

Workshop
CITY OF VERNON
APRIL 5, 2021
5:30 PM

PRESENT – MAYOR: Candice Hodges; **COUNCIL MEMBERS:** Joseph Brock, Gwendolyn March, Laura Brewer, Chad Jackson, Rebecca Baxley; **CITY ATTORNEY:** Michelle Jordan; **CITY CLERK:** Tracy Walker; **PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR:** Jason Rhoton; **FIRE CHIEF:** ShiQuan Green; **NOT PRESENT – RECREATION DIRECTOR:** Timothy Garner

Invocation – by Tracy Walker

Pledge of allegiance – recited by all

Mayor – The trees from the grant have been delivered; they are in 15-gallon planters. We will be putting 2 in the square with a bench in memory of the 2 young men that have recently passed away. The others will be put around the track area to provide shade. Ms. Rhonda mentioned to get with her or someone else from garden club on where to place memorial bench because they have the gazebo coming in September. The mayor thanked Ms. Laura for taking care of the Easter celebration.

Attorney – The title searches for the City Hall have been ordered. The mayor stated that she would like to have them by May for the park grants.

Clerk – In reference to the park we had a citizen complain about standing water and mildew on the track which is making spots slippery. So, when we do get a grant to somehow fix the bad areas of the track. In the meantime, gravel has been placed in the spot in question. A letter from Gulf Power has been included in everyone's packet stating that the rates will be decreasing next year. We had questions regarding our online payment system and late fees. The system tells customers that it could take 24 to 48 hours for processing. But the customers are not reading that. We will check with our carrier to see if there is a way to speed up processing to alleviate this problem. Also look into our ordinance on payment dates and fees. Check with the City of Chipley to see who they use.

Fire Chief – Everyone has been supplied a list of what the F/D needs to be up to par, and a list of items that we would like to have. Council advised for a break down of cost for needs and cost for wants. Cascade trailer is out of service currently, bottles are being re-hydroed at All-star Fire Extinguishers in Marianna at a cost of \$95 each. F/D has a business meeting Tuesday 4/6/21 at 7PM. The F/D needs will cost around \$100,000.

Recreation – Not Present - Mr. Goulding requested verification on Baseball's opening date as soon as it is known.

Public Works – Need new pump for the lift station on Lazy Bone Dr. The Mayor asked the status of the filters for the plant. Jason advised that they should be here Thursday, but he still would like to put off letting the septic haulers back until we have an upgrade at the plant.

Public Participation: Rhonda Dickinson – Wanting to know about a grant to get ground penetration equipment to survey the cemetery. Ms. Walker had advised her that they would not give a grant unless we know who is buried in the spots. Rhonda is requesting to check with the county to see if they can apply for a grant since all the counties cemetery's need this done. She also is requesting that maybe the council can purchase one and see if Mr. Goulding could use it to teach a class at the VOTECH. The Garden Club will not meet again until September.

- 1. 3336 Jackson Ave – irrigation well (Leo Welch)** – Mr. Welch is requesting to have an irrigation well installed. The Attorney advises a Resolution will be needed for the well to be drilled, therefore requires a council vote; which will take place at the next meeting scheduled for 4/19.
- 2. Farmers Market – City Hall Parking Lot on Sundays** in addressing the question of insurance, the City Attorney advises it is in the best interest of the city to have the Farmers Market provide their own insurance, and the City can also check into a specialty insurance to cover events like this on City property to add padding in the event something happens.
- 3. 7/4/21 Celebration Update (7/3/21 - Skylighters / Christon Birge)** We are looking at holding our celebration on Saturday, 7/3. It was the only date available for the fireworks company. The program with Skylighters is going to cost \$12,000 and Christon Birge has agreed to come in at \$1200. Christon is going to need us to provide 2 trailers to build a stage and a gray tarp. The parade will start at 4PM and fireworks to follow at Sports Plex. The Firecracker pageant will be held 6/19 at 5PM by Laura Brewer at the Community Center.
- 4. Community Center painting estimates** Mr. Bryant brought us another bid to include the restrooms. We are still in need of a third bid for the painting of the Community Center. Joey advised he would supply Tracy with a couple names of painters.
- 5. Council Chambers carpet** Dennis has come out and looked at the carpet, he can get us some squares to replace carpet that way if there is ever a leak, we will only have to replace the damaged area. It will take the help of Public works and would cost around \$5500. We need 2 more bids in which Joey will send over a couple phone numbers for carpet installers.
- 6. Copy machine** The City Hall needs a new copy machine the one we have will not handle the workload. Dex Imaging in Panama City has several options. One is a lease and after 5 years they

bring a new machine at the cost of \$88.05 a month. To buy it out right is \$4400. We can give our old one to the Fire Dept, who is need of one. The Council agreed to go with the lease option.

7. CARES Act funding disbursements add to the 4/19 agenda. We have 9 Churches and 33 businesses that have applied and can now be paid.

8. Cemetery bids We received 3 bids Clayton Hammock, \$550 x 2 which is \$1100 a month. Cut weed eat and blow. Ashley Hallmark cut grass at cemetery every 2 weeks in season and as requested out of season at \$375, and Legendary Lawn maintenance cemetery \$324.88 per cut, mow weed eat, spray fence line, and pick up trash. Need to get back with each bidder to be more specific about what is included.

9. Sound System we need a new sound system for the Council Chambers, the one we have is malfunctioning; it will not even turn off we have to unplug it. The Attorney advised to check and see if the sound system would be covered by the Covid funds, due to needing to be able to keep the public informed. Ms. Brewer would also like to have the one in the community center replaced if it could be covered under the Cares Act funds; Tracy will check into this.

10. Day of Prayer at City Square (Candice) the Churches have requested the use of the City Square for a gathering place to have a day of prayer where everyone else can attend. They are requesting May 6th at 6:30PM; all agree would be a good thing for the community.

Palm Trees planted in the City limits (Joey Brock) need to be trimmed and maintained by the City workers.

Inter-city drainage ditches (Chad Jackson) we need to get them cleaned up and the ones on private property also, we need to acquire permission from the property owners to be able to go onto their property to keep the ditches clean to alleviate some of the flooding in the city. The Mayor suggested to contract it out, due to time restraints on the city crew.

Welcome signs DOT beautification grant (Chad Jackson) check into getting custom made signs at the entrances of the City limits welcoming people to Vernon and maybe to something in memory of the two young men that lost their lives this year. We need something to recognize our schools' achievements.

Fire Dept. pre-incident plan and hydrant check (ShiQuan Green) the fire department will be going around to the businesses checking on their fire safety plans and equipment. We will also be going and checking all fire hydrants to insure function and accessibility.

**WITH NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO DISCUSS, THE WORKSHOP WAS
CLOSED AT 6:58PM**