

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF AUSTELL  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2017**

Present: Valerie Anderson  
Mayor Pro Tem Ollie Clemons  
Randy Green  
Sandra Leverette  
Scott Thomas

Absent: Mayor Joe Jerkins  
Kirsten Anderson

Also present were: Scott Kimbrough, City Attorney; Sandy Farmer, City Clerk; Randy Bowens, Public Works Director; Jim Graham, Community Development Director; Pat Maxwell, Fire Chief; Denise Soesbee, Finance Director and Bob Starrett, Police Chief.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Pro Tem Ollie Clemons called the meeting to order and Pastor Billy Hooper Clarkdale First Baptist Church gave the Invocation and Mayor Pro Tem Clemons led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Pro Tem Clemons asked if anyone had any items to add to the Agenda. Mr. Randy Bowens stated he would like to add Item 11A. – Rosehill Cemetery Lawn Maintenance.

*Ms. Valerie Anderson moved to follow the recommendation to approve Item 11-A. - Rosehill Cemetery Lawn Maintenance to the Agenda. Seconded by Ms. Sandra Leverette. Motion passed (4-0).*

**2. CONSENT AGENDA – INFORMATION UPDATE**

(No Action Required by Council – See Specific Department Director before a Meeting.)

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approve Bills
- B. Approve Legal Bills \$2,050.00
- C. Approve Minutes of Regular Council Meeting August 7, 2017

*Mr. Randy Green moved to follow the recommendation to approve the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Ms. Sandra Leverette. Motion passed (4-0).*

**4. EXCEPTION TO CONSENT AGENDA**

**5. CITIZENS REPORT**

Mayor Pro Tem Clemons asked if anyone would like to speak to the Mayor and Council. No one spoke.

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**6. GAS SYSTEM REPRESENTATIVE  
JOE JERKINS**

Mr. Scott Kimbrough stated he attended the meeting even though it was a while ago due to Labor Day and the hurricane. We appreciate Brittany Rasmuson being present and she was appointed to the Austell Gas System Board. Just the normal business was taken care of and the gas rates are still flat. Plenty of gas in storage and plenty of supply. It still has been kind of warm and we are waiting for the cold snap to come in and maybe it will last for a long time.

**7. FINANCE REPORT  
OLLIE CLEMONS, CHAIRPERSON  
Denise Soesbee, Director**

- A. Financial Report
- B. Purchase of Hand Held Devices for Water Department

Mayor Pro Tem Clemons stated the purpose is to approve the purchase of two hand held devices for water meter reading.

On August 10<sup>th</sup> the Water Department and the Finance Department received a quote for two hand held devices for reading water meters.

The current hand-held devices used now are over 10 years old and need to be replaced because the technology has changed so much they will no longer be supported by our software company as of 12/31/2017. The recommendation of Kendall Supply, our current vendor, is to replace these devices.

*Mayor Pro Tem Ollie Clemons moved to follow the recommendation to approve the purchase of the hand-held devices in the amount of \$16,705 and waive the three bid rule since the current software will not support any other devices. Funding will come from the Water and Sewer Fund (505-4440-54-2500) in the amount of \$16,705.00. Seconded by Mr. Scott Thomas. Mayor Pro Tem Clemons asked if there were any questions. Ms. Valerie Anderson asked how long we have had the current devices for water meter reading. Mr. Bowens stated about fifteen (15) years. Motion passed (4-0).*

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C. Budget Amendments 2017-18

Mayor Pro Tem Clemons stated the purpose is to amend 2017-2018 budget to reflect proposed salary increases. In an effort to be more competitive with surrounding jurisdictions the Finance Committee proposed adjustments to Public Safety salaries as well as a 5% increase to all other City Departments. We have been looking at this issue for some time now because our Police and our Fire Department have been struggling trying to retain and hire good people. The surrounding jurisdictions have been paying more and we were able to come up with the funding for this because we did receive a little bit more from the Gas System and also our Tax Digest. This has enabled us to have the monies for the salary increases.

*Mayor Pro Tem moved to follow the recommendation to approve the attached Budget revision for fiscal year 2017-2018. Seconded by Mr. Scott Thomas. Motion passed (4-0).*

**8. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION  
SANDRA LEVERETTE, CHAIRPERSON  
Sandy Farmer, Director**

A. No Report

**9. POLICE DEPARTMENT  
OLLIE CLEMONS, CHAIRPERSON  
Bob Starrett, Police Chief**

A. Police Report

B. Code Enforcement Report

C. Transfer Code Enforcement

Mayor Pro Tem stated the Police Committee requests Council to approve the transfer of the Code Enforcement Division from the Police Department to Community Affairs. With the City of Austell growing in the downtown area, and the adoption of the new Zoning Ordinances, (Please see attached Ordinance) Code Enforcement would be better suited under the Community Affairs Department. This transfer will include the two Part-Time positions, the Code Enforcement budget, and their vehicle.

