

City Hall  
Fayette, Alabama  
February 23, 2021

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Fayette met at 5:00 o'clock, p.m. on February 23, 2021, in the Council Chambers of the City Hall.

Upon roll call the following were found to be present: Mayor Rod Northam, Councilmembers Virettia L. Whiteside, Eddy Campbell, Tommy Williams, Aliska Hughes-Monroe and Jerry Nichols. Also present were City Clerk Dawn Clapp, City Attorney Dale Lawrence and Police Chief Danny Jenkins.

The opening prayer was given by Mr. Luke Porter.

Councilmember Eddy Campbell led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Rod Northam announced a quorum was present and the meeting was open for the transaction of business.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilmember Nichols moved the minutes of the meeting held on February 9, 2021, be approved. Upon the motion being seconded by Councilmember Whiteside, it was unanimously approved.

#### PRESENTATION OF APPROPRIATIONS TO SCHOOLS

The Council presented Fayette County High School, Fayette Middle School and Fayette Elementary School with checks in the amount of \$5,000.00 each. Dr. Jeremy Madden (FCHS), Mrs. Tonya Freeman (FMS) and Dr. Alicia Nalls (FES) accepted the donations on behalf of their schools.

Dr. Alicia Nalls thanked the Council for their support and stated the funds would be used for new flooring and a marquee.

Mrs. Tonya Freeman thanked the Council for their support and stated the funds would be used to improve the school.

Dr. Jeremy Madden thanked the Council for their support and stated the funds would be used for an ACT Online Preparation Course.

#### BOND FINANCE

Mr. Rick McCabe updated the Council on the financing of the City's current bond. He reviewed the three options the City had concerning refinancing the bond. The three options were as follows:

The first option would be to just refinance the current bond at the lower interest rate which would reduce the amount of the City's annual bond payment. Under this option, the bond payment would drop approximately \$22,000.00 per year resulting in a savings of \$370,000.00 over 17 years.

The second option would be to refinance the current bond at the lower interest rate but keep the City's bond payment amount the same as the current bond payment. Under this option, the bond payments and maturity date would remain the same as the current bond and the City would receive \$350,000.00 at closing.

The third option would be to refinance the current bond at the lower interest rate and extend the bond payments for an additional five years while keeping the new bond payment the same as the current bond payment. Under this option, the bond payment would remain the same as the current bond payment but the maturity date would be extended 5 years and the City would receive \$1,000,000.00 at closing.

Councilmember Campbell moved the City proceed with the second option. Upon the motion being seconded by Councilmember Nichols, the same was unanimously approved.

#### DEATH OF MR. JOEY COSBY

Mayor Northam reported the City had lost one of its longest serving employees, Mr. Joey Cosby. Mr. Cosby had worked for the City for almost thirty-five years. He died unexpectedly this past weekend. Mayor Northam asked everyone to remember his family and friends in their prayers.



## STATEMENT OF MAYOR

Mayor Northam stated he had a few comments to make about the recent article in the Washington Post. His comments were as follows:

*"I want to make it clear that this Council will conduct business with the guiding principle of respect for every person. We will listen to concerns and we will not always agree, but we will give each person the respect that they deserve. I will not discuss issues on social media, those discussions will take place in person so that the issue is given my undivided attention and will not propagate gossip.*

*I am proud of the diversity that we have in our city. That diversity is what makes Fayette the great place that it is. We need many ideas and views to help us be the City of Opportunity for everyone.*

*The inconsistencies in this article were numerous. In our council meeting, many facts were left out and some were incorrect. The only things that were left in were to support a divisive narrative. This article could have been one of inspiration to those who have dreams and goals in life. We are in these roles to make a difference and I will always try to deliver a message of inspiration. We are a city of unity and will not stand for this divisive narrative. The mention of the potholes in Ward 4, when we have them all over town, but failing to mention the investment in improvements to Martin Luther King Drive. The mention of no jobs, when our current unemployment rate is less than 3% and our businesses are having a hard time getting qualified people to work or even apply. Yes, we are learning about the city ordinances and the proper enforcement. We have a lot more to learn, but we are making progress to ensure that if it is written down, we will do our best to follow it. We have a caring municipal court whose goal is to help people, not punish them, but unfortunately, sometimes punishment is the last option to change the undesired behavior.*

*Finally, when it came to the election and campaigning, I found a mutual respect at each door that I knocked on. No, not all of them were supporting me, but they respected that I made the effort to visit them and that I respected their freedom of choice. That mutual respect is what has led me to never want to move from this city and will be what carries us to achieve the improvements that we want to see for our citizens.*

*Council, I appreciate you for all that you do for the citizens of Fayette. You have come into office and worked diligently to help our people. I look forward to working with you for many years to come."*

Councilmember Nichols stated it takes courage to run for Council because you are putting yourself out there.

