

**SAVANNAH CITY COUNCIL  
SPECIAL MEETING  
SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2013  
CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM  
6:00 P.M.**

Mayor Connie George presiding.

**Purpose:** Special meeting was held to review budget amendments and other discussion items.

Council members present: Greg Wilson, Don Dillman, Joy Thompson and John Parker. City Administrator Jill Cornett, City Clerk Beth Kar, Chief of Police David Vincent, Director of Public Works Kenny Lance, Golf Manager Mark Christopher and Fire Chief Tommy George and a few members of the public were also present. The meeting notice was posted at City Hall April 18, 2013. The meeting was audio recorded.

**Budget Amendments** – City Administrator Jill Cornett provided an overview of why the City needed to amend the budget. She described that one of the items the City was “dinged” for in the 2012 audit was for not amending the budget on the Stormwater COP refinancing. The City needs to do a budget amendment for the addition of Pool Bonds; this is the main reason for this budget meeting. Legally the City is not expected to amend the budget unless it exceeds budgeted amounts as a whole and the City has not done that. However, Cornett felt that the City had made enough significant changes to personnel from amounts in the original budget, plus she had additional recommendations.

**Personnel** – Many changes have been made this year. Jason Long was promoted to Assistant Utility Director. Jason is being trained on water operations because Water Superintendent Dale Watson is nearing retirement. Watson is now the Utility Director. The operators at both plants are being cross trained. Dellie Dunn was promoted to full time. Mike Quirk was promoted to full time. Gene Grossman was promoted to full time. Tim Spoonemore was promoted as his duties increased. Additionally Valorie Bush and Trevor Moss have been working for the City almost 2 years, 20 to 30 hours per week. The City is legally obligated to provide health insurance benefits and retirement for employees who average 30 hours or more a week in a 12 month calendar period. Cornett recommended that both Valorie Bush and Trevor Moss be granted full time status. Trevor has passed the chemicals certification so if he is not made full time; his rate still needs to be increased. In the past there were two full –time people at the golf course. Mark Christopher has been handling everything as the only full-time employee.

Council discussed the proposed recommendations. John Parker asked if the budget included making Valorie and Trevor full-time. If not, he would recommend that these two be considered in next year’s budget. Don Dillman was familiar with Trevor and said he does a tremendous job at the golf course including tournaments. Jill Cornett mentioned that without making them full-time, the City runs a risk of losing them. Don Dillman added that there was enough revenue and making them full time would not cost that much more. Joy Thompson asked what the Golf Committee had recommended. Trevor is making \$9.25 an hour and this would be increased including \$1,000 for earning his chemical license. A golf course maintenance full-time position is in the budget but listed at a higher salary and with a different title. Mike Quirk and Dellie Dunn’s positions were in the budget, so each of them was a replacement and not a new expense in the budget. Since Trevor was in the budget, John Parker thought that was fine but since Valorie was not in the 2013 budget, he thought the City should wait until the next budget.

Trevor is the only one at the golf course with a chemical license. City Administrator Jill Cornett talked about segregating duties at City Hall. John Parker was concerned that another full-time staff member was not budgeted money. Jill Cornett reminded everyone that the other salary changes of Jason and Tim were not part of the budget, either. Joy Thompson would rather go into Closed Session to discuss Valorie. Joy Thompson motioned to table a decision on Valorie until closed session. Don Dillman seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes. Joy Thompson motioned to amend the budget to reflect the changes as listed on the CA report. John Parker seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes. Joy Thompson motioned to promote Trevor Moss to full time status with benefits including \$1,000 increase for earning his chemical license certification. Don Dillman seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

Pool Bond & Expenses – Don Dillman motioned and Joy Thompson seconded to approve the budget amendment to add the Pool Bonds to the budget. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

Website – Council earlier approved the website renovation. Cornett would like to approve the expense of the website as a budget amendment. Don Dillman motioned to approve the website expense as a budget amendment. Joy Thompson seconded. Vote: 3 yes; 1 no: Parker. Motion carried.

GIS Software – Midland GIS proposed to take the City's GIS mapping and put it into a new system that would be cloud based. This proposal would include locations on the City infrastructure. Building Inspector Gene Grossman commented that it would not just locate the pipes but would determine the type of pipes and size of the line. This is a recommendation that the City could budget \$50,000 for this and break-out the expense by departments. John Parker asked if the budget today could stand it when broken out. Yes there is the revenue to support the expense. There is just not a line item expensed for GIS. She expects that this would likely be so intensive, that some of the cost would go into the next budget year. John Parker motioned to put out a bid for GIS mapping to determine if it is affordable. Greg Wilson seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

Early Payoff NID – The Neighborhood Improvement District tax covered the improvements to sidewalks and lighting around the Square. Jill Cornett contacted the City's bond counsel. The current payoff for NID would be \$32,960. The City would save approximately \$22,000 in interest and fees. In the big picture it saves the taxpayers money to pay it off early. The cost would come out of the street department. Joy Thompson motioned to pay off the NID to save on the interest. John Parker seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes. Joy motioned to amend the budget to reflect paying off the NID. John Parker seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

