

**REGULAR MEETING
CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NASHVILLE
COUNTY OF BERRIEN
January 12, 2009**

INVOCATION: Brother Larry Daughtry

PLEDGE: Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Travis Harper

WELCOME: Mayor Travis Harper

ROLL CALL: Members of the City Council present included Mayor Travis Harper, Aldermen Dick Perryman, Bill Turner, Billy Retterbush, Michael Richbourg, Scott Stalnaker, and Darren Davis.

STAFF PRESENT: Tina Haughton, Chief Jimmy Clayton, Tommy Davis, John Reynolds, Peter Schultz, Henry Yawn, City Manager Mandy Luke, and City Attorney Mitchell Moore.

OTHERS PRESENT: Randall Milton, Fern Turner, Larry Daughtry, Margie Tygart, Brenda Smith, John Hunkele, Nichole Robinson, Brandon Rampy and Keith Stone.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: Alderman Richbourg made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Alderman Stalnaker, and the motion carried unanimously.

ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA- Mayor Travis Harper requested number 4 to be added to the agenda. Brandon Rampy wants to discuss the grinding of the yard trash. Alderman Richbourg requested item 5 be added to the agenda. He would like to discuss scheduling the Public Hearings for the water rate increases. Alderman Richbourg made a motion to approve the formal agenda with the additions. Alderman Stalnaker seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 2009 Committee Appointments- Mayor Harper made the appointments of the Mayor Pro-Tem and the appointments of the standing committees for the 2009 calendar year. In accordance with Section 3-6 of the City of Nashville Charter which states the Mayor shall appoint standing committees of the City Council whose duties shall be provided by the Council. Mayor Harper appointed the following Committee appointments. Alderman Billy Retterbush, Water and Sewer Department; Alderman Scott Stalnaker, Public Safety and Gas Department; Alderman Michael Richbourg, Mayor Pro-Tem and Public Safety; Alderman Bill Turner, Economic Development and Sanitation; Alderman Darren Davis, Street Department; Alderman Dick Perryman, Parks Recreation and Cemeteries. Alderman Retterbush made a motion to approve the Committee appointments. Alderman Stalnaker seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Ratification of Watts Reception Expense- Mandy Luke told the group the Mayor and Council were polled on December 19, 2008, regarding the expenses for Jr. Watts' Retirement Reception. The cost exceeded the \$1,000.00 limit. After

polling the Council the majority approved and the expense needs to be ratified. Alderman Richbourg made a motion to ratify the expenses for Jr. Watts Retirement Reception. Alderman Stalnaker seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Annual Fee to GMA for Cable & Telecommunications

Management Services- Mandy Luke informed the Council the City of Nashville has been participation in the GMA's Cable and Telecommunications Management Services Program for several years. They monitor laws and regulations for cities to ensure that these maintain strong regulatory authority in matters concerning cable, telecommunications and rights of way. The annual fee for this calendar year, January 1, through December 31, 2009 is \$2,407.00. GMA has provided great services over the years in monitoring these regulations for the cities. Mayor Harper asked what services the City would be losing if we choose not to pay the annual fee. Mitchell Moore said the service is a good investment. He said they keep the City up to date in monitoring the regulations in matters concerning cable, telecommunications and rights of way. They use their expertise, and do all the research for the City concerning these matters. If the City chooses not to continue the services then the obligation will fall on the City Attorney. Mitchell said the services will save the City time and money in research on these matters. Alderman Davis asked when the annual fee is due. Alderman Richbourg replied, by January 21, 2009. Alderman Stalnaker stated the fee is a small price to pay for the service provided by GMA. He added in the long run the City will save money by keeping the service. After discussing the matter further, Alderman Richbourg made the motion to pay the annual fee. Alderman Stalnaker seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

4. City Yard Trash Disposal- Brandon Rampy, who owns a grinding operation in Lowndes County, presented an estimate for grinding yard trash on site for the City. He said his operation grinds the waste for boiler fuel for local paper mills, and although the City's yard waste is extremely clean it doesn't have the woody material needed for boiler fuel his operation provides. Mr. Rampy said he would be glad to give the City a quote on grinding the waste. Alderman Richbourg asked him how long the process would take and the cost. Mr. Rampy said the grinding would take anywhere from 20 to 30 hours, at \$400.00 per hour. He said although his company can not use the waste, he can grind it so the City can use it. The group discussed uses for the material such as filling in the waste site or burying it grinded waste, and using it as filler for different street projects. Alderman Retterbush reminded the group about the RDC meeting on January 21st he is to attend and how much of the grant money the City will be granted for these services. Mayor Harper asked, if we need to advertise for bids on the grinding of yard waste. Alderman Retterbush said yes we should but we need to see how much funding the City will receive from RDC. Alderman Richbourg made a motion to advertise for bids on grinding the yard waste, on site, and bids will be good for 30 days after the deadline for submittal. Alderman Stalnaker seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Water and Sewer Rates – Alderman Richbourg told the group the Council held a work session today at 5:30 concerning increasing water rates. He said the City will need to increase the water and sewer rates approximately \$21.00 per customer per month in order to pay for the \$5.6 million dollar water treatment plant the City was mandated by EPD 4 years ago to install. The City was mandated by EPD to install a new water and sewer treatment plant and if we don't comply

