenda.

Vice Mayor Rudd asked if Green spoke to the park manager regarding the discussion on paying or not paying him and the duties of the city park. Rudd stated he doesn't mind paying him, however he will do more than just the park.

Councilman McKenzie reported rotten boards halfway down the boardwalk at the park that need to be replaced as soon as possible.

Vice Mayor Rudd would like staff to contact the County and have them drag and clean out the ditches.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m. Motion by McKenzie, second by Rudd.

October 26, 2023
Special Meeting with Wakulla County
Location Options – Emergency Communications Tower

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Edwards with prayer and salute to the flag. In attendance: Edwards, Harden, McClendon, and McKenzie.

The County was represented by Somer Pell, Jennifer Nagy, and Jay Nix (Motorola).

Attorney Cox recapped the request presented by the County at the October 9 meeting; including the original request for placement of the communication tower on Park Avenue, and the discussion related to other land swap options within the city.

Mrs. Pell reported the County and their consultants looked at the DOT yard, the city park, the VFD, and the Mom's restaurant property. The property located on the NW corner of Mom's is a better fit logistically than the County's lot on Park Avenue. The County is aware the city has plans for the site but would only need a 100' x 120' parcel.

As time is critical, Mrs. Pell asked for approval to proceed with presenting an agreement at the next meeting so the County can begin the process, as it will take months to complete.

Attorney Cox stated a small-scale map amendment and a text amendment to include height allotments is needed prior to public hearings. Mrs. Pell stated a rezone of the parcel is quicker than a small-scale comp plan amendment.

Mayor Edwards asked why the city can't just rezone the portion needed at the Mom's location and approve the height requirement at the November meeting. Once an agreement is met, Mrs. Edwards requested the County communicate with the city throughout the build process.

The County will prepare the land swap agreement.

After discussing the various properties, the Council instructed Attorney Cox to work with County staff and bring everything to the November Council meeting for a 1st public hearing and hold the 2nd hearing at the December meeting.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m. Motion by McKenzie, second by Edwards.