

**REGULAR MEETING  
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NASHVILLE  
COUNTY OF BERRIEN  
AUGUST 12, 2013  
6:00 P.M.**

**INVOCATION:** Mayor Travis Harper

**PLEDGE:** Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Travis Harper

**WELCOME:** Mayor Travis Harper

**ROLL CALL:** Members of the City Council present included Aldermen Eric Gaither, Billy Retterbush, Antonio Carter, Scott Stalnaker, Michael Richbourg Alderwoman Mellisa Watson, and Mayor Travis Harper.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Tina Ward, Mandy Luke, Randy Lane, John Reynolds, Peter Schultz, Dawn Morrison, Chief Clayton, Paul Stagner, Mitchell Moore, Paul Stagner, and Henry Yawn.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Steve Conner, Danny Studstill, Frank Watts, John Black, Randal Milton, Mr. Miles, Allen Davis, Bryan Shaw, Cal Pearson, Elaine Johnson, and Pearlene Daniels.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES-** Mitchell Moore pointed out a correction in the minutes. Under item seven the correct way to spell except is accept for that particular sentence. Alderman Gaither made the motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting with the change. Alderman Carter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**ADOPTIONS OF FORMAL AGENDA-** Mandy Luke asked the Mayor to add an Executive Session to the formal Agenda. Alderman Richbourg made the motion to adopt the formal agenda with the changes. The motion was seconded by Alderwoman Watson and the motion carried unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Presentation from the Girl Scouts-** Dawn Morrison announced the Girl Scout Troup 40566. Julia Guess and Mary Matoska presented the Council with bird feeders for the City parks. Mayor Harper accepted the feeders on behalf of the City of Nashville.

**2. Presentation for the immediate need for a gas line extension-** Danny Studstill introduced Mr. Steve Conner from Homerville. Steve is the new owner of Hubert Moore Lumber Company. Mr. Conner has been in the wood business since the 1980's and owns a saw mill in

Homerville which is named DuPont Yard. Mr. Conner's company is green friendly and energy efficient. Mr. Studstill gave the group the history of what Mr. Conner's company does in Homerville. In November of last year Mr. Conner became the proud owner of the old Hubert Moore Lumber Company which is now called DuPont Pine Products, LLC. Opening the Mill again has given around fifty seven people a job. One of the issues the mill has right now to keep it competitive is what is called "Dry Kiln". Dry Kiln is like a bulk tobacco barn on steroids. Once the wood comes out of the mill he puts it into the "Dry Kiln" and once that process is completed he ships the wood. One of the things that made the purchase of the lumber company such a great deal was the blessings Mr. Conner received from Great Southern Wood, which is also known by "yellow wood". This company has agreed to purchase everything that the saw mill can produce. One of the issues Mr. Conner is having right now is he can produce more sawed lumber than the kilns can dry. In order to fix this problem Mr. Conner would like to modernize and update the kilns. The kilns use electricity right now which is very expensive and according to the people who know how to update the kilns, natural gas is the way to go. Using natural gas will increase production. Mr. Conner has a loan from the Town of Alapaha to complete the conversion and put in the "new kiln". All he needs now is the natural gas. Danny stated some questions have been raised about Mr. Conner's commitment to the City of Nashville because this will be a big investment for the City. Mr. Conner has already given a big commitment to the City of Alapaha by investing eight million to purchase the saw mill so he is committed. Steve Conner told the group he has tried every way possible to dry the wood but nothing is more efficient than natural gas. Danny added that the North Berrien gas line users are seasonal users right now but the lumber company will be using this service year round. Presently they are looking for grants to help fund the project as well as low interest loans. Mayor Harper suggested the Council hold a work session in the next few weeks to discuss the matter further.

**3. Economic Development Assistance Program for the Gas Line Extension-** Dawn Morrison she would like the permission of the Council to pursue the application of the Economic Development Assistance Program. If we are awarded this grant it will pay 60% of this project. We must get started on the application process as soon as possible because the dead line is September 13<sup>th</sup>. South Georgia Regional Commission will write the grant for us but we need to get the application in for them to do so. Since this grant will only cover 60% of this project we are also seeking permission to apply for another loan program at 0% interest with USDA to cover the other 40%. If our application is approved the money will come from USDA to Colquitt Electric and then to the City. So, how this loan works is USDA will loan the money in the amount of what we need for this type project to Colquitt Electric and Colquitt Electric will loan the money to the City of Nashville. If for some reason this application does not get approved we are looking at other possibilities such as GMA which will have three to four percent interest. Alderman Richbourg made the motion to allow Dawn to apply for the Economic Development Assistance Program for the gas line extension. Alderman Stalnaker seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Alderman Richbourg asked Dawn how much money she will be asking from USDA. Dawn said she will not know the answer to that until the City is approved for the grant. Randy Lane asked Dawn to explain about the Engineers for the project. Dawn said their will need to be an Engineer on the front end of this

project and an Engineer on the back end of this project. The Engineer who is on the front end or that draws up the plans cannot bid on the project. Dawn said she spoke with (ASA) Albert Sloan Associates in Valdosta and they will be interested in drawing up the plans for the project. Alderman Richbourg made the motion to allow ASA to do the preliminary drawings on the front end of this project. Alderman Stalnaker seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Dawn said we also need permission to apply for the USDA loan for the match part of this grant as well as permission to seek other loan possibilities if we do not get approved for the USDA loan. Dawn also reminded the group we can pull out of any of these applications at any time if we are not approved for the grant. Alderman Carter made the motion to allow Dawn Morrison to look for the secondary funding source for the grant. Alderman Gaither seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Dawn added that she will need a letter of assurance from Danny Studstill and Steve Conner. Danny Studstill told Dawn they will be happy to accommodate.

