

**MINUTES  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
CITY OF DOUGLAS  
JULY 26, 2010**

**A Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held on Monday, July 26, 2010 at 7:00 P.M. The meeting was convened in the Council Chambers of City Hall with Mayor Jackie L. Wilson presiding. Mayor Pro Tem Ronnie Anderson, Commissioners Robert Moore, Olivia Pearson, and Dennis Josey were also in attendance. Commissioners Johnnie Lee Roper and Marty Swain were unable to attend the meeting.**

**INVOCATION**

Pastor Marshall Adcock, First Assembly of God, gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Charlie Davis, Assistant City Manager, led The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**MINUTE ADOPTION**

The following minutes, were unanimously approved:

**Work Session..... July 15, 2010  
Commission Meeting..... July 15, 2010**

**A MOTION** was received by Mayor Pro Tem Ronnie Anderson to approve the minutes of the previous meeting; it was seconded by Commissioner Dennis Josey. The motion was unanimously carried by the Mayor and Commission. **(5-0)**

**APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA**

The Mayor and Commission unanimously approved **(5-0)** to accept the order of the agenda.

**A MOTION** was received by Commissioner Robert Moore, for approval of the order of the agenda; Mayor Pro Tem Ronnie Anderson seconded the motion.

**APPROVAL OF THE FIRST READING/2010 TAX ORDINANCE**

Joyce Taylor, Finance Director, stated to the Mayor and Commission that as required by state law, a five year history of the City's proposed tax digest and levy has been published and was ready for the first reading by City Attorney Jerome Adams. The second reading and adoption will be August 9, 2010 at the regular scheduled meeting.

Mayor Jackie Wilson reiterated that the City of Douglas will not increase taxes.

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City Attorney Jerome Adams read the first reading of the proposed 2010 Tax Ordinance: **“AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA PROPOSED FOR THE LEVYING OF A TAX UPON ALL TAXABLE PROPERTY WITHIN THE CITY OF DOUGLAS SUBJECT TO TAXATION UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA AND THE ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF DOUGLAS FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2010 AND FOR ALL PURPOSES”**

**APPROVAL OF THE APPLICATION BEVERAGE LICENSE**

Upon receiving a recommendation from Randall Parker, Building Inspector, the Mayor and Commission unanimously approved **(5-0)** the request of Umiya C-Store LLC for an alcoholic beverage license, retail, for Quick Gas at 1000 W. Baker Hwy.

**A MOTION** was made by Commissioner Olivia Pearson for approval and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ronnie Anderson.

**APPROVAL OF THE ELECTRIC CITIES OF GEORGIA AGREEMENT**

Upon receiving a recommendation from Dale Batten, Community Development Director, the Mayor and Commission unanimously approved **(5-0)** a resolution authorizing Mayor Wilson to execute the grant Services Agreement with Electric Cities of Georgia, Inc., to provide services for the Renewable Energy Program, Residential Energy Efficiency Program and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program funded by GEFA.

**A MOTION** was made by Commissioner Bob Moore for approval and seconded by Commissioner Olivia Pearson.

**APPROVAL OF THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT/FUEL FARM CONSTRUCTION/PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT-OBSTRUCTION REMOVAL-PHASE 1**

Upon receiving a recommendation from Dale Batten, Community Development Director, the Mayor and Commission unanimously approved **(5-0)** Work Authorization 14A received from the LPA Group, Inc., in association with Statewide Engineering Company, Inc., for professional services regarding the Runway 4/22 Obstruction Removal Phase I in the amount of \$17,658.00; authorized Work Authorization 15A for the construction phase of the new Fuel Farm in the amount of \$16,925.00 and authorized a local match in the amounts of \$423.17 for the fuel farm and \$882.90 for the obstruction clearance from SPLOST 2000 funds.

**A MOTION** was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ronnie Anderson for approval and seconded by Commissioner Dennis Josey.

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**APPROVAL OF ONE YEAR EXTENSION OF THE WATER METERS BID**

Upon receiving a recommendation from Jerald Guthrie, Purchasing Director, the Mayor and Commission unanimously approved **(5-0)** a one year extension to the annual bid approved July 27, 2009, for water meters from Dublin Winnelson, Inc. of Dublin, Georgia, for a grand total of \$49,084.68 based on unit prices. Water meters will be ordered as needed.