### **Discussion Items:**

**Water Rates** – John Parker stated that according to ordinance 2552, there should be an increase in water rates May 2013. The ordinance includes a 3% increase each year until 2017. At that time the City would have a rate analysis to see what rates should be charged in the future. John Parker motioned to postpone the increase for 6 months until Council can see if the raise is needed. Don Dillman mentioned that in the audit it shows that the City is behind on setting aside bond reserves. Dillman wouldn't mind looking at water rates once the City has the necessary monies into the restrict funds. Jill Cornett's recommendation is to put more money in the reserves. She pointed out that if City does not adhere to the water rate increase, she did not think the lenders would refinance the City's water debt. John Parker wanted to be able to identify and justify the need to citizens for the water rate increases. Don Dillman thought the City should

bring in an engineer to identify restructuring water lines and other costs. The City already paid Carl Brown for the engineering report. Cornett talked about capital changes such as painting the water tower and acidizing the well. Mayor Connie George asked if there was a second to Parker's motion. Council continued discussion. Council discussed the City's wholesale water contract with Andrew County #3. Don Dillman mentioned that in the Carl Brown's report it showed that Savannah wasn't selling the water less than cost. Cornett continued that that if the City wants to refinance debt, it needs to be able show that it will be bringing in enough money for all expenses. She was afraid the lenders could call in the bonds. It is estimated that the average water bills will be about \$1.20 more a month with the 3% increase. John Parker motioned again to postpone a rate increase within the next 3 months. Don Dillman asked if the City could keep the 3% raise, but go ahead and review the rates. Cornett would like to go ahead and implement the raise, then call Carl Brown. Don Dillman would like to look at would be the loss if the City lost the contract with Andrew County #3. John Parker withdrew his motion to postpone the increase. John Parker motioned to ask that Council have additional work sessions on water rates before the next budget. Joy Thompson seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

**Aldermen Power of Duties** – John Parker has some concerns on the powers that Council representatives to committees and boards have had in the past, including voting rights. John Parker motioned that any alderman in an elected position who is the liaison to any committee established by the city, does not have voting rights. Don Dillman seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes. Council discussed what does Zoning Commission have regarding the Liaison voting? Cornett will look it up. Gene Grossman said the mayor and the liaison can be voting members by the Zoning Book. Joy Thompson motioned to add Council representative/liaison reports/discussions to all city committee agendas. (This does not include Mo-Kan, Region D and other non-city committees). Greg Wilson seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

**Permits** – Mayor Connie George asked if there was a grandfather clause applying to building permits. City Administrator Jill Cornett described that it is casual of way of saying that a business can maintain its procedures as they were before a law was established. Building Inspector Gene Grossman called it nonconformist; there is no legal term “grandfathered.” Building Inspector Gene Grossman described conformist and nonconformist on trailer parks and mobile homes. Sullivan Publications said the City's Zoning Book code was better written than many he had seen. John Parker understood but stated that it sounds like the City was trying to put people out of business. What if one is trying to improve a property by removing an old trailer to put in a new trailer? Grossman did not necessarily disagree but said it would take amending the city's zoning code to allow it. The City would have to be specific on what can be brought in such as nothing less than 5 years old. Cornett suggested waiting until the City receives the codification drafts from Sullivan. Parker asked Grossman if there were guidelines for trailer replacements. Grossman described the code with mobile home conditions using Bledsoe Trailer Court which is nonconforming.

Bill Nicholas, 503 S. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, wanted Council to discuss his issue of having more than one accessory building on his property. He brought pictures and handouts. He has a carport that he wants to enclose and make another garage. Don Dillman explained the issue Nicholas wanted two non-attached structures and zoning prohibits it. He doesn't see as a problem other than it doesn't following zoning regulations. Initially Nicholas wanted a garage but that would make two unattached buildings. The City would issue him a carport permit but not one for a second garage. If he encloses the carport then it would not follow the zoning regulations. Cornett presented that the problem was: once the City make an exception for one person, it sets a precedent. The City would have to pass an ordinance to allow more than one accessory. It is on

the agenda of the Zoning meeting next Monday. Cornett asked if Council could approve a variance. Don Dillman motioned that any action be postponed until after Zoning Commission met Monday night. Greg Wilson seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes.

**Interim Attorney** – Friday Cornett mailed out 20 letters to attorneys in the area. She also asked Steve Stevenson if he had time to be the City’s Interim. He doesn’t but provided another name. Bids are due May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Cemetery** – Since the rates increased in 2011 only 15 lots have sold in nineteen months. The previous 3 years the City sold more. Parker mentioned that local mortuaries were not recommending Savannah because St. Joe was cheaper. Dillman asked if anyone had spoken to the two funeral homes and asked who they recommend for cemeteries. Parker thought the City would sell more if the rates were lowered. He would like to return to the 2008 rates. An ordinance will be created to lower the rates. Joy Thompson received complaints about headstones needing repaired. The County commissioners have money available to fix headstones. Some companies provide the service free of charge. The City will inventory how many headstones need fixed and then contact area monument companies. Thompson also heard there was grant money to help with mowing. Mt Mora in St. Joe received a maintenance grant.

Joy Thompson motioned to go into closed session for personnel **610.021(3)**. John Parker seconded. Vote: Dillman: aye; Wilson: aye; Parker: aye; Thompson: aye. Motion carried.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION -- PERSONNEL 610.021(3)**

No motions were made in Closed Session. John Parker motioned to go back into open session. Joy Thompson seconded. Motion carried on 4 ayes.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

No further business to discuss. Joy Thompson motioned to adjourn and Greg Wilson seconded. Motion carried on 4 yes votes. Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

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Connie George, Mayor

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Beth Kar, City Clerk