

**COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 4, 2006-9:00 AM**

A regular meeting of the Statesboro City Council was held January 4, 2006, at 9 a.m. Present were Mayor William S. Hatcher, Council members John Morris, Gary Lewis, Joe Brannen, Tommy Blitch and Will Britt. Also present were City Manager George Wood, City Attorney Sam Brannen, Director of Finance and Administration Judy McCorkle, City Engineer Maz Elhaj and Planning Director Jim Shaw.

RECOGNITIONS:

OATH OF OFFICE

Judge Lee Deloach administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Hatcher, Councilman Blitch and Councilman Brannen.

Mayor Hatcher stated that he appreciates the support over the last four years and expressed a “thank you” to the dedicated people that work for the City everyday. They are a great team dedicated to their jobs to make this a better place to live. He pledges to make the next four years better.

Councilman Blitch stated that the employees are dedicated, customer oriented and said he wonders if the citizens understand the dedication of the City employees.

Councilman Brannen stated that he echoes what Mayor Hatcher and Councilman Blitch had said and expressed his thanks to the City for their confidence in him.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES-DECEMBER 20, 2005

Councilman Blitch requested the following corrections be made to the December 20, 2005 minutes Council meeting minutes:

Page 2- changes “Council members Lewis, Blitch, and Britt voted in favor of the motion and it was approved. This request was approved. “To Councilmen Lewis, Britt, Brannen, Morris and Blitch voted in favor of the motion. The motion was approved by 5-0- vote and the request was denied”

Councilman Brannen made a motion, seconded by Councilman Blitch to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2005 as corrected. Councilmen Brannen, Morris, Lewis and Britt voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried by a 5-0-vote

RECOGNITIONS

RICHARD DEAL OF FRANKLIN, MIKELL AND DEAL, LLP

City Auditor Richard Deal, Franklin, Mikell, & Deal, gave a report on the City’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) ending June 30, 2005. He stated it looked good and complimented the Finance Department for a good job. No material

weaknesses were found, there were no reportable conditions and the City received an unqualified opinion. He gave highlights as follows

Page 16 & 17	Shows Summary Information:		
	Total Assets	\$51,006,481	4% increase
	Capital Assets	\$42,523,654	3% increase
Page 17	Changes in Net Assets:		
	Governmental	\$1,261,548	8% increase
	Business type	\$ 531,237	2% increase
Page 7	Management's Discussion & Analysis-Changes in Net Assets		
	Total Revenues	\$29,190,922	9% decrease
	Did not draw as much SPLOST		
	Total Expenses	\$27,368,137	8% increase
Page 18	Balance Sheet Government Funds Total-	\$7,203,888	
Page 20	Statement of Revenues, Expenditures & Changes in Fund Balances		
	General Fund	\$178,392	4% increase
	Total Fund Balance	\$4,976,873	4-6% increase
	Need to keep 25% reserve in fund balance and the City is in very good shape here. This will decrease next year with the construction of the police station.		
Page 22 & 23	Statement of Revenues, Expenditures & Changes in Fund Balances Budget & Actual:		
	Revenue & Expenditures are under budget		
	Budgeted to decrease fund balance-	\$183,094	
	Added to fund balance-	\$178,392	
	Increase in fund balance-	\$361,486	
Page 25	Expenses & Changes in Fund Net Assets- Proprietary Funds		
	Operating Income	\$1,869,942	
	In 2004	\$1,846,000	
	Internal Service Funds - Health Insurance & Fleet		
	Change in net assets	\$147,844	19% increase
	Health Insurance net assets	\$668,000	
	Fleet net assets	\$259,000	
Page 26	Statement of Cash Flows		
	Net Increase Cash	\$671,249	
	Internal Service Fund	\$232,498	

Mayor Hatcher congratulated Director of Finance and Administration Judy McCorkle and the Finance Department for filing on time and taking pride in the City and working to show it in good financial condition.

MOTION TO ADOPT ON SECOND READING ORDINANCE #2005-15:

Councilman Morris made a motion, seconded by Councilman Lewis to adopt the second reading on Ordinance #2005-15 annexing 1.19 acres of property located at 16779 Highway 80 West into the city. Councilman Lewis, Britt, Brannen, Morris and Blich voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE ANGLE PARKING REQUEST OF NOEL BURNSED ON EAST MAIN STREET.