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We had our City Attorney, Scott Kimbrough to review our Ordinances and amend the Ordinances so the Code Enforcement Officers will be sworn in and be able to write their own citation and the transfer to Community Affairs. Mr. Kimbrough stated we also gave some members of the Public Works Department the Water authority the ability to write certain citations as well when they are out doing their job. This will keep them from having to call a Code Enforcement Officer and go through multiple layers to get the job done. We have allowed Public Works Department to write citations for certain violations. Flood Plain, Soil Erosion, Storm Water Management and Water Shed Protection dealing with subdivisions and construction. We have built this into the Ordinance which is consistent with other jurisdictions.

Mayor Pro Tem stated we used Cobb's Ordinance as a model and it is a more efficient way to handle our Code Enforcement and to give Public Works the authority to issue citations. We have had discussions with our Public Works Director and our Community Affairs Director and our Police Chief and we have found this will be a lot more efficient for our Code Enforcement Department.

*Mayor Pro Tem Clemons moved to follow the recommendation to approve the transfer of Code Enforcement to Community Affairs Department effective September 18, 2017. Seconded by Mr. Scott Thomas. Motion passed (4-0).*

**10. FIRE DEPARTMENT  
RANDY GREEN, CHAIRPERSON  
Pat Maxwell, Fire Chief**

A. Fire Report

**11. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
KIRSTEN ANDERSON, CHAIRPERSON  
Randy Bowens, Director**

A. Rosehill Cemetery Lawn Maintenance

Mayor Pro Tem asked Mr. Bowens to discuss this item. Mr. Bowens stated the purpose is to discuss the Rosehill Cemetery Lawn Maintenance contract.

At the November 7, 2016 City Council meeting, Mayor Jerkins authorized \$12,000 for the use of lawn maintenance of Rosehill Cemetery.

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The following three bids were received. It is the recommendation of the Public Works Committee to open this Agenda item for discussion.

<b><u>Bidder:</u></b>	<b><u>Monthly Cost</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Cost</u></b>
R.A.L. Maintenance Service, Inc.	\$1,550.00	\$ 9,300.00
J & J Landscape	\$4,000.00	\$24,000.00
Duggy's Lawn Care	\$1,500.00	\$ 9,000.00

Annual Cost is based on Six Months:

Funding is available in the Fiscal Year 2018 annual budget and will be changed to the A.A.C.I.C. fund. (785-1110-52-1200).

The City Street crew has been cutting the cemetery twice a month and it actually takes all of our crews and equipment to do the job. Sometimes it takes a day and one half to finish and complete the job with cutting and trimming. I was instructed by the Mayor to see what it would cost to maintain on a regular basis. Doing so, we have three bids. We have one from R.A.L. Maintenance Service, Inc. for \$1550.00 per cut. J & J Landscape for \$4,000.00 and that is \$2,000.00 per cut and it would be two cuts a month. Duggy's Lawn Care is \$1500.00 per cut. We are not suggesting either one of these and we would like for the Council to review the pricing. The only one I really know is J & J Landscape and this is the only one I know because he was a former employee here at the City of Austell. He went full-time with a lawn maintenance business when he left the City of Austell. He has done really well. The monies are available from the A.A.C.I.C. fund which the Mayor instructed me. When I first went out to get bids for this and everyone came in around \$18,000.00 to \$20,000.00. I even had some that were up in the thirty thousand. These three vendors are basically in the same ballpark. We instructed these vendors to provide us with two cuts a month. This means cutting inside the plots that are grass and outside as well. Our grass cutting season starts around the third week in March and extends throughout the year. We are currently just about to finish with this cutting season. If any of these vendors get chosen the grass season will not start until March 2018. These are the prices we have and it is open for discussion.

Mr. Green stated it says on monthly cost one at \$1550.00 and one for \$1500.00 is this for two cuts a month. Mr. Bowens stated no the \$1550.00 is for one cut. Mr. Green stated so J&J is \$4,000.00 for two cuts. Mr. Bowens stated yes, that's right. Mr. Thomas asked Mr. Bowens which one would you feel more comfortable with.

