

City of Thomasville Council Meeting, June 8, 2020

The Council of the City of Thomasville met in a regular session with Mayor Greg Hobbs presiding and the following Councilmembers present: Mayor Pro Tem David Hufstetler; and Councilmembers Jay Flowers, Todd Mobley and Wanda Warren. Also present were the City Manager, J. Alan Carson; City Attorney, Tim Sanders; other staff and members of the media.

This meeting will be held in a manner that observes active Executive Orders and Health Advisories provided by Georgia Governor Kemp, Centers for Disease Control, Department of Public Health, and local health officials in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Seating will be limited and additional safety measures will be required such as, but not limited to, social distancing and wearing of facial coverings to ensure the health and safety of meeting participants and the citizens of Thomasville. Members of the press and citizens not present were granted simultaneous access to the meeting via the City of Thomasville's live stream feed located at www.thomasville.org.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Greg Hobbs called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

INVOCATION

Councilmember Jay Flowers led the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem David Hufstetler led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilmember Flowers motioned to approve the Council Meeting Minutes of May 26, 2020 as presented, with no exceptions. Councilmember Mobley seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded:

AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Mayor Hobbs acknowledged the following Citizens to be Heard:

1. Keith Thomas, 432 Woods Gate Lane, Thomasville, Georgia, commended the Chief Building Official Mark Harmon and the Building/Inspections Department staff for recent actions and assistance. He also noted he would like to see more employment diversity within the City of Thomasville.
2. Lucinda Brown, 103 Halcyon Way, Thomasville, Georgia, requested of Council to combine efforts with Thomas County Government to create a citizen review board for both respective law enforcement entities. She noted in light of current events, this should be done soon to help curtail the potential violent protest destruction in Thomasville. Mayor Hobbs reported that this is being reviewed by both entities.
3. Nolah Shotwell, 702 Wright Street, Thomasville, Georgia addressed Council regarding the City's current process of condemnation of homes. She noted there were available resources that could be used to rehabilitate homes which the Chief Building Official had deemed as unfit structures. Shotwell further noted the current process creates unnecessary liens for those property owners. She requested coordination between the Land Bank Authority, Housing Authority, and other organizations, that could provide fairness to the property owner while keeping those properties on the tax rolls. Councilmember Warren indicated agreement and noted this process should be more accurately reviewed by Council and staff to ensure the property owners' right to fairness.

ADOPT AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler motioned to adopt the agenda as presented, with no exceptions. Councilmember Warren seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded:

AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business for consideration during this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

First reading of ordinance to demolish unfit structure located at 818 South Street.

Chief Building Official, Mark Harmon, reported the structure at this address was read on first reading by Council one year prior. Harmon further reported the structure was pulled prior to a second reading because the owner indicated willingness to demolish at their expense. It was noted that as of May 29, 2020 the owner had shown very little progress in achieving the demolition as promised. At the Mayor's request, Chief Building Official Harmon reviewed the process of demolition of unfit structures. Harmon reported the process is outlined in Chapter 5 of the Thomasville Municipal Code and parallels the process mandated by State Statutes. Harmon's summarization of the process follows. The City of Thomasville does not condemn viable homes. Since 2015, a list of dilapidated and abandoned structures has been maintained and is updated periodically; structures are assessed and prioritized by demolition need based on numerous items such as, but not limited to, citizen complaints, community safety and state of deterioration. Harmon reported an independent appraisal is obtained to confirm, or deny, that the structure meets the threshold for demolition; meaning that the money to repair, alteration, or improvement exceeds 50% of the value of the structure after the repair, alteration or improvement. A title search is completed, owners are notified of the hearing to be held, and advertisements are ran in newspaper for two consecutive cycles. An advertised hearing is held, at which orders are lawfully issued to demolish the unfit structure. Upon the expiration of the orders, an ordinance to demolish the unfit structure is brought before Council for consideration at two readings prior to its final passage and adoption.

Discussion ensued regarding suggestions to include organizations who might be interested in rehabilitation of unfit structures. Harmon noted that numerous entities, individuals and owners are notified of the structures through various means of advertisements and contacts prior to the hearing date. It was noted that the structures which are brought to Council for consideration are the most derelict and deteriorated structures without interest of rehabilitation by owners, individuals or other organizations. Harmon noted the appraiser's opinion the cost to repair the structure located at 818 South Street was estimated at \$28,100.00 (Repair Cost) and its post-repair market value was estimated at \$44,800.00 (Post-Repair Value – Building Only) and therefore exceeds the ordinance's 50% feasibility rule. Council requested that, going forward the process should include proof of contact made with outside organizations/initiatives with potential interests in rehabilitation; such as but not limited to Landmarks, Housing Authority, Land Bank Authority, etc.

Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler motioned to order the ordinance to demolish unfit structure located at 818 South Street as presented, as read for the first time, passed and carried over. Councilmember Flowers seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded:

AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

The title of the ordinance read for the first time, passed and carried over follows.

AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE DEMOLITION OF THE STRUCTURE LOCATED AT 818 SOUTH STREET, THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA; OWNED BY SLYDERZ, LLC, MODELLA JOHNSON, AND ESTATE OF MODELLA JOHNSON; TO PROVIDE THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS ORDINANCE; TO REPEAL ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Motion to approve Budget Amendment FY2019.

Chief Financial Officer, Ashley Cason, reported each year the City of Thomasville is required to obtain approval to amend the budget for any funds with expenditures/expenses that exceed the budget. Similar to prior years, this action is delayed until the year end is over and is then all final amounts that are required to be amended are presented to Council at one time. The following table provides a comparison of the City of Thomasville’s budgeted revenues, expenses and net income and the City’s actual revenues, expenses and net income based on preliminary financial statements as of December 31, 2019, which are subject to audit adjustments. The table illustrates that the City of Thomasville was over budget in both revenues and expenses. Revenues came in higher than budgeted primarily due to an increase in consumption and sales; and thus, expenses increased as well. Overall, the City exceeded budgeted net income by \$998,065.00. Cason also requested Council authorize a \$230,000.00 internal transfer from Utilities to the General Fund to balance the General Fund budget.

CITY OF THOMASVILLE 2019 NET INCOME

***Subject to Audit Adjustments**

	<u>2019 BUDGET</u>	<u>2019 ACTUAL</u>	<u>OVER</u>
Revenues	144,731,929.00	148,731,961.00	4,000,032.00
Expenses	139,682,075.00	142,684,042.00	3,001,967.00
Net Income	5,049,854.00	6,047,919.00	998,065.00

Councilmember Flowers motioned to approve the Budget Amendment FY2019 and to authorize the internal transfer as presented. Councilmember Mobley seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded:

AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

Consider approval of Three (3) Inter-Participant (“IPT”) MEAG Agreements and Authorize the Mayor to Execute the Agreements.

Executive Director of Public Utilities, Chris White, reviewed the information as it was presented to Council in the June 8, 2020 Utilities Committee Meeting. As participants of the Municipal Electric Authority of Georgia (MEAG) each participant is required to maintain a percentage of reserve electrical capacity. There are a number of cities that fall short of this need and requirement. To help alleviate large capital investment of those cities, MEAG allows for and facilitates transfer of these capacity and reserve requirements from cities that have excess capacity, to those that fall short. These IPT are sales agreements having terms of 12 calendar months and provide compensation in a predetermined amount(s) with proceeds credited on the seller’s MEAG monthly invoice. These credits reduce some of Thomasville’s fixed electric cost which ultimately reduces energy cost to customers. Thomasville has “sold off” excess capacity for a number of years, however in March 2020, MEAG invoked new policy requiring the full City Council approval and an “Opinion of Enforceability Letter” from the City Attorney. White reviewed the three IPT MEAG Agreements as follows:

1. IPT Agreement with Acworth For Reserve Capacity; 4425KW at \$2.00 per KW – Annual Total \$8,850.00
2. IPT Agreement with Palmetto For Reserve Capacity; 1088KW at \$2.00 per KW – Annual Total \$2,176.00
3. IPT Agreement with Palmetto For Excess Capacity; 712KW at \$17.00 per KW – Annual Total \$12,104.00

Councilmember Mobley motioned to approve the IPT Agreement with Acworth for Reserve Capacity; 4425KW at \$2.00 per KW – Annual Total \$8,850.00 and to authorize the Mayor to execute the agreement, as presented. Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded:

AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

Councilmember Mobley motioned to approve the IPT Agreement with Palmetto for Reserve Capacity; 1088KW at \$2.00 per KW – Annual Total \$2,176.00 and to authorize the Mayor to execute the agreement, as presented. Councilmember Flowers seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded:

AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

Councilmember Mobley motioned to approve the IPT Agreement with Palmetto for Excess Capacity; 712KW at \$17.00 per KW – Annual Total \$12,104.00 and to authorize the Mayor to execute the agreement, as presented. Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded:

AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

Bids and award for purchase of Construction Contract for Water Main Replacement Project on South Pinetree Boulevard and Millpond Road.

City Engineer, Wayne Newsome, presented.

This project will replace an existing 8” Asbestos Cement (AC) water main on the south side of South Pinetree Boulevard, from 150’ east of Magnolia Street to Millpond Road, and thence on the east side of Millpond Road to tie into an existing 12” water main approximately 200’ south of the intersection of Millpond Road and Blackshear Street. This project is will be funded by utilizing 2020 GEFA Loan Funds for Drinking Water (DWSRF No. 2019033). A summary of the five bids received follows.