the City could be fined up to \$1000.00 per day. Alderman Richbourg stated we have to decide how we are going to raise the rates and when the rates will be raised. Although the ground breaking for the facility will take another 9 month, the City will need to prove to GEFA the funding they are providing for the facility can be paid back. Alderman Turner suggested raising the rates in stages or implements. Mandy Luke added the only thing we can work with is the \$14.00 debt service on sewer, and Mr. Bill Powell told us at the Work Session we can work that charge in phases. The other charges are set in and can not be phased in. Mayor Harper said if we implement the total amount now we could save on the total amount of the loan. Alderman Richbourg suggested the rates be changed to half now and half five or six months later. Mandy Luke informed the group in order to do the increases the City's billing will need to be changed to REU, (Residential Equivalent Units) because we are not using that system now. Alderman Richbourg said we need to make a motion to change the current per gallon water billing system to Residential Equivalent Units and that we will raise rates 30 days after the change. Alderman Retterbush added a letter should be sent out to each customer explaining the new billing before rates are raised as well as the proper advertising in the paper. The group had some discussion about REU's and how the rates should be raised. Alderman Richbourg made the motion to change the current per gallon billing system to Residential Equivalent Units. Alderman Retterbush seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. The group discussed sending each consumer a letter advising them of the change in billing and the increase in rates. They also discussed when the rate increase will take place and in how many increments. Alderman Richbourg made the motion with proper advertisement and informing the public that we increase water and sewer rates according to the REU billing schedule by half of the recommendation by Bill Powell of Rural Water; and in 90 days we implement raising water and sewer by the other half of that number. Alderman Retterbush seconded the motion. Mayor Harper noted this will begin the first of March 2009. The motion carried unanimously. Mayor Harper requested the Council make a motion to give Bill Powell of Georgia Rural Water, a supplement for his time and travel. He said Mr. Powell is providing the City with his services on his own time and the Council has supplemented Mr. Powell's time and travel in the past. Alderman Stalnaker made a motion to pay Mr. Powell the same amount as before. The motion was seconded by Alderman Richbourg, and the motion carried unanimously. Alderman Richbourg requested the City advertise for a Public Hearing ASAP, and invite Bill Powell back to explain and answer any questions the public may have.

REPORTS

6. City Manager's/Finance Director's Report- Mandy Luke handed out copies of the updated budget to the Council. She wanted to update the Council on the budget and allow the new members to get acquainted with the City's financial, the different funds, and how much is budgeted for each department. Mandy pointed out the Gas Fund is as of now in the red, and the water and sewer fund is in the black. She said the General Fund is doing well now due to property taxes. Mandy also updated the Council on the Local Option Sales Tax and the SPLOST. She gave figures comparing where the City is now to what the City collected last year from the charts she provided. She also gave the comparison figures on the water/sewer, sanitation, and gas charges. Mandy said the only other thing she would like to inform the Council of is Mary Alice McGee called today and wanted the Council to look at the Freeport Tax.

7. City Attorney's Report- Mitchell Moore said Mrs. McGee also contacted him and went over some unverified figures, and if the City is going to do this we need to do it now. He said apparently at one point we implemented a 20% rebate or cut which amount to around \$26 thousand losses in revenue.

Mitchell explained what the Freeport tax means to the new Council members, and the loss in revenue the City could loose by giving new businesses this limited tax break. Alderman Stalnaker stated the City can't take a loss like this at this time. He added if we had some new industries wanting get established in the City, this Freeport tax would be a good idea. Mayor Harper asked Mitchell would this apply only to new industries or would it apply to all businesses. Mitchell said he understands it to be every business. Mayor Harper replied at this time the City can not afford to agree to the Freeport tax. Mitchell said the idea is if the City invokes it in, then you will bring in more industry and the additional industry would offset the loss of revenue. Mayor Harper asked Mitchell when the Council would have to make a decision on the Freeport Tax. Mitchell said the decision must be made in the first of the year or in January. After the group discussed the issue further they decided the Freeport tax would not be a good idea for the City at this time, but would like for Mitchell to look into the matter further, and possibly adding it to the next agenda. Mitchell said Mary Alice McGee has already requested that she be placed on the next Council Meetings agenda, which we will need to discuss in the executive session of that meeting.

8. Department Heads' Report- Tommy Davis told the group he would like to thank the Council for allowing Mr. Rampy to speak in the meeting about his views on grinding the yard trash.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/GENERAL COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL

Randall Milton told the group he would like for someone to look at the repaired sewer line in front of his house. He said the line needs to be filled in again because it keeps sinking. Mayor Harper asked Tommy Davis to fill the area in again.

Margie Tygart asked the Council if someone could cut back the limbs on some of the trees at the cemetery. Alderman Retterbush asked Tommy Davis to get the sidearm mower and cut the limbs down. Mrs. Tygart also asked the group if the City plans to get a recycling bin, and is the City required to have a recycling bin. Mayor Harper said in the next 2 to 4 years we will be required to reduce the amount the things we take to the landfill by a certain percentage. He added Mr. Henry Yawn is also working with Tifton and Valdosta on regional recycling. Mrs. Fern Turner said she will have sympathy for everyone who will be working with the public on water's billing and rate changes.

John Hunkele told the group the surveyor sent a copy of the survey on the Stream Buffer Variance, and at this time he is still working out the easements and property lines in that area, so I just wanted to report the surveyor is almost finished in that area.

Alderman Turner said he has received several complaints from both residence and businesses about garbage pickup. The garbage is not being picked up on time, and some mornings the trash trucks are too early and are very noisy picking up the trash. Alderman Stalnaker requested we get in touch with Kevin Griffin of Griffin Waste and inform him of the complaints and see if he can handle the problem. Alderman Richbourg request the drafted Golf Cart Ordinance and the definite crossings be added to the next agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Alderman Turner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. Alderman Retterbush seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Travis Harper

Alderman Bill Turner

Alderman Dick Perryman

Alderman Darren Davis

Alderman Billy Retterbush

Alderman Scott Stalnaker

Alderman Michael Richbourg

ATTEST

Johnny Hall, City Clerk