

CITY OF HAHIRA

APRIL 4, 2023

WORK SESSION

6:00 P.M.

COURTHOUSE

The Mayor and Council met for a Work Session on April 4, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. with Mayor Bruce Cain presiding.

PRESENT: Mayor Bruce Cain, Mayor Pro Tem Tony Rosatti, Councils: Mason Barfield, Louise White and Kenneth Davis. City Manager Jonathan Sumner, City Clerk Lisa Mashburn, Assistant Fire Chief David Thompson, Police Chief Terry Davis, PWD Willie Jones and MSD Jennifer Price. Fire Chief Dwight Bennett was not present.

REVIEW/CORRECTION OF MEETING MINUTES:

A. FEBRUARY 3, 2023 RETREAT

B. FEBRUARY 28, 2023 WORK SESSION

C. MARCH 2, 2023 COUNCIL MEETING

The Mayor asked if anyone had any corrections or questions regarding the minutes. None noted.

PUBLIC HEARING:

A. APPLICATION OF JIGNA CHAVADA-100 EAST MAIN STREET AND 203 SOUTH CHURCH STREET FOR PACKAGE SALES OF BEER, WINE, AND DISTILLED BEVERAGES (CHIEF DAVIS)

Lt Pitchford stated this is reapplication for a current license due to death of spouse. There is a clear background check and no issues with application. The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions. None noted. City Manager Sumner stated that it has been advertised in the legal organ as required.

B. APPLICATION BY ESTEL POWELL-THE SLICE 406 W MAIN STREET TO SELL BEER NAD IWNE BY THE DRINK (CHIEF DAVIS)

Chief Davis stated this is a new applicant. The Slice is moving to a new location in the old Daylight Donuts building. The measurements of distance and background are all ok. Does anyone have any questions? None noted.

C. APPLICATION BY ELISE PIERCE-THE LOOKING GLASS 213 WEST MAIN STREET TO SELL BEER AND WINE BY THE DRINK AT A NEW ESTABLISHMENT TO BE NAMED (CHIEF DAVIS)

Chief Davis stated this is a new application and will be located next to the Looking Glass on one side of the building. It will be a sports bar and is in the alley side of the building. The venue must sell 50 % food and it must be monitored. Does anyone have any questions? Councilman Barfield asks if the alley way is City property. It was stated that yes, it is.

D. APPLICATION BY DWIGHT BENNETT-DOWNHOME PIZZA 406 WEST MAIN STREET TO SELL BEER AND WINE BY THE DRINK (CHIEF DAVIS)

Chief Davis stated this is a new application and will be for wine and beer by the drink. The distance and the background check are both good. Does anyone have any questions? None noted. Chief Davis stated that with all the beer and wine applications I think the fees should be increased. I think we should do a study because we are charging about half of what other Cities charge. These fees are paid every year and this would reimburse for the time of Public Safety and City Hall staff.

E. ORDINANCE TO ADD TECHNOLOGY FEE TO POLICE FINES-FIRST READING (CHIEF DAVIS)

Chief Davis stated this would be an add to the fine. We would charge a technology fee on each fine. This would be a \$20 tech fee and it would go into a certain bank account to pay for technology items. This would include things like body cameras, cloud fees, computers in cars, IT services and hardware. Lt Pitchford did some research on this and many Cities charge this listed as \$20.00 offender's fee. City Manager Sumner stated that as required we will have the first reading on Thursday night. I think this would help to collect tech fees so that we can get competitive pricing for providers. Fees are going up almost 100 % and as you know we only get what we pay for. I have included a memo in your packets. If you look at 450 citations at \$20.00 that is \$9,000 in that specific fund and it lessens the burden on the community on ad valorem tax. This is a way to redirect the cost and it is patterned after other Cities like Remerton and Lake Park. Does anyone have any questions? None noted.

REVIEW OF BILLS/BUDGET OVERAGES:

The Mayor asked if anyone had any questions or concerns regarding the bills. None noted.

DISCUSSIONS:

A. WOODBRIDGE DRAINAGE RECOMMENDATION (CARTER AND SLOOPE)

Steven with Carter and Sloope came to discuss the bids for the Woodbridge Drainage project. He stated in March we had 7 pre-qualified contractors and when the bids came in, we had 2 bids. The project was projected to be \$691,000 but the bids came in at 1.2 million. This is far too expensive. The cost of everything in the industry has gone up with labor being the main issue with material cost. We have been experiencing this for a while now. We would suggest possible rebid within the next 3-4 months and see if difference in materials and labor cost. We could also split the project up or fix endangerment areas first. I would love to see this go to rebid in a few months, change a few things and see what happens. We could change the project time from 120 days to 180 days. A lot of the contractors are on several projects right now and I think this would help. Councilman Barfield said I think it would be wise to give more time for the project with things like they are now. If you only get 2 bids out of 7 that

is a problem. City Manager Sumner said that if prices do come down, we may be able to be flexible with the timeline. I know the neighborhood is not happy but wait until the third quarter of year and try again. We could hold out a little longer and take care of any emergency needs for residents. Steve stated that this is crazy market right now and we are just trying to work on solutions. City Manager Sumner said he recommended rejecting all bids and rebid in the 4th quarter. Does the Council have any questions? None noted.

B. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF HAHIRA-\$7,500 LEGAL FEE REQUEST FOR NONPROFIT FORMATION-HOTEL/MOTEL TAX RETENTION (CHAIRMAN RAKER)

Chairman Raker of the DDA said he would like to see increase in the motel/hotel tax. The current rate of 40% is sent to Tourism and Trade in Valdosta. The DDA is looking ahead with potential growth of the hotel/motels in Hahira. Currently we collect only \$800 per year but it could be a lot more in the future. The DDA Attorney recommended we do a 501C3 to keep the money in Hahira. If we do this, we

will capture money and keep the money in Hahira. Councilman Davis who is also on the DDA Board stated out intent is looking into the future and keeping this money in house for the future. If we make this change, we can keep the money for tourism trade for the City of Hahira. I think if we go ahead and put this into play it will help us in the future and it will be a lot more difficult later. The Mayor stated we do not benefit from the money that is made here; it goes to Valdosta. They were paying for billboards in the past and then they cut that in half and now they cannot pay for it anymore. We are just giving money away; we need to look out for Hahira in the future.

C. GEORGIA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONVENTION-SAVANNAH JUNE 22-27, 2023 CITY MANAGER

GMA Annual Convention will be in Savannah, June 22-27. The cost is about \$1100 per person with \$250 per night for lodging. The registration has been made and I just need approval.

DEPARTMENT REQUESTS:

A. POLICE DEPARTMENT COURT AND OPERATIONAL SOFTWARE-TYLER TECHNOLOGIES-\$160,706-SPLOST VIII-CHIEF DAVIS AND LT PITCHFORD

Chief Davis said that as discussed at the Retreat we would like to go to Tyler Records Management. Lt Pitchford stated this is a system upgrade that we would like to have because Tyler does work well. Many cities in our area use this system and it has easy access but there is a high initial fee. The cost would be \$10,309 annually. The Court side of this is excellent and it also has collections through Tyler. This would be a major change but a good one. Chief Davis said that he feels it would be a good investment, I have been wanting to do this for a long time. The cost could be reduced due to the new technology fee and it could be paid for out of SPLOST VIII.

B. MAIN STREET BOARD APPOINTMENTS-KAYLA WALKER AND CITY BECTON (MSD PRICE)

MDS stated that we have two openings on the Main Street Board. We received applications and would like to appoint Kayla Watson with Citizens Community Bank and City Becton with All About You

Salon. Does anyone have any questions? None noted.

C. MOTHER-SON DANCE-MAY 12, 2023 (MSD PRICE)

MSD Price said it is time for the 2nd Annual Mother-Dance. It will not be as large as the Father - Daughter dance but we have sold enough tickets to pay for the DJ and the snacks. The dance will be May 12, 2023.

**D. BROOKRIDGE DRIVE FORCEMAIN RELOCATION
ADDITIONAL WORK-LITTLE RIVER UTILITIES-
\$33,964-SPLOST VIII (PWD JONES)**

City Manager Sumner said, as stated last month, Brookridge Drive will be paved for the new subdivision and we need to move the force main. We need additional funds in the amount of \$33,964 that can be paid out of SPLOST VIII. They will order the pipe and then in about 2-3 weeks it should be complete.

**E. TYLER TECHNOLOGIES INCODE CONNECT
CONFERENCE-POLICE AND ADMIN (CITY MANAGER)**

City Manager Sumner said the Tyler Technologies, Incode Conference is in San Antonio Texas from May 7-10. We would like to send 2 from City Hall and 2 from the Police department to attend the Conference. The cost is \$3,200 per person.

**F. SALARY ADJUSTMENT-PUBLIC WORKS
DEPARTMENT (CITY MANAGER)**

City Manager Sumner said as discussed at the Retreat this is a request for all departments but we will start with the Public works department. The salaries are below market value. We have made a 3% increase every year but we really need to bring employees up to current market values. The public works adjustments are in your packet for review. I plan to do Public Safety and Fire in May and then Admin after that. I am looking at the GMA salary study for cities our size and we will also look at the time on the job. We also have print out of comparisons in your packet from surrounding Cities. Councilman Davis asked what other cities have you looked at for comparison? Sumner stated Adairsville, Claxton, Dawson, Gray and Ringgold to name a few. Mayor Cain stated we have lost 5 people due to

money. PWD Jones stated they all work hard and I would like to see it start immediately.

SET APRIL COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA (MAYOR CAIN)

All moved to consent agenda.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:05 P.M.

ADJOURN.

MAYOR BRUCE CAIN

CITY CLERK LISA MASHBURN