

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOTHAN, ALABAMA
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 4, 2007**

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Dothan, Alabama, met in regular session in the Commission Chambers of the Roy Driggers Municipal Building at 10:00 A.M., Tuesday, December 4, 2007 with the following members present: Mayor Pat Thomas, Associate Commissioners Larry Matthews, Amos M. Newsome, Jr., Paul Lee, John E. Craig, Jr., Taylor Barbaree and Keith Seagle. Also present were City Manager Michael West, City Clerk Pam McCoy, Secretary Tammy Danner, who recorded the Minutes of the Meeting, and the local news media representatives.

Mayor Thomas called the meeting to order. Mother Ede Plovanich, Episcopal Church of the Nativity, then led in prayer, after which Commissioner Newsome led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Commissioner Matthews moved that the Minutes of the Meeting of November 27, 2007, be approved, motion seconded by Commissioner Barbaree and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Craig commended everyone who worked with the Downtown Christmas Festival for doing a great job! Cathy Cole, Executive Director of the Dothan Downtown Group estimated around 12,000 people showed up for the event.

Mayor Thomas invited everyone to the Pearl Harbor Survivors of the Wiregrass Area Ceremony to be held December 7th at 10:00 a.m. at the Wiregrass Armed Forces Memorial in Dothan. Guest Speaker will be Major General Virgil L. Packett, II, Commander at Fort Rucker.

City Manager West reminded everyone that the December 11th City Commission Meeting will be held at Calvary Baptist Church (Chapel) at 5:30 p.m.

City Manager Mike West along with General Services Director Larry Muench presented a Service Award to David Childs for twenty years of service with the City.

Mr. Muench then introduced the new Safety Officer for the City of Dothan, Trampus Gougler.

City Manager West announced that the Rose Hill Senior Center will be holding their annual "My Little Christmas Shoppe" this Thursday from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and invited everyone to come out and support this event.

City Manager West stated that this will be the City's first full year for automated garbage service during the holidays. The City crews will be working on December 24th and will only take Christmas Day off. Mr. West asked that everyone break down their boxes, etc. to help with keeping pickups at a steady pace. There will be a press release issued in relation to this.

City Manager West announced that the Downtown Hoop's Classic will be held December 26 -31 in the Civic Center.

In regard to the holiday trash pickup, Commissioner Lee asked if the residents had overflow that would not go into the can could they put it in bags and have the City pick it up. Mr. West said yes; residents will not be limited to the one container for pickup after Christmas.

Commissioner Matthews asked if the City employees who work on December 24th are compensated? Mr. West said yes; they will get holiday pay as well as pay for working that day.

Mayor Thomas introduced Resolution No. 2007-422 (recorded in Ordinance Book No. _____ at Page _____), appropriating an additional \$40,000.00 to the Wiregrass Transit Authority for operating expenses. Commissioner Barbaree moved for adoption, motion seconded by Commissioner Craig. Commissioner Seagle said there was a question last week about splitting this allotment. He said we talked about two different areas. One was for the increased cost of doing business and the other was for purchases of new vehicles. Mayor Thomas said that is correct. This is for operating expenses and they were going to bring us back a proposal once they have talked with the County and see what their exact needs are. They are going to bring us back a proposal on capital. Commissioner Seagle said his concern about this is not over Wiregrass Transit Authority. He said he is satisfied that they provide a valuable service to the community and we appreciate what they do. Commissioner Seagle said it is the piece meal nature that we sometimes seem to get into with not-for-profit organizations coming back for more money. He said all of them are deserving and all of them are serving a good need. Commissioner Seagle said we would be likely every week to have a different organization to come back and say "I would like "x" amount more." He said it all goes to good purposes so it is difficult to say no. Commissioner Seagle said at the same time this came up we recently received a briefing on the CDBG planning model whereby there is a set plan on how we can allocate that money. He said he spoke with the City Manager and suggested that we could use that model or something like that to determine how we allocated funds to non-profit organizations. Commissioner Seagle said the key elements are that first of all we start with a set amount. He said our budget has over \$2 million in it that we give to some of these non-profit agencies. He said the agencies would then make an application to some form of citizen board, which would include full accountability of those funds. He said perhaps there could be a percentage held back that would be available for mid-year emergencies or extra needs. Commissioner Seagle said if we could have something like that in place whereby we set the money, there is a board that helps determine how we split up the "pie" and there is a procedure for them to request additional needs. He said this would be a better way of doing business than having these things come up piece meal at anytime.

