

Council Meeting
July 17, 2023

Members Present: Mayor Buddy Duke, members Terry McClain, Greg Paige, Walter Cowart, Celestine Hayes and Jody Greene.

Others Present: City Manager Mark Barber, City Clerk Rhonda Rowe, City Attorney Tim Tanner, Chief Chad Castleberry and several members of the public.

Invocation was given by Councilman McClain.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes: Councilman Paige made a motion to approve the minutes of July 3, 2023 as presented. Councilman McClain seconded with all in favor.

Ord. #23-03: This ordinance, rezoning property of Sherlene Johnson located at 210 N. Martin Luther King Drive from R-8 (Residential) to R-8M (Residential), was read for the second time. Councilwoman Hayes made a motion to deny the ordinance. Councilman Paige seconded with all in favor.

Ord. #23-04: This ordinance, rezoning property of Artis Bailey and Cynthia Folsom Bailey located at 827 N. Elm street from WLI (Wholesale Light Industrial) to GB (General Business), was read for the second time. Councilwoman Hayes made a motion to approve the ordinance. Councilman Paige seconded. The decision was unanimous.

Alcohol License Request (Circle K Stores, Inc.): Circle K Stores, Inc. d/b/a Circle K #2707043 located at 1402 W. 4th Street, has applied for a retail malt beverage package license and a retail wine package license. The required application has been completed and other documentation completed and reviewed, along with payment of required fees. Staff recommends approval. Councilman Greene made a motion to approve the issuance of a license. Councilman McClain seconded. All were in favor.

Property Purchase: Mayor Duke advised the current property for sale in which the council had authorized the city manager to negotiate with the property owner, along with pricing parameters, has been reviewed and the title search completed with no findings. City attorney Tim Tanner stated the title was clean, with no liens. Additionally, there is no record of a prior business such as a gas station or dry cleaner located on the property that would trigger an environmental review. The property parcel is identified on the tax map as A007-128. Councilwoman Hayes asked how much the purchase price will be and for what purposes will the property be used? The city manager advised the property consists of .92 acres and is located between W. 3rd and W. 4th Street, beside the railroad tracks. This would broaden the footprint of the downtown area. We have thought about utilizing it for more green space but have also received permission from the railroad to move the caboose to this area. It could be used for open air events, including a farmers market. The appraisal on the property was \$92,000; however, we can purchase it for \$80,000. A member of the audience, Altheia Paige, asked if this was the building with the

glass? She was advised there is no building on the property. Councilman Greene made a motion to approve the purchase of the property. Councilman Cowart seconded. The decision was unanimous.

Fairy Gear: Ms. Gear, who resides at 611 W. 2nd Street, complained to the council concerning the use of fireworks. She stated the 4th of July is gone but it sounds like a war zone in her area. She had called 911 and was told they couldn't do anything about it. The state law only requires they have to be finished by 12:00. She stated that it sounds like a bomb bursting and that it's terrible. There's old people over there, babies over there and people work. She stated this is a city and there are city ordinances. She stated that where its coming from, these people don't work, they don't do nothing! She asked this be taken into consideration and looked into.

Other Comments:

Mark Barber – Introduced Brandie Dame, who has been hired as the Community Engagement Director.

Congratulated MainStreet Director Dana David on the "Christmas in July" event held this past Saturday. It was a huge success.

Celestine Hayes - Asked about the update on the utility billing? She was advised the programmer is getting it down to the final details. The \$400 credit as well as the allocation of the balance over the 24 month period should be provided at the same time. The customer will be billed for the current month's usage plus 1/24th of the prior balance will be added to it. Altheia Paige asked if we were going to work with those who couldn't do the 24 month payments. They will have to decide whether to pay the city or buy food or medicine. Mr. Barber stated we are willing to speak with anyone but the council has adopted a 24 month pay period.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.

Rhonda P. Rowe, City Clerk

Luther L. Duke III, Mayor