<u>BIDDER</u>	<u>BID AMOUNT</u>
James Warren & Associates – Valdosta, Georgia	\$634,248.75
Popco, Inc. – Sylvester, Georgia	\$698,537.25
Green’s Backhoe – Thomasville, Georgia	\$736,368.00
T B Landmark Construction, Inc. – Jacksonville, Florida	\$823,419.00
RDJE, Inc. – Newnan, Georgia	\$892,418.50

Newsome reported that is the opinion of Engineering Consultants, Carter & Sloope, Inc., that James Warren & Associates are qualified to complete the proposed project in accordance with the plans and specifications and within the required contract time period. Newsome noted the recommended company has worked with the City of Thomasville on previous projects. This project will be funded utilizing 2020 Georgia Environmental Financing Authority (GEFA) loan funds for drinking water (DWSRF No. 2019033).

Councilmember Flowers motioned to award the bid for Water Main Replacement Project to James Warren & Associates of Valdosta, Georgia, in the amount of \$634,248.75, as presented. Councilmember Mobley seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded:

AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

Bids and award for the purchase of one (1) Roll Off/Hook Lift Truck for Solid Waste Department.

Solid Waste and Landfill Superintendent, Jimmy Smith, Jr., reported Solid Waste’s Hook-Lift Unit #11801 was involved in a single vehicle accident; which resulted in a total loss claim. He briefly reviewed the cause of the accident; and explained the accident was not due to the employee’s negligence. Smith noted the purchase of a replacement Hook-Lift Unit would be funded by utilizing the GIRMA insurance claim of \$162,226.75; with the remainder amount needed from the Solid Waste Capital Transportation budget. Bids were received for a replacement unit, the summary of those bids follows.

<u>BIDDER</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>BID AMOUNT</u>
Four Star Freightliner – Montgomery, Alabama	2021 Freightliner114	\$167,890.00, 120 – 150 Days ARO
Performance Peterbilt – Albany, Georgia	2021 Peterbilt 567	\$188,172.00, 75 - 90 Days ARO
Action Truck Center – Dothan, Alabama	2021 Volvo VHD64B	\$186,190.00, 180 – 210 Days ARO
Rush Truck Center – Valdosta, Georgia	2021 HS International	\$180,999.00, 180 Days ARO

Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler motioned to award the bid for the purchase of one Roll/Off Hook-Lift Truck to Four Star Freightliner of Montgomery, Alabama, in the amount of \$167,890.00 with funding as presented. Councilmember Mobley seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed 5-0, with the following votes recorded:

AYES: Mayor Hobbs, Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler and Councilmembers Flowers, Mobley and Warren.

REPORTS

City Manager Carson acknowledged and commended staff's efforts in achieving a \$1million surplus in the FY2019 Budget. He commended Councilmembers' actions in reference to their assistance with contacting local representatives in support of continued funding for the State Farmer's Market in Thomasville. It was noted the Market is viable and an immeasurable economic resource for this region. City Manager Carson also encouraged citizens and Council members to complete their Census forms, as the Census provides for numerous economic resources for the City of Thomasville.

Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler reiterated the region's need for continued funding for the State Farmer's Market. He noted having met with Representative Darlene Taylor and other County officials in reference to the Market recently. Mayor Pro Tem Hufstetler reported that the Thomasville Market is the only one, of the six Markets that are recommended for State funding cuts, that actually makes money. He encouraged local leaders to attend a tour and inspection of the Market with State Representatives later in the week.

Councilmember Flowers commended the City Engineering Department for being recognized by the Georgia APWA. The West Jackson Street Streetscape Project / The Bottom District as the 2020 Small Cities/Rural Communities Award winner for Historical Restoration/Preservation. He encouraged the community to utilize the new digital resource *Community Connect* to alert first responders of residents' special needs prior to arriving on scene in an emergency. Councilmember Flowers echoed the concerns of potential loss of funding for the State Farmer's Market in Thomasville and commended the assistance of Local Representatives in the matter.

Councilmember Warren stated Black Lives Matter. She noted that, as a representative of this community and its people, she would be remiss to not acknowledge what is happening in reference to discrimination and injustices within the community and the country. Councilmember Warren commended the protestors for their efforts in protesting for what is right in relation to this movement. She noted that as representatives of the people in this community, there is a need to acknowledge and have the difficult conversations that will help the community which is hurting. Councilmember Warren further noted she would do what she can to make sure there is fairness for all people. She reported that she did not stand for the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of this meeting and would remaining sitting during future Pledge Allegiances until there was fairness for all people in this country.

Councilmember Mobley commended the Thomas County EMS for their efforts in a recent medical call with his father. He acknowledged it was because of their training and assistance that his father was still with the family today.

Mayor Hobbs commended the City Manager and staff for their efforts with the operations of the City and thanked everyone for their participation.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to discuss, the Thomasville City Council Meeting was adjourned at 6:52 PM.


Mayor, Greg Hobbs


ATTEST: City Clerk

