

March Minutes  
Commerce Civic Center  
March 13, 2006  
6:30 P.M.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Mayor and Council was held on Monday, March 13, 2006 in the Commerce Civic Center Peach Room, 110 State Street. Mayor Charles Hardy called the meeting to order. City Clerk Shirley Willis called the roll and those in attendance were Mayor Charles Hardy, Mayor Pro Tem Dusty Slater, Councilmen Wayne Gholston, Donald Wilson, Mark Fitzpatrick, Bob Sosebee and Richard Massey, City Manager Clarence Bryant, City Attorney John Stell, one member of the press and approximately 15-25 citizens.

Councilman Donald Wilson gave the invocation.

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Pro Tem Dusty Slater made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wayne Gholston to approve the minutes of the regular February 13, 2006 meeting as presented and in the March 6, 2006 Work Session minutes make a correction on page 2 to correct the amount of \$12.86 to be \$2.86.

The vote was unanimous with the correction to be made.

Citizens or Delegations – None scheduled.

Mayor Charles Hardy welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated there was a citizen in attendance that had asked to address the council.

Mr. Joe Fenn, 159 Parkview Drive, Commerce, Georgia 30529 talked about the traffic issues and said Little Street desperately needed attention. It was a narrow street with drainage vents all along the street. Mr. Fenn said he had discussed the street with Councilman Donald Wilson but he forgot to mention it. Mr. Fenn asked that consideration be given to the street during the resurfacing process.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Larry Lord's Request to sell two cemetery lots back to the city.

Mr. Lord was one of three executors of the estate of Minnie Ruth Lord. Ms. Lord's cemetery plot had two lots remaining that would not be used by the Lord family.

Councilman Donald Wilson made a motion, seconded by Councilman Richard Massey to approve the buy back of the cemetery lots.

The vote was unanimous.

B. 2006 LARP Street and City resurfacing recommendations.

Mayor Charles Hardy reported that LARP had only awarded the section of North Broad from the State Farm Office to the Hospital Road for resurfacing. Other streets on the list were Orchard Circle, Harris Street and Neal Street.

City Manager Clarence Bryant said the State graded and the streets needed to be resurfaced; however there were not enough LARP funds. Mr. Bryant had talked to the County and they had a new cost on asphalt. Mr. Bryant said the City of Commerce had spent \$28,000 and \$554 additional dollars budget amendment could be made and resurface Orchard Circle and additional streets in this budget year.

The streets on the asphalt resurfacing calculator were as follows:

Orchard Circle	2,826 feet	\$30,222.50
Neal Street	527 feet	4,790.58
Victoria Street	2,050 feet	21,923.61
Clayton Street	582 feet	6,224.17
Harmony Street	656 feet	6,314.00
Harris Street	1,000 feet	<u>9,625.00</u>
	Total Cost	\$48,877.35

Councilman Richard Massey made a motion, seconded by Councilman Donald Wilson to amend the budget for resurfacing.

City Manager Clarence Bryant said the County could do the resurfacing prior to June 1, 2006.

Councilman Donald Wilson said Steve Ayers told him he had gone to the State Barn and the State was going to pave and he had the dates when it would be done. Mr. Bryant had the DOT correspondence and it did not indicate Orchard Circle was included. Mr. Bryant said the resurfacing would be City/County contract and not LARP funds. Mr. Bryant covered the DOT correspondence.

The vote was unanimous.

C. Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Appointment

Mayor Charles Hardy said that Councilman Mark Fitzpatrick had agreed to serve on the council.

Councilman Bob Sosebee made a motion, seconded by Councilman Richard Massey to appoint Mark Fitzpatrick to the RAC council.

The vote was five for (Dusty Slater, Richard Massey, Bob Sosebee, Wayne Gholston and Donald Wilson) one abstained (Mark Fitzpatrick).

D. Natural Gas prices

Mayor Charles Hardy reported that the natural gas prices were down and the city's residential distribution charge would be \$2.86 for the March billing cycles.

City Manager Clarence Bryant offered one other bit of information regarding the gas prices. He said in talking to MGAG the cost of gas was projected at \$9.05 for the next twelve (12) months average.

E. Clayton Street/Jefferson Road Intersection Improvements

Mayor Charles Hardy said the City had received a letter from Stevenson & Palmer regarding the estimated cost from Griffin Brothers in the amount of \$28,500.

City Manager Clarence Bryant said in comparison to Shankle Road the SPLOST funds would be used.

Councilman Donald Wilson made a motion, seconded by Councilman Bob Sosebee to amend the budget for the project.

The vote was unanimous.