**A MOTION** was made by Commissioner Dennis Josey for approval and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ronnie Anderson.

**APPROVAL OF THE PURCHASE OF AN AQUA RAY DISINFECTION SYSTEM FOR THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT**

Upon receiving a recommendation from Jerald Guthrie Purchasing Director, the Mayor and Commission unanimously approved **(5-0)** the recommendation by Ernie Crussel, Water Department Director, to accept the quote for \$78,900.00 received from Ozonia North America LLC, located in Leonia, New Jersey, the single source provider for the Aquaray 40 "High Output" Vertical Ultraviolet Disinfection System needed as part of the rehabilitation of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. This price includes freight charges.

**A MOTION** was made by Commissioner Dennis Josey for approval and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ronnie Anderson.

**APPROVAL OF FINAL BILL UTILITY POLICIES**

Commissioner Bob Moore stated that in the past the final bill procedure has been an unwritten policy, but has been applied for several years.

Upon receiving recommendation from Commissioner Bob Moore, to have a written policy and procedure concerning finalizing utility bills (2) weeks after account have been disconnected. This policy shall be read and passed by this Commission in the proper manner. Mayor Pro Tem Ronnie Anderson seconded the motion. Mayor Wilson, Bob Moore Dennis Josey and Mayor Pro Tem Ronnie Anderson approved (4-1) in favor of the **MOTION** Commissioner Olivia Pearson **opposed** the motion.

**Discussion:** Commissioner Pearson stated that as a result of Cheryl Cunningham coming before the Mayor and Commission, and upon Commissioner Pearson investigating the policy concerning the procedures of a final bill, she was informed that there was not a written policy and procedures on finalization of bills.

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Commissioner Pearson indicated that an explanation or other options other than what Ms. Cunningham has been offered should be given. Commissioner Pearson continued to state that she was very disappointed that there was no written policy. Commissioner Pearson stated that she disagrees with that type of procedure, and now the Commission has decided to make a motion tonight on implementing a written policy concerning finalization of bills. Commissioner Pearson also stated that for the record she has a problem with a residential bill being finalized out in two weeks.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Cheryl Cunningham of 207 Pinecrest Drive, Douglas Georgia, stated that she was disappointed at listening to Commissioner Pearson confirm that there was not a policy concerning final billing and scrutinizing her on television. Ms. Cunningham feels the City of Douglas owes her monetary compensation, and a public apology. Ms. Cunningham also expressed concern due to already obtaining a final bill, but received another bill charging \$37.00 for (7) seven days.

Mayor Jackie Wilson stated to Ms. Cunningham that neither she nor the City of Douglas owes her an apology. After accusation from Ms Cunningham concerning Mayor Wilson not abiding by policy and procedures, Mayor Wilson preceded to explain that about six (6) years ago her son purchased a commercial property in Douglas. Mayor Wilson could not recall if he did not receive the bill or he just was not used to paying it on a certain date. Mayor Wilson proceeded to explain that her daughter-in-law presented a check to a Customer Service Representative. Mayor Wilson's daughter-in-law returned to Mayor Wilson explaining they would not take her check. Mayor Wilson responded to her that was correct that they will not take a check on anyone that has been cut off. Mayor Wilson told her daughter-in-law to take her check that the Customer Service Representative would take her check. Mayor Wilson's daughter-in-law returned stating that they would not take her check. Mayor Wilson stated that she would explain to the Customer Service Representative that she could take her check from her, but not from her daughter-in-law. Mayor Wilson stated the policy was and still is that you cannot give a check if your utility bill is cut off, but she could give one anytime she wanted too because she was in good standing with the city.

Cheryl Cunningham questioned the statement from Mayor Wilson concerning she could give a check anytime she wanted too.

Mayor Wilson responded that was because she was not the person being cut off and she is in good standing with the city. Mayor Wilson also stated that her son has not been cutoff since that incident, but could not say that about Ms. Cunningham.

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Mayor Wilson explained the policy concerning finalizing a bill in two (2) weeks that it has not been a written policy but it has been an unwritten policy for years.