Councilmember Whiteside stated the councilmembers are here to serve the citizens.

## AIRPORT CARES ACT APPLICATION

Mayor Northam reported the City could receive \$9,000.00 from the CARES Act for the Airport if it applied for the funds. Councilmember Whiteside moved that the City submit an application for the Airport for Federal assistance under the CARES Act. Upon the motion being seconded by Councilmember Williams, the same was unanimously approved.

## FAYETTE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mayor Northam presented Fayette Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Danny White a \$5,000.00 check pursuant to the contract with the Chamber to provide to the City services and programs for the promotion of the City and for recruiting industrial and manufacturing operations to locate within the City.

## BUSINESS LICENSE SOFTWARE

Mayor Northam reported he had received two quotes on business license software. He recommended the software from ETA Data Direct, Inc. at a purchase price of \$3,500.00 with a monthly support fee of \$200.00 per month. He stated he would provide the Council with more information about how this compares to the City's current system. He would also investigate whether the assistant City Clerk would need another computer and printer.

## RAILS TO TRAILS PROJECT

The Council discussed the Rails to Trail project. Some councilmembers were concerned about walkers crossing Martin Luther King Drive because of the traffic on the street.



## RESOLUTION 2021-01

Mayor Northam presented Resolution 2021-01 to the Council for their consideration. Resolution 2021-01 is as follows:

### **RESOLUTION 2021-01 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SUBMITTAL OF A RTP GRANT APPLICATION REQUESTING \$400,000 IN RTP GRANT FUNDS WITH THE CITY PROVIDING MATCHING FUNDS OF TWENTY PERCENT**

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**WHEREAS**, the City of Fayette has made it known their intention to apply to the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs for Recreational Trails Program(RTP) Funds to construct Phase I of the City of Fayette Rails to Trails multi- purpose trail; and

**WHEREAS**, said programs are limited to funding a maximum of \$400,000 or eighty percent (80%) of the proposed project cost which will be used for construction of the first phase of the multi-purpose trail.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the Fayette City Council is authorizing the submittal of a RTP Grant application requesting \$400,000 in RTP Grant funds and will commit twenty percent (\$100,000) matching funds for the construction phase of this project.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that in the event the grant is awarded, the City of Fayette understands that it will sign assurances complying with all applicable Federal and State laws, rules, and regulations.

**ADOPTED AND APPROVED** by the City of Fayette, on this the 23rd day of February 2021.

#### **THE CITY OF FAYETTE:**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Rod Northam, Mayor

**Attest:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dawn Clapp, City Clerk

Councilmember Williams moved the Council adopt Resolution 2021-01. Upon the motion being seconded by Councilmember Hughes-Monroe, the same was unanimously adopted.

#### LOCAL FOODS/LOCAL PLACES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REQUEST

Mayor Northam asked the Council whether it wanted to apply for technical assistance concerning the Local Foods/Local Places program. Councilmember Campbell moved the City proceed with the request for technical assistance concerning the Local Foods/Local Places program. Upon the motion being seconded by Councilmember Whiteside, the same was unanimously adopted.

#### COVID-19 UPDATE

Mayor Northam stated the Covid-19 situation in the community is improving. He stated on January 22, 2021, there were 2,258 Covid-19 patients in ICU statewide. On February 22, 2021, there were 862 patients in ICU statewide.

Mayor Northam stated the local Walmart is giving approximately 200 vaccinations a week. Also, Dr. Fred Yerby continues to provide vaccinations and the Health Department is continuing its drive-thru vaccination program each Friday.

#### REPORT OF MAYOR

Mayor Northam stated the Severe Weather Preparedness Tax Holiday is this weekend.

Mayor Northam announced that a new business, Mendex Tire Center, has opened in Fayette.

Mayor Northam stated that there are still many job opportunities in Fayette.

[Councilmember Eddy Campbell was excused from the meeting at this point.]

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilmember Nichols moved the Council go into executive session for the purpose of discussing the consideration the City is willing to offer for the lease or purchase of certain real property. Upon the motion being seconded by Councilmember Hughes-Monroe, it was unanimously approved.

Councilmember Nichols moved the Council come out of executive session. Upon the motion being seconded by Councilmember Whiteside, the same was unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, upon the motion to adjourn being made by Councilmember Nichols and seconded by Councilmember Whiteside, it was unanimously approved.

Attest:

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Mayor

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City Clerk