**4. Fines and Fees for City Ordinances-** Randy Lane asked the group to postpone this item until the next Council meeting due to Paul Stagner's unexpected absence.

## **REPORTS**

**5. City Manager's/Finance Director's Report-** Mandy Luke told the group she was contacted by Mary Alice McGee from the County about a new business that will be located in town. She is asking the City Council to offer the same tax incentives that we offered another new business back in May of this year. Mandy said the last tax incentive we did tax abatement for the first five years with no taxes. We also looked at waving some of the permit fees as well as the business license fee, and we also looked at negotiating some of the water and gas hookup fees. Alderman Retterbush added that the City does have a clause to pull out of this if we need to due to State laws. Mandy said she needs the permission of the Council to make the offer to the new business. Alderman Retterbush made the motion to allow Mandy to make the tax incentive offer to the new business. Alderman Gaither seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Mandy informed the group that as of Wednesday Tina Ward, the City Clerk will be on vacation and the minutes from this meeting may not be ready for the August 26<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

**6. City Attorney's Report-** Mitchell Moore updated the group on the Toys for Berrien Kids which is the non-profit organization that was recently formed. Mitchell told the group he will pursue the paperwork that needs to be filed in order to get this organization in order. Mitchell also updated the group on the Ice Skating Rink issue. He said according to the City's insurance agent the existing policy does not cover this event. He said Lynn recommended the City take out a special event policy to cover the event. Mitchell said they also recommended he revised the contract and he did so. Under seventeen one provision he added the artificial ice will indemnify and hold the City harmless. Mitchell also added the City of Nashville to the waver and release form which will have to be signed by all participants. He then submitted the forms with the changes to the ice skating company for them to approve and initial. Mitchell told the group the ice skating company also has a provision in the contract that they will provide a subfloor and the City can be held responsible for that subfloor. So Mitchell revised the contract again and

asked that they must let the City know four weeks in advance about the subfloor and if one is required, if the cost is too much then the City will have the right to terminate the contract. He submitted this change in the contract to the company for their approval and initials. Once the contract has been return to us with their approval Council needs to give Mitchell the authority to execute the contract and move forward. Mitchell will also need the Councils approval to get the special event policy which is \$300.00. Alderman Stalnaker made the motion to allow Mitchell to execute the contract and move forward with the event as well as, getting the special event policy recommended by the City's insurance company. Alderman Richbourg seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Mayor Harper asked Dawn Morrison how much this event will cost the City. Dawn said the total cost of the event without the subfloor will be \$5,500.00. We normally spend \$2,000.00 for the snow each year but this year we were going to use the \$2,000.00 toward the ice skating rink and sell tickets for the remaining balance.

**7. Department Head's Report-** Dawn Morrison updated the group on Beetree Park. She said they are meeting with Mr. Rakestraw next week to make the final changes on the plans and then we will be ready to put the project out for bids. Dawn also updated the group on the Rural Development Zone. She said this zone has been created and is in place, so now we have to create an Opportunity Zone. An opportunity zone helps to recruit more businesses and helps businesses expand and create jobs, because if these businesses create jobs then they get tax incentive for those jobs. We have some new businesses coming into the City limits so we want to go ahead and get this into place. The Opportunity Zone is very detailed and very intense to write and Crissy and I have decided to turn this over to the Rural Development Center and allow them to write it. Dawn spoke to Sherry Davidson about writing this for us and Ms. Davidson said the cost to write this will be \$1,500.00 at the very most. Dawn said she would like the permission of the Council to pursue this and have the Rural Development Center to write the Opportunity Zone. Alderman Stalnaker made the motion to allow the Rural Development Center to write the Opportunity Zone provided the City Financial Officer, Mandy Luke can find funds available. Alderman Richbourg seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC/COUNCIL**

Cal Pearson with Small World Education would like for the City to update more often on the Beetree Park Project. He said the project has been ongoing for about a year and no updates have been given. Dawn Morrison told Mr. Pearson they will be having a meeting next week if reference to the park and she will put an ad in the paper stating the time and the place. Elaine Johnson complained to the Council about the condition of Beetree Park. She said the grass needs to be cut around the equipment and the table that's out there. The equipment also needs to be fixed or replaced. She added she is concerned about safety of the small children who play in the park. Randy Lane told Ms. Johnson they will handle the grass tomorrow.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

Alderman Richbourg made the motion to go into Executive Session at 6:55 pm. Alderman Stalnaker seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Alderman Stalnaker made the motion to come out of Executive Session at 7:10 pm. Alderman Richbourg seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Alderman Stalnaker made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 p.m. Alderman Richbourg seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

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Mayor Travis Harper

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Alderman Eric Gaither

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Alderwoman Mellisa Watson

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Alderman Antonio Carter

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Alderman Billy Retterbush

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Alderman Scott Stalnaker

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Alderman Michael Richbourg

## ATTEST

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Tina Ward, City Clerk