Commissioner Pearson stated that in her opinion there is no such thing as an unwritten policy, if it's not written there are no standards to go by. Commissioner Pearson apologized for there not being a policy and that Ms. Cunningham's account had been finalized in two (2) weeks. Commissioner Pearson suggested that she could pursue it further if she sees that anything unethical has been done.

Mr. Hal Presley, President of the Coffee County Branch of the NAACP, presented the Mayor and Commission with a utility billing policy that came from the Utility Billing Procedures Manual, and two (2) affidavits. Mr. Presley request for clarification, so that he would be perfectly clear and have a good understanding of the policy and procedure manual.

Mr. Presley reiterated what Ms. Cunningham stated earlier concerning an incident he experienced. Mr. Presley came to City Hall to pay someone's utility bill, he had never had a check to be returned, and he was told he had to pay it in cash or a cashier's check.

Mayor Wilson responded that that those instructions of paying by cash or cashier's check was told in error.

Mr. Presley continued to state that there was a conversation concerning Christen Shaw, but there was no conclusion. Mr. Presley stated that if he comes to City Hall and his services were disconnected and he was to pay the entire bill and a reconnect fee according to what he read to the Mayor and Commission his services would be restored that same business day? Mr. Presley asked was this the correct interpretation of this written word?

Charles Davis Assistant City Manager responded that this was a correct statement.

Mr. Presley read a letter that he also gave to the Mayor and Commission. After the letter was read Mr. Presley stated that if the response that Mr. Davis stated was true, therefore Ms. Shaw and anyone in the City of Douglas who paid their utility bill in full should not had to pay an \$85.00 after hours cut on fee. Mr. Presley also stated that the only way this city is going to make real progress is to reduce the policy to writing and make everyone adhere to the same rules, except in extenuating circumstances. Mr. Presley requested that the information he presented be made a part of the minutes.

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Melvin Harris, a citizen speaking concerning Roundtree Park stated that he would like to know if the city could put tops on the dug outs and lights at Roundtree Park.

Mayor Wilson explained that this was not in the budget for this year. Mayor Wilson stated that we don't always have funding for the parks.

After much discussion, Commissioner Dennis Josey suggested that Mr. Harris could get in touch with him and he could meet with the joint City/ Coffee County Parks and Recreation Commission to express his concerns.

Daniel Wilson, 1422 Adams Street, expressed concern for the conditions of Adam Street and Irma Streets. Also Mr. Wilson asked the question on why sewer was higher than the water.

Mr. Davis explained that it cost the city more money to treat waste water than to pump fresh water.

Mayor Wilson stated that the city will have Public Works to look at the streets that Mr. Daniels expressed concern for.

Commissioner Pearson stated that she is very concerned on how the Board of Commission is not moving forward as they should, and she is very disappointed and feel that they should get it right.

**A MOTION** to adjourn the meeting by Commissioner Dennis Josey and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ronnie Anderson. Mayor and Commission unanimously approved the motion to adjourn. **(5-0)**

**UTILITY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**DOUGLAS MASONIC LODGE #73**

Charles Davis, Assistant City Manager, stated that the Douglas Masonic Lodge # 73 at 609 S. Gaskin Avenue, has experienced a toilet leak that caused (2) utility bills to run extremely high. The water and sewer charges are \$789.00. Randall Parker, Permit Inspector went and showed them the leaks. Since then the meter hasn't move. Mr. Davis stated that Dr. Jimmy Veal and Mr. Michael Newton have appeared before them due to the utility committee can only recommend that customers pay for what services were rendered.

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Mr. Veal and Michael Newton petition the Mayor and Commission that the water and sewer charges are removed for those two (2) months due to the malfunction of the toilet.

After much discussion a **MOTION** was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ronnie Anderson to write off \$394.75 of water and sewer and to allow the Masonic Lodge #73 to pay the remaining balance of the utility bills in a three (3) month installment plan. Commissioner Bob Moore seconded the motion. The Mayor and Commission unanimously approved (**5-0**) the motion.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Mayor and Commission unanimously approved (**5-0**) the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm.

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**Jackie L. Wilson, Mayor**

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**Wynetta J. Bolder, City Clerk**