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Mr. Bowens stated obviously, I would feel comfortable with J&J because I know him and because I know the individual. The other two I am not familiar with because I just solicited this out and they are the ones that answered. I do know that J&J has insurance to cover his crew. I would like to say when you are dealing with landscapers I had asked all three of them to give me pricing on cuts and not a full year of maintenance because in the winter months the grass is dormant and we don't have to cut it. They want to provide weed control, pruning and things of that nature. I am like just give me what you would charge the City per cut and I will know what that is. This way we will have apples for apples. They still came back with providing year round lawn care. We have to break this down to see what the amount will be per cut. Mr. Green asked if the other Lawn Care companies are insured like J&J is. Mr. Bowens stated we did ask them to provide us with their insurance but they did not. Ms. Leverette stated so you are saying you are familiar with J&J Landscaping and have you seen any of their work. Mr. Bowens stated, yes he had. Ms. Leverette asked in what areas. Mr. Bowens stated they take care of a cemetery in Douglasville. They do a lot of weed eating and very little equipment can be used to cut between the graves. They either use push mowers or weed eaters and this is very time consuming. They all three came out and visited Rosehill and it is 6.77 acres of land. Mr. Scott Thomas asked Mr. Bowens if he was more comfortable with J&J. Mr. Bowens stated, yes he is. Mayor Pro Tem Clemons asked Mr. Bowens if the other two companies come with any recommendation. Mr. Bowens stated none of them did. Mayor Pro Tem stated my concern is you asked them to provide insurance and the two did not. I am looking at possibly a six thousand dollar savings from one or the other. Do you think we need to ask them again for proof of insurance? Mr. Bowens stated that is possible and we need to be more clear in our understanding of what we are looking for. If we can get just a per cut basis and not including all the other different jobs they can do we will have a clearer picture of what we need. Also, they might have forgotten about the insurance. What we would like to do as I have commented to the Mayor once we do this we will enter into a contract for one year at that price. I don't if we want to go two years are not. This would be for the Council to decide. If we wait the prices will go up. Ms. Valerie Anderson stated she thought we should table this item because she stated she did not feel comfortable voting at this time. Mayor Pro Tem Clemons stated he agreed because we need more information. Mr. Bowens stated I solicited more companies but these three are the only ones who responded. Also, we are in no hurry because we are at the end of the season. Public Works crew will continue to cut the cemetery as long as needed until the grass goes dormant.

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All three companies are well aware if awarded the contract it will not go into effect until March 2018. Ms. Leverette asked Mr. Bowens if he had seen the work of the other two companies. Mr. Bowens stated no he had not. I am looking for what kind of work they do on commercial property. I think Duggy's Lawn Care is working all the way up in North Atlanta. He lives down in this area. Mayor Pro Tem Clemons stated this is certainly needed because the crew in Public Works has been tied up with this and this is the reason why the Mayor was trying to find someone else to do the maintenance of Rosehill Cemetery. This is not an emergency that we do at this point and time. We will table this item with the understanding you will come back with more information on the other two companies.

*Ms. Valerie Anderson moved to follow the recommendation to table Rosehill Cemetery Lawn Maintenance. Seconded by Ms. Sandra Leverette. Motion passed (4-0).*

**12. PARKS DEPARTMENT  
SCOTT THOMAS, CHAIRPERSON  
Jim Graham, Director**

A. No Report

**13. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
VALERIE ANDERSON, CHAIRPERSON  
Jim Graham, Director**

A. No Report

**14. ATTORNEY, DUPREE & KIMBROUGH**

A. No Report

**15. MAYOR'S REPORT**

A. CMA MEETING  
TIME:  
LOCATION:

OCTOBER 10, 2017  
6:30 P.M.  
POWDER SPRINGS

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- B. New A.A.C.I.C. Committee Members – Diane Evans  
Brittany Rasmuson

Mayor Pro Tem asked if anyone had any questions. Ms. Valerie Anderson stated She had a question. Isn't Ms. Rasmuson on the Austell Gas System Board Committee? Mayor Pro Tem Clemons stated yes, she is. Ms. Valerie Anderson stated and isn't Diane Evans also on the Planning and Zoning Committee. Mayor Pro Tem Clemons stated, yes she is.

*Mr. Randy Green moved to follow the recommendation to approve the New A.A.C.I.C. Committee Members. Seconded by Mr. Scott Thomas. Motion passed (4-0).*

**16. ADJOURN**

*Mr. Scott Thomas moved to follow the recommendation to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Sandra Leverette. Motion passed (4-0).*