

Council passes amendments to Land Development Regulations

BY DAVID S. RODOCK
THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — City of Valdosta council members unanimously passed an extensive number of agenda items in their regular meeting Thursday, including text amendments to the Land Development Regulations (LDR) for ten different chapters.

Special Ombudsman Response Team (SORT) members Bill Slaughter and Sue Cox came forward to support the LDR amendments.

"This text amendment came about with a lot of discussion with developers, architects, representatives from the construction industry and City of Valdosta staff to try to improve and make the LDR a little easier to work with and this is what we came up with," said Slaughter.

An additional amendment was brought forward by staff before the council meeting and made a change to the new chapter, effectively allowing approval of land uses which are deemed less intensive than the allowable uses of the existing zoning district.

According to City staff, the main changes are a series of deletions in order to effectively eliminate the four "specialty" zoning districts.

Each of these districts has its own development standards and they have the potential to limit the level of creativity that is possible with developments.

Staff believes new Chapter 212 - Planned De-

velopment Approval will allow much greater flexibility in terms of site design, conditions of approval and the ability to still develop the property under the original zoning without initiating the zoning process again.

'This text amendment came about with a lot of discussion with developers, architects, representatives from the construction industry and City of Valdosta staff to try to improve and make the LDR a little easier to work with and this is what we came up with.'

Bill Slaughter

Council approved the following agenda items unanimously:

- A bid for oils and lubes that are used throughout the City in their automotive and equipment fleet.
- A bid for the annual filter contract to supply air, fuel, oil and other necessary filters that will be used in their automotive and equipment fleet.

- A bid for electrical services contract for all City facilities.

- A bid for air conditioning services was submitted by Waller Heating and Air (current supplier) at a rate of \$40 per hour; a \$5 reduction from their current rate.

- A bid for the gas and diesel fuel supply for the entire City automotive and equipment fleet.

- A bid to provide hand tools and maintenance supplies for the City work force.

- A bid to provide janitorial supplies for use throughout the City.

- A bid for a ready mix concrete supplier, which is used by multiple departments.

- A bid for the redevelopment and rehabilitation of wells six and seven.

- A bid for the redevelopment of wells six and seven. Rowe Drilling Company submitted the lowest bid in the amount of \$405,046, with a ten percent contingency.

- A bid for the replacement of a culvert on Park Ave. at One Mile Branch. According to Pat Collins, city engineer, the City was successful in obtaining assistance from the Georgia Department of Transportation in the amount of \$177,791.63 for construction of the culvert.

- Radney Plumbing submitted the lowest bid for the project, at \$283,530, with a 10 percent contingency.

- Remaining costs will be covered by the City.

- An ordinance for a Conditional Use Permit to allow a mini-warehouse facility located at 1406 Madison Highway, zoned High-

way-Commercial (C-H).

- An ordinance for a Conditional Use Permit to allow an outdoor paintball facility within the Urban Commercial Corridor Overlay District. The property is located at 2103 W. Hill Ave. and is currently owned by Langdale Tire Company.

- An ordinance for a Conditional Use Permit to allow an expansion to Christ Episcopal Church, located at 1521 N. Patterson St.

- An ordinance to rezone .11 acres, located at 214 S. Troup St. from Community-Commercial (C-C) to Single-Family Residential (R-6).

- An ordinance rezone 1.56 acres, located at 409 W. Mary St. from Single-Family Residential (R-6) to Multi-Family Residential (R-M).

Katherine Mayer brought forward a number of concerns she had with any potential multi-family construction projects at the location, citing that such construction would not be consistent with nearby structures.

- An ordinance to rezone 0.29 acres located at 111 Wells St. from Highway-Commercial to Single-Family Residential (R-6).

- A resolution authorizing the approval and acceptance of the Policies and Procedures, the Minority/Women's Business Enterprise Plan and the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Plan for the Community Home Improvement Program (CHIP). The City has been involved with the CHIP from the Georgia Department of

Community Affairs (DCA) since 1998 and is responsible for down-payment assistance, rehabilitation assistance and reconstruction assistance regardless of an applicant's ethnicity.

- An ordinance to amend the City of Valdosta's Charter to re-define City Council Districts as required for re-apportionment based upon the 2010 Census.

Larry Hanson, city manager, does not foresee any problems with Justice Department approval of the proposal. Pending Justice Department approval, the district changes will take effect for the upcoming 2011 Municipal Election.

- A resolution to adopt an Amendment to the March, 2007 Greater Lowndes Solid Waste Management Plan.

The Georgia DCA requires a resolution to be adopted to approve an amendment to the current plan which will allow Evergreen Landfill to continue receiving waste.

- A consideration for a final payment on the Mud Creek Treatment Plant Closed Circuit Television Interceptor Project.

The final bill to Video Industrial Services will be in the amount of \$215,025.89.

- A consideration to accept a Deed from the Bray Company to the City of Valdosta for a .32 acre parcel located on Green Street adjacent to City-owned property.

- Alan Strickland was appointed to the Zoning Board of Adjustments and Appeals.

- The application process for appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority was reopened.

- A first reading of an ordinance to prohibit certain practices of Sweepstakes Parlors and the issuance of business licenses to entities that engage in the same type of activity in the City of Valdosta.

Mayor and Council approved a 120 day moratorium on Sweepstakes Parlors on March 10, 2011 to allow for further consideration of the subject.

No action was taken by council at this time.

Citizens came forward to discuss the Valdosta Small Emerging Business program, a potential addition to the recently completed Wiregrass Solar facility and concern with the Citizen's To Be Heard portion of the meeting being moved to the end of the agenda.

"To me, it seems like it is a control of citizens, to suppress the information that comes before the general public," said George Boston Rhynes. "Now that most of the citizens are gone, the people in the community won't know hardly anything brought before their elected officials. I'm going to make a statement tonight, that this agenda will be changed. Citizens will not be the last thing on this sheet. I'm 100 percent sure that it will be changed. The God I serve is going to send better councilmen, he is going to put men and women on this council who value the voice of the people."