City Manager George Wood stated the landscape architects, Wood & Partners, and the engineers, Hussey, Gay, Bell, & DeYoung, have written letters saying they are still opposed to this request for reverse angle parking due to safety considerations and the amount of traffic on East Main Street. City Engineer Maz Elihaj stated this is an unfamiliar concept and it does not following standards. He recommended that the City not approve this request.

Councilman Lewis asked could this be done on a trial basis and if it does not work, then go back to horizontal parking. Councilman Morris stated with this type parking you are not changing anything. The whole purpose of the streetscape is to slow traffic down and people can adapt to this circumstance, therefore he can not see a problem.

City Engineer Maz Elihaj stated you asked me and I went to the book of standards—this is sub-standard, it's not in the books. Hussey, Gay & Bell nor Joey Maxwell supports this. The City will be liable for anything because this is sub-standard and it is not in the books.

Police of Chief Stan York stated we are talking about safety, and reverse angle parking is foreign and dangerous to the whole State of Georgia, not just Statesboro. The angle parking at the First Baptist Church is common and people are familiar with it. He has counseled with his staff and all agree it is a danger and will cause more accidents. People from out of town are not familiar with this type of parking. No city or county in the State of Georgia has reverse angle parking.

Councilman Lewis asked how did First Baptist Church become normal? People got use to it and people can get use to this. Chief York replied if it is advertised and done throughout the city, it would be o.k. but to single out this one section, it would be a danger.

Councilman Brannen asked City Attorney Sam Brannen would the city be liable responsible if someone was hurt?

Attorney Brannen stated the City would be responsible. Normally the City has immunity, but when you get something that is out of the ordinary and out of the norm, it is not safe and not according to standards and the Engineers says this is dangerous then immunity would not apply. If we institute this and someone gets hurt, you will be looking at experts in the courtroom testifying you have put in a substandard system, not a normal parking system in the State of Georgia; therefore, you are going to be sued. You have liability. This is not the norm as our Engineers have said. When you venture out on a project of your own and there are experts to testify that you should have known better than to do that because it doesn't meet Engineering standards, then you have a liability.

Council Britt stated he feels the Burnseds have done a considerable amount of work on the building and to compliment the streetscape as more parking is needed. He approves of the angle parking over the reverse angle parking. He is concerned with a car coming from the French Quarter area and not being familiar with the proper lane usage and they turn across the eastbound side into the parking spot. Councilman Britt made a motion for the staff to come up with the safest way for regular angle parking and to determine how many spaces this will be. Councilman Lewis asked if this could be on a trial basis. The motion died for lack of a second.

Councilman Blich asked about what turning degree this would be. Mr. Elhaj said 60-75% on the reverse angle parking, but it would take a tighter fit for it to work. Councilman Blich states he is concerned with the safety and suggested to do a trial run for three to six months, and if it creates a problem, go back to parallel parking.

Councilman Brannen asked Mr. Wood if the DOT would have to give permission first. Mr. Wood said the people dealing with the streetscape would have to approve this and we would also need to send an amendment to the Department of Transportation in order to go forward with the streetscape project. They are looking at nine parking spaces. We need a new drawing from the landscape architect to send to Moreland Artibelli to see if the Department of Transportation would approve. This would take sixty or ninety days. This is their money.

Councilman Morris made a motion due to the safety, money and time to deny the angle parking and move forward. The motion died for lack of a second.

Noel Burnsed presented a PowerPoint showing the advantages of reverse angle parking. His architect thought this was very interesting and said you would see more of this in the near future. Mrs. Burnsed said they would be willing to pay for anything, but to give them a try. It seems to be reasonable to try. There was a concern about ownership of the sidewalk. Mrs. Burnsed said it belonged to them but they would give it to the City for the streetscape. Mayor Hatcher said we would come back for a final approval.

Councilman Brannen made a motion, seconded by Councilman Lewis, to approve angle parking, not to exceed nine spaces, subject to approval from the Department of Transportation, on a six month trial basis. Councilmen Blich, Brannen, Lewis, and Britt

voted in favor of the motion. Councilman Morris voted against the motion. The motion carried by a 4-1 vote.

MOTION TO AWARD A BID FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW POLICE STATION TO BE LOCATED ON GRADY STREET TO THE LOW BIDDER, POPE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$4,556,000.

