

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CITY OF DOTHAN, ALABAMA
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 11, 2007**

The Board of Commissioners of the City of Dothan, Alabama, met in regular session at Calvary Baptist Church (Chapel) at 5:30 P.M., Tuesday, December 11, 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. Mayor Thomas, along with Commissioner Seagle welcomed everyone to the 12th off-site City Commission meeting. Commissioner Seagle expressed appreciation to Calvary Baptist Church for hosting the meeting. Tim Stewart, IT Manager, then led in prayer, after which Commissioner Lee led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Commissioner Lee moved that the Minutes of the Meeting of December 4, 2007, be approved, motion seconded by Commissioner Matthews and unanimously approved.

Larry Patrick, Department of Leisure Services recognized the 2007 Alabama Recreation and Park Association State Champion Soccer Teams and their coaches.

City Manager West introduced George Harris and Hal Bloom, Lobbyists for the City of Dothan. Mr. Harris stated that when we last met, we had just gotten word that we had several of the projects that Dothan was interested that were placed into this year's spending bills. One was funding for the I-10 Connector, an additional \$4.4 million that was being placed into the transportation sub-committee appropriation bill. The other one was \$1 million towards the City's public safety project, which entails some radios that Chief Powell has been pushing on. Mr. Harris said it was the largest public safety award for any entity in the State of Alabama this year. He said those projects are still in the spending bill. The House and the Senate have passed their versions of the various spending bills. They have to conference on those bills to come with a final version. It would be unique for special financing projects not to be included in those. Mr. Harris said this year it is a little bit unique in the sense that we have had a change of control since the last Congress; the Republicans and the Democrats can agree on some things. He said the war funding is getting into the middle of some of that. The fight seems to be between the White House and Congress generally over the cap on the total amount of spending. Mr. Harris said as of last night they thought they were getting close to an agreement where they would place all of these spending bills into one spending bill and pass that. Along with that, there would be an agreement on some emergency spending for the war. The talks broke down on the House side, but the Senate continues to believe they are going to reach some kind of agreement. Mr. Harris said their ultimate goal is to pass those bills before they break for Christmas. He said if the President should veto those bills, which he has threatened to do, they are trying to get a coalition so they will be able to override those vetoes. On individual spending bills, such as the Commerce, Justice and Science Sub-Committee Bill, the votes may be there to override that. Mr. Harris said that is important to the City of Dothan because it list your public safety funding in that sub-committees appropriation bill. Mr. Harris said we are still optimistic about that. He said, since we have last met, Congressman Everett has announced his retirement. It has led to a number of people who have announced their plans to run for that office. Mr. Harris said he would not be surprised to see additional people announce their intention to run. That potentially creates an opportunity for the City of Dothan. Mr. Harris said when these people come and talk about their plans to make sure they understand what the priorities of the City are and try to get those commitments up front. Congressman Everett has been supportive of projects like I-10. Mr. Harris said the loss of his seniority will have an impact so we have to be mindful of that. He said we have been working on finding a time period

for a fly-in with the Commission to Washington D.C. Mr. Harris said one thing that was talked about when we first engaged was that we felt like it was important for the City of Dothan to begin to have some sort of regular contact with Washington to talk about your projects. He said most of the cities they represent do that usually in the spring time. He said there are a few cities that have decided this year they want to start going twice a year. Mr. Harris said he did not have a feel at this point of what impact that is going to have. He again said it is important for Dothan to be planning sometime in early spring to have a fly-in to express to the members of political importance to getting these things passed.

Mr. Hal Bloom stated that there have been rumors that there was a possible state special session. The Governor decided not to call a special session. The February 5th session will be the first active state interaction as far as government is concerned. Mr. Bloom said we met with the delegation during the session, discussed your issues, and we look forward to having that same type of exchange once we get this session underway. Mr. Bloom said that is an effective way to help influence the legislative process. He said he would encourage the Commission to do that again in March or April; to go to Montgomery and break bread with the legislature and talk about common issues. Mr. Bloom said we all represent the same constituents, the same people you represent in your city council districts are the same people they represent as legislators.

Commissioner Barbaree asked how it was going with talks with the staff of ALDOT or the Governor's staff regarding the Ross Clark Circle Improvements. Mr. Harris said we met with Dave Stewart, the Governor's Chief of Staff and his Policy Director, Brian Taylor, along with the Mayor and City Manager this summer and talked about that particular issue. We also talked about the I-10 Connector issue. There was some confusion regarding the Ross Clark Circle Improvements and trying to push that back to the beginning of 2012, but in a regional transportation meeting about the priority of the Ross Clark Circle and in conversations with the Transportation Director it was confirmed that it was erroneous. They are planning to stay on the schedule as written by the Transportation Director, doing the right-of-way acquisition in 2008 and breaking ground and working in 2009. He said we also emphasized as part of that, that the Ross Clark Circle was not something that should be pushed to the side. He said we get some of the same rhetoric that we normally get about limited resources, but he thought they understood the importance of that as a higher priority and we believe we have made that point with the Governor's staff and the Department of Transportation that we could not have an either/or deal. That has to be a priority along with I-10.

Commissioner Seagle asked Mr. Harris if he would be driving back to Montgomery this evening? Mr. Harris said yes. Commissioner Seagle said you are going to get some first hand experience driving up 231 north. He said the build up of the retail in that area it is very congested and in speaks for itself. Mr. Harris said we are down this road at least every couple of months and have been for a number of years. He said he knew it had become increasingly noticeably as to what a difference there is.