F. Waterworks Road and Minish Drive Intersection – Traffic Control

Mrs. Mary Seabolt, School Board member, had contact City Manager Clarence Bryant about placing a 4-way stop at the Waterworks Road and Minish Drive because of recent accidents during the school traffic. Mr. Bryant said he would recommend a flashing light during the school traffic hours versus a 4-way stop. The flashing light was used on Highway 15 at the new middle school and was working good.

Councilman Richard Massey stated that 4-way stops were dangerous and a caution light should be tried first. Councilman Mark Fitzpatrick said he had rather see a caution light versus a 4-way stop. Mayor Charles Hardy said it worked on the State Highway and why not the City of Commerce.

City Manager Clarence Bryant said with the flashing light the law would be enforced on the right-of-way.

Councilman Donald Wilson made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wayne Gholston to place a flashing caution light at the intersection.

The vote was unanimous.

#### G. Sewer Main Extension to serve new Freedom Bank Operations Center

Mayor Charles Hardy reported that Freedom Bank would be building an operations center at the end of the Quality Foods complex. They had requested sewer and two plans of cost estimates had been presented for approval of the sewer main extension.

Plan A would be to come off of B. Wilson Road with an 8" sewer line for 600' with two (2) manholes at an estimated cost of \$22,000. The line would serve Freedom Bank.

Plan B would be to come off of Lathan Road with an 8" sewer line for 800' with six (6) manholes at a cost of \$40,000. The line would serve Freedom Bank and have the potentiality to serve Westwood Road and Westview Road (12 houses).

City Manager Clarence Bryant and Water/Sewer Distribution Superintendent said the City was waiting on a plan from Freedom Bank for floor elevation. Mr. Harbin had not heard back from Freedom. The possibility was to go down B. Wilson Road.

Mayor Pro Tem Dusty Slater made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wayne Gholston to proceed with the cheapest workable route.

The vote was unanimous.

#### G. Joint Railroad Crossing Study with Jackson County

Mayor Charles Hardy said information had been received from Jackson County that they would like to partner with the City of Commerce for a study to assess the need for at-grade railroad crossings. A company by the name of Arcadis had given a proposal of \$49,727.18 of which the County would pay one-half. Norfolk Southern was requesting the City of Commerce to close three existing crossings for a crossing into the new industrial park.

Councilman Bob Sosebee made a motion, seconded by Councilman Richard Massey to approve the joint funding for the assessment of the crossings.

The vote was unanimous.

#### H. Activity Reports

Mayor Charles Hardy asked Police Chief John Gaissert if he would like to give the report from the Police Department.

Chief Gaissert said the department had a steady month in February. There had been over 1,900 calls handled in a 28 day month. He brought to attention the narcotics unit activity. They had made a total of 22 arrests and had seized guns and cash.

Chief Gaissert said in an effort to solve officer safety issues all of the vests must be changed out. The cost to replace the vests was \$10,000. He reported that grants had been received that came within \$500 of the cost of the replacements. He said it would be a 2-4 week delivery on the vests.

Chief Gaissert then asked for authorization from the Council to add a 1995 GMA Sierra Truck that had been confiscated to the declared excess property list.

Councilman Bob Sosebee made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Dusty Slater to declare the vehicle as excess property.

The vote was unanimous.

Mayor Charles Hardy thanked the Chief for securing the funds for the purchase of the vests. He asked if there was anything else on the activity reports.

City Manager Clarence Bryant brought to their attention that the building construction value was \$4M more than in the last fiscal year.

The Commerce Police Department Activity for February was 1,637 dispatched calls, 95 walk-in reports at PD and 176 SRO calls for a total call volume of 1.908. There had been 27 accident reports, 130 incident reports and 50 animal control calls. The traffic citations issued were 79 speeding, 18 suspended license/no license, 9 no insurance, 17 DUI, 10 drunk/disorderly, 2 shoplifting, 3 obstruction, 6 alcohol related, 19 seatbelt/child restraint violations and 94 other for a total of 256. The arrests were 20 theft/burglary, 1 criminal trespass and 11 felony and 6 misdemeanor drug cases. There had been 24,438 total miles driven.

The Narcotics Unit has made the 11 felony and 6 misdemeanor drug arrests and had 4 warrants and 1 disorderly conduct for a total of 22 arrests. The seizures were \$534.00 cash, 1 SKS Rifle, 1 Glock .45 caliber handgun.

The Commerce Fire Department had answered 15 calls, 9 inside the city limits, 3 in the fire district, 3 outside the fire district, 2 structures, 1 grass and woods, 2 alarms, 5 vehicle/wrecks and 4 miscellaneous. The man hours for this period were 23.