City Manager George Wood made a recommendation to award the bid for the construction of the new Police Station to the low bidder, Pope Construction Company, Inc. in the amount of \$4,556,000. He stated that we had built up our fund balance during the last two years and that we will use \$807,000 of this for this project this year.

Councilman Morris asked why there was such a decrease in the pricing in a two month period. Mr. Wood stated he also did not understand because the energy prices are still high since hurricane Katrina. John Rule, of Martin Rule Associates Architect contacted the bidders to see why there is a 10.2% decrease. They indicated the pricing from their sub-contractors had dropped considerably.

Mr. Wood said since we have saved \$516,997 over the previous bid, we can reduce the funding needed. He suggested doing so by decreasing the transfer from the General Fund by \$100,000, the Water and Sewer Fund by \$200,000, and the Health Insurance Fund by \$200,000. That is \$500,000 of the savings. The other \$16,997 would go to the contingency line item for this project.

Architect John Rule stated the 480 day construction period would begin this week and a pre-construction meeting would be held next week. Mayor Hatcher asked Jeff Pope of Pope Construction if he thought the project could be completed within the sixteen month. Mr. Rule replied yes, if the weather permits.

Councilman Brannen made a motion, seconded by Councilman Britt, to award the bid for the construction of the new Police Station located on Grady Street to Pope Construction in the amount of \$4,556,000. Councilmen Lewis, Britt, Brannen, and Blich voted in favor of the motion. Councilman Morris abstained from this issue due to conflict of interest. The motion carried by a 4-0 vote.

MOTION TO AWARD A BID FOR THE PURCHASE OF SIXTEEN POLICE PORTABLE RADIOS FOR PROJECT 25 COMPATIBLE COMMUNICATIONS BEING USED IN THE STATE OF GEORGIA TO THE SOLE BIDDER, SAVANNAH COMMUNICATIONS, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$56,679.10 FUNDED BY THE HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT.

Police Chief Stan York requested that Council award a bid to Savannah Communications for the purchase of sixteen police portable radios in the amount of \$56,679.10. Chief York stated they would be paid for by the Homeland Security Grant. These radios could be used for any type disaster and are the radio of the future.

Councilman Blich made a motion, seconded by Councilman Lewis, to award a bid to purchase sixteen portable radios to Savannah Communications in the amount of \$56,679.10. Councilman Lewis, Britt, Brannen, Morris and Blich voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

MOTION TO DECLARE NINE FIREARMS OBTAINED FROM KMART AS DAMAGED GOODS, SURPLUS PROPERTY AND AUTHORIZE DISPOSAL

Police Chief Stan York stated he had received a letter from the Kmart store stating they had taken in five rifles and four shotguns as damaged goods. They ask the City to dispose of them. Chief York recommended that Captain Chapel do minor repairs on four rifles and one shotgun to use in training and the remaining guns would be declared surplus and sold at an auction.

Councilman Britt made a motion, seconded by Councilman Blich, to declare four firearms as surplus property. Councilmen Lewis, Britt, Brannen, Morris, and Blich voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried by 5-0 vote.

MOTION TO AWARD A BID FOR THE PURCHASE OF TRUCK SCALES TO BE USED AT THE NEW OFFICE OF THE TRANSFER STATION TO THE LOW BIDDER, GEORGIA SCALE CO. OF AUGUSTA, GA. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$46,472.50

Mr. Wood stated these scales will be used at the Lakeview Transfer Station. They are of a high quality and heavier weight. Public Works Director Bobby Colson said the old scales will be reconditioned and used again.

Councilman Britt made a motion, seconded by Councilman Blich to award the bid for the purchase of truck scales to Georgia Scale Co. in the amount of \$46,472.50. Councilmen Lewis, Brannen, Morris, Britt and Blich were in favor of the motion. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

STAFF REPORTS:

City Manager George Wood introduced Captain Emerson Melton is the Interim Fire Chief for the month of January. There are three candidates applying for the Fire Chief's position. Each person will serve a one month term until the position has been filled.

Mr. Wood stated the street re-naming ceremony for Donnie Simmons Way will be held on Sunday January 15, 2006 at 2:30 p.m. at Baldwin and Williams Street.

Mr. Wood asked the Council to consider a date for a retreat. Scott Wrighton, a former City Manager, will be the facilitator.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION- NEXT MEETING

Director of Finance & Administration Judy McCorkle informed Council the next meeting will be Wednesday January 18, 2006 due to the Martin Luther King holiday.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