Commissioner Barbaree asked Mr. Harris if he could foresee the Interstate being built from Macon, Georgia to Tallahassee impeding on any funds that we may receive for any of our projects where federal dollars may be involved. Mr. Harris said the dollars you already had designated are earmarked for the I-10 Project. They cannot be used for other projects. Mr. Harris said even if the State of Alabama wanted to use those for something different, it is the law of the United States Congress that those dollars be used for that project. He said there will be a lot of discussion about transportation and how we deal with two things: considering to build out new roads, which are desperately needed particularly in the southeastern part of the United States with hurricane evacuation routes as well as transportation and the problem with maintenance and repair work. Our interstate system is 50 and 60 years old. It desperately needs some help and it is an ongoing problem. Mr. Harris said one of the things they are working on is making sure that we are pushing to get your projects underway so that it is an ongoing project at the time of the next reauthorization so that we can get the bigger dollars allocated over a six-year period of time to get that project completed.

Commissioner Lee said he would like the same push for the Ross Clark Circle as we are for the Interstate. He said we have two issues with the Circle; the projected eight-lane from 231 south to 231 north, that is one project and with just general maintenance of the Circle. We have some serious needs all around the Circle that we drive through and it is becoming a safety hazard. Commissioner Lee said it needs to be high on the priority list as well. Mr. Harris said they understood.

Mayor Thomas asked City Manager West to get a written state legislative agenda and a written federal legislative agenda so that when we go to Montgomery and Washington we are all singing from the same page. He said hopefully that would all come from our strategic planning session. Mr. West said we spent time discussing that so we will do it.

Mayor Thomas expressed appreciation to Mr. Harris and Mr. Bloom for the update.

City Manager West announced that the Friends of the Opera House will feature an Old Fashion Carole Sing with the Wallace College Jazz Band and Singers this Friday night at the Dothan Opera House at 7:00 p.m. He said there will be a Christmas program held Thursday night at Andrew Belle Park and next Tuesday night it will be at the Rose Hill Senior Center at 5:00 p.m.

City Manager West said he wanted to clarify a few things regarding the animal control ordinance. The ordinance will be on the administrative agenda next Tuesday. He said this ordinance does not require that cats be on leashes. He suggested that a public forum be held before we put the ordinance up for a vote.

Commissioner Seagle said we need some more information. He said as was explained to them by the City Attorney, the definition of “at large” whether an animal was considered at large in your own backyard without a fence or without a rope is the key to this ordinance. Commissioner Seagle said if you are not familiar with that and it is something that you have an interest in he is alerting you that it is time to get into it. He said call him or contact the City and find out if that definition is something that you are ready to live with.

Commissioner Craig said the main responsibility coming out in this new ordinance is the responsibility of people who own pets. They have to be responsible for them wherever they are running, whatever they are doing, whether they are on a leash or off of a leash, whether they are muzzled or unmuzzled. If you own an animal you are responsible for it.

Mayor Thomas introduced Resolution No. 2007-426 (recorded in Ordinance Book No. _____ at Page _____), approving the plans prepared by the Alabama Department of Transportation for resurfacing and pavement widening on SR-53 (US-231) from just south of Troy University Drive to south of CR-63. Commissioner Barbaree moved for adoption, motion seconded by Commissioner Matthews and unanimously adopted.

Mayor Thomas introduced Resolution No. 2007-427 (recorded in Ordinance Book No. _____ at Page _____), renewing the agreement with Attenta Smart Risk Management to provide administrative services for workers compensation at an annual cost of \$41,000.00. Commissioner Lee moved for adoption, motion seconded by Commissioner Matthews and unanimously adopted.

City Manager West said this is a \$1,000.00 increase over what they charged us last year.

Mayor Thomas introduced Resolution No. 2007-428 (recorded in Ordinance Book No. _____ at Page _____), awarding the following bids over \$7,500.00 by the City. Commissioner Matthews read each item in the meeting.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
3-Phase Pad Mount Transformers	T.C. Specialty Dothan, AL	\$ 8,283.00- \$17,705.50
	Gresco/Capstone Utility Supply Dothan, AL	

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Traffic Signs	Vulcan Signs Foley, AL	\$15,916.38
Galvanized Sign Post	Vulcan Signs Foley, AL	\$14,325.00
Radar Speed Trailers	Kustom Signals, Inc. Lenexa, KS	\$19,029.00

Commissioner Matthews then moved for adoption of Resolution No. 2007-428, motion seconded by Commissioner Barbaree. In regard to the no outlet/high intensity item on the bid, Commissioner Newsome asked if we would eventually get rid of all of the dead end signs and be replaced by the no outlet signs. City Manager West said that is the new terminology they are going to nation wide. Jerry Corbin, Public Works Director said we have already changed some of them. Commissioner Newsome said as quickly as we can get the dead end signs replaced will be better. Mr. West said if the signs are in good shape we will hang on to them. There being no further discussion the resolution was unanimously adopted.

Mayor Thomas introduced Resolution No. 2007-429 (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>
John R. Powell	Alabama Association of Chiefs Of Police (AACOP) 2008 Winter Conference Montgomery, AL	\$ 732.00
Anne Rumble Elston Jones Kim Meeker Tony Kirkland Larry Patrick Steve Sherrill Robin Patrick Debbie Reed Kenny Dunning Tyson Carter Roy Kitts Matt Barefield Ron Money Tonnie Cooper Kelly Lyon	Alabama Recreation and Park Association State Conference Birmingham, AL	\$ 6,999.84

Commissioner Barbaree then moved for adoption of Resolution No. 2007-429, motion seconded by Commissioner Newsome and unanimously carried.

Commissioner Lee moved for acceptance of a miscellaneous easement from BHR Properties, LLC for guying an electrical power pole, motion seconded by Commissioner Newsome and unanimously carried.

Commissioner Seagle again expressed appreciation to Calvary Baptist Church and to the citizens for coming to the meeting.

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

/s/Pam McCoy, City Clerk

See approval next page:

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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