The Department of Building Inspection completed 78 inspections for an average of 4.5 per day. There were 10 building, 2 electrical, 4 plumbing and 3 mechanical permits issued for a permit value of \$4,424.00. The building valuation for the fiscal year was \$9,865,900 and the calendar year to date valuation was \$2,135,000.

The Building & Housing Inspections Department had completed 10 new, 32 COP and 94 utility. The follow-up inspections were 34, letters were 8 and the walk-ins handled were 46. 328 Calls were answered and 5 junk car incidents with 5 follow ups on the junk cars. Total activity for the department was 562.

The Water and Sewer Distribution activity was 13 residential and 5 non-residential new water services. There were 9 residential and 3 non-residential new sewer services. There were 12 residential and 2 non-residential water services and 2 residential sewer services replaced. The turn ons were 74 water and 66 sewer services. The turn offs were 84 water and 73 sewer services. Fifteen (15) new hydrants were installed and 2 hydrants repaired. There was 12,000 feet of main extensions. The work orders received were 103 and there were 107 completed. There were locates were 238.

The Electric Department activity was 1 existing residential service done, 3 new homes added, 600 residential size of load-amps added, 3 security lights added, 1,200 security light wattage added and 70 cut ons and 70 cut offs.

The Natural Gas activity was 4 meters set, 6 meter change outs, 1 meter removed, 1 meter maintained, 6 service calls, 10 leak calls, 283 locates and 12 inspections. The gas load changes in residential were 360 residential heating and 120 water heating added. The commercial load changes were 780 heating, 500 water heating and 775 cooking.

#### I. Financial Review

Steve McKown said it was a banner month – the January utility bills were collected plus a partial payment of \$288,000 on the gas line relocation had been received. Also, a lot of SPLOST collections were included. The bottom line showed \$351,000 revenues over expenditures. The City was okay and in the black. Some major items that affected cash were 1) SPLOST expenditures of funds collected in other years and \$425,336.26 in the current month and 2) \$112,648.48 of circuit rebuild expended this month in the Electric Fund. Mr. McKown said the city was not losing money and the cash reserves were where they should be.

#### 6. City Manager's Report

City Manager Clarence Bryant had two items.

- 1) Hasco Craver of DDA – Approval of the request to DOT for the Easter Parade to be held on April 15.

Councilman Bob Sosebee made a motion, seconded by Councilman Donald Wilson to approve the DOT paperwork for the Easter Parade route.

The vote was unanimous.

- 2) Mr. Bryant requested an Executive Session for the purpose of possible condemnation.

7. City Attorney's Report

Attorney John Stell had nothing to report.

8. New Items Proposed by the Mayor and City Council

Mayor Charles Hardy read a letter from DOT regarding the TEA application and the City of Commerce was not selected.

The second item of Mayor Hardy was a notice from Lonnie Dickerson regarding the opening day ceremony at the Recreation Department on April 8, 1006 at 10:00 A.M. Mr. Dickerson wanted to recognize the mayor and council and Archie Chaney would throw out the opening pitch.

The third item of Mayor Hardy was an invitation from Jim Joiner about the ribbon cutting at the new recreation department in Jefferson would be held on Wednesday March 22, 2006 at 10:00 A.M.

Mayor Pro Tem Dusty Slater had nothing to report.

Councilman Richard Massey had nothing to report.

Councilman Wayne Gholston had nothing to report.

Councilman Donald Wilson talked about an area on Victoria Street below Tom Williams' home there was a problem where the sewage tap was made in front of a new house on the left.

Councilman Donald Wilson asked about the sidewalk work. Mr. Bryant told him the bids were in the process of being evaluated. No one that bid on the job was closer than 100 miles.

Councilman Mark Fitzpatrick reported the area on Coleman Drive that was torn up and his opinion was that was where the trash truck was turning into the street. Maybe it could be fixed where the truck could turn left.

Councilman Donald Wilson asked about Church Street and if it was closed. Mr. Bryant said he couldn't get the information from Barry. He said the survey of the right-of-way had to be completed before any action could be taken.

Councilman Mark Fitzpatrick made a motion, seconded by Councilman Donald Wilson to go into Executive Session.

The vote was unanimous.

Councilman Bob Sosebee made a motion, seconded by Councilman Richard Massey to come out of Executive Session.

The vote was unanimous.

Mayor Charles Hardy said land acquisition was discussed and no action would be taken.

Councilman Bob Sosebee made a motion, seconded by Councilman Richard Massey to adjourn the meeting.

The vote was unanimous.

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Charles L. Hardy, Jr., Mayor

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Shirley Willis, City Clerk