Mayor Thomas said that is an excellent idea; that is why it is in the works. He said there is a group that will look at non-profits and make recommendations to this Commission right now. Mayor Thomas said of the \$2 million that Commissioner Seagle mentioned, there are several agencies that might be non-profits, but they also either partner with the City or they are hired by the City to fulfill specific contract obligations. Wiregrass Transit Authority is one of these. They are our partners. The City and County created a partnership that would handle our public transportation. Mayor Thomas said their funding has been \$112,000.00 since 1997 or 1998. This is the first increase that we have given them regardless of what gas has done. They handled a lot of their own by advertising on their buses. Mayor Thomas said he appreciated them be ingenious and raising those funds so that it did not cost the taxpayers any further dollars during that period. Mayor Thomas said their operating costs have risen dramatically. He said he thought they had met with everyone and had showed that. As far as the specific non-profits for example: the Wiregrass Rehabilitation Center is a non-profit agency, but they mow grass at cemeteries for us, they pick up trash along the highways, they mow around our utility stations, clean up the stadium, etc. He said once you set your contract services aside then you would have a pot of money left and we are working on a way to allocate that. There has been some thought of allocating that money to the United Way and let them do it and doing it professionally. Mayor Thomas said we already have a committee in place that is committed to look at that during the next three to six months and make recommendations to us. He said whether we take those recommendations or not would be up to us. Mayor Thomas said Wiregrass Transit Authority is not your typical non-profit; it is a branch of us. We supply transportation to our citizens and we either fund that transportation or we do not.

Commissioner Craig said he expects to see this expense increase as the population continues to age. He said it falls to the cities to provide it and said cities are us.

Commissioner Matthews said we cannot forget about our youth. Wiregrass Transit Authority does a lot for our kids in getting them to school and to other areas. He

said we need to get busy on our youth initiative throughout the city. Commissioner Matthews said our future depends on the young people. He said if we do not start taking care of our young people and developing something for them we are going to be in trouble.

Commissioner Seagle said we can all identify many deserving groups and there in lies the problem. He said he doubted there is a single group on that list that anyone here would say they do not deserve the money or we are not going to give them anymore money because they are all deserving. Commissioner Seagle said unless we are just going to leave the vault door open, we need a plan to do that. He said that is why he was suggesting that we have a set amount generously provided by the people of Dothan that will go to these organizations and that there be a more organized, established procedure for allocating those. Commissioner Seagle said as long as they come to us one at a time, who is going to sit here and vote not to give money to help elderly, children, disabled, etc., whatever group it is. He said he was just suggesting that we be a little more organized about it. Mayor Thomas said he was again saying that it is in the works. Commissioner Seagle said he was looking forward to it. There being no further discussion the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Mayor Thomas introduced Resolution No. 2007-423 (recorded in Ordinance Book No. _____ at Page _____), entering into an agreement with Houston County to share in the cost of improvements to the Cottonwood Road/Forrester Road/Saunders Road/Beverlye Road Intersection. Commissioner Lee moved for adoption, motion seconded by Commissioner Barbaree. Commissioner Lee recognized those members in the audience who were present in favor of this resolution. He expressed appreciation to them for coming today. Commissioner Lee said this is long overdue and hopefully by the end of 2009 we will have a completed project.

Commissioner Craig asked if this agreement included access to Trinity Lutheran Church. Mayor Thomas said it is in the updated intersection agreement that we have. City Manager West said he talked with Jerry Corbin and we are going to go ahead in the next couple of weeks and finalize the agreement with the church, which will also provide a provision for a turn lane by ALDOT.

Commissioner Lee said this is a unique intersection. He said another unique situation here is that you have two churches that are located at this one intersection. He said you have people from all over the city that come in and out of those churches. He said this is a vast need that we will be addressing. There being no further discussion the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Mayor Thomas introduced Resolution No. 2007-424 (recorded in Ordinance Book No. _____ at Page _____), approving other purchases over \$7,500.00 by the City. Commissioner Lee read each item in the meeting.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
<u>Other purchases:</u>		
AreaRae Detectors with related Equipment and accessories	Rae Systems San Jose, CA	\$27,250.00
Change Order on rebuild of Allis Chambers Transformers	VTCU Corporation Pocatello, ID	\$21,325.00

Commissioner Lee then moved for adoption of Resolution No. 2007-424, motion seconded by Commissioner Matthews and unanimously carried.

Mayor Thomas introduced Resolution No. 2007-425 (recorded in Ordinance Book No. _____ at Page _____), approving the following advance travel requests for City employees:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>CONFERENCE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Melanie Walsh	Magistrates Maintenance Training Institute Tuscaloosa, AL	\$ 615.00

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Lavera McClain	Magistrates Maintenance Training Institute Tuscaloosa, AL	\$ 545.00
Jason Miller	Magistrates Maintenance Training Institute Tuscaloosa, AL	\$ 615.00
Melissa Woods	Magistrates Maintenance Training Institute Tuscaloosa, AL	\$ 615.00
Mike Etrass	Police Internal Affairs Pensacola, FL	\$ 1,370.50

Commissioner Matthews then moved for adoption of Resolution No. 2007-425, motion seconded by Commissioner Barbaree and unanimously carried.

There being no further business, Commissioner Barbaree moved that the meeting be adjourned, motion seconded by Commissioner Lee and upon the unanimous vote of "yea," the meeting was duly adjourned.

/s/Pam McCoy, City Clerk

Approved:

/s/Pat Thomas, Mayor

/s/Larry Matthews, Associate Commissioner

/s/Amos M. Newsome, Jr., Associate Commissioner

/s/Paul Lee, Associate Commissioner

/s/John E. Craig, Jr., Associate Commissioner

/s/Taylor Barbaree, Associate Commissioner

/s/Keith Seagle, Associate Commissioner

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