

**CITY OF THOMSON  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

January 10, 2008

7:30PM

CITY HALL

Present

Robert E. Knox, Jr., Mayor  
Kenneth Usry, Mayor-Elect  
Alton Belton, Councilmember  
James Jones, Councilmember  
John Smalley, Councilmember  
Clifford (Bud) Lunceford, Councilmember-Elect  
Bernice Brown-Councilmember-Elect  
Jimmy Plunkett, City Attorney  
Don Powers, City Administrator  
David Moore, Municipal Judge  
Dianne L. Landers, City Clerk

Kathy Usry  
Walter & Edna Kennedy  
Mr. & Mrs. Greg Honeymichael  
George Nichols  
Bruce Blasingame  
Mozell Peeples  
Julia Lunceford  
Mary Belton  
Johnny Johnson  
Ettoniet Anderson  
Margaree Smalley  
Bea Hart-Moss

Also Present

Billy Hobbs-McDuffie Mirror  
Jim Wallace-McDuffie Progress  
Donna Branch-WTHO  
Bill & Laura Johnson  
Kelly Evans  
Curtis L. Pickard  
Scott Huff  
Mike Dunn  
Vicki & Tommy Yates  
Kenneth & Linda Bradley  
Peter J. Ruddick  
Tommy Samuels  
Margaret Samuels  
Grant Usry  
Chuck Cason  
Larry Guest  
Bill Jackson  
Jean Lazenby  
Tara Reese  
Rhonda Brown  
Krystal Belton  
Eugene & Martha Bird  
Doug & Dede Keir  
Eloise Clemons-Dunaway  
Felicia Hart

Mayor Knox welcomed our guests (standing room only) for this Regular Council meeting for January 10, 2008. This was his last day as Mayor for the City of Thomson. The invocation was given by Dr. John Cook of Thomson Presbyterian Church, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Knox presented the gavel to the Newly Elect Mayor, Kenneth Usry and proceeded to leave to care for his wife who had recently undergone surgery.

Before Mayor Knox's departure, Mr. Bruce Blasingame, former coach and principal, made a special presentation to Mayor Knox, honoring him as a great leader for the City of Thomson and McDuffie County.

Judge Roger Dunaway, Chief Judge of the Tombs Judicial Circuit Superior Courts also spoke highly concerning Mayor Knox and shared some of his fond memories from days gone by.

## **OATH OF OFFICE:**

The Oath of Office was given by Judge Roger Dunaway, Jr. to the Mayor Elect, Kenneth L. Usry and Councilmember Alton Belton, John Smalley, James Jones and newly elected Councilmembers Bernice Brown and Clifford Lunceford. All members will serve for a four year term.

Mayor Kenneth Usry called the business section of the meeting to order and the first order of business was to appoint a Municipal Judge for the Municipal Court for the City of Thomson. Mayor Usry recommended David Moore, who has served in this capacity since the resignation of Judge Wells.

Councilmember Smalley motioned to accept David Moore as the Municipal Judge for the City of Thomson, and the motion was seconded by Councilmember Jones. Motion carried with all in favor. Judge Dunaway then swore in Mr. Moore.

## **MINUTES:**

Councilmember Smalley moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Council meeting on December 2007. Councilmember Belton seconded the motion. The motion was carried by all.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### 2<sup>ND</sup> Reading of Ordinance #533 on Health Insurance Decision:

This is the second and final reading of an ordinance establishing a new employee health insurance plan previously presented to the Mayor and Council. This ordinance allows the City of Thomson to subscribe to this plan, one that is less expensive as the current plan. The insurance is offered through the Georgia Municipal Association.

Councilmember Smalley moved to approve this Ordinance, seconded by Councilmember Lunceford. All in were in favor. Motion carried.

### 2<sup>ND</sup> Reading of Ordinance #534 to establish a Franchise Fee for Cablevision:

This is the second and final reading of the ordinance that states that the City of Thomson will set a 5% rate as our franchise fee for cable services.

Councilmember Belton moved to accept the ordinance that gives the rate for cable services. Councilmember Smalley seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### Appointment of Mayor Pro-tem:

Mayor Usry served as Mayor Pro-tem for the last twenty nine years under Mayor Knox. The position is now open. Mayor Usry recommended Councilmember Belton, as the senior Councilmember, to serve as Mayor Pro-tem.

Councilmember Lunceford moved to appoint Councilmember Belton to the position of Mayor Pro-Tem for the City of Thomson. Councilmember Jones seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.

### Appointment of City Attorney:

Jimmy Plunkett has been the City Attorney for the City of Thomson since 1984. Mayor Usry recommended the appointment of Mr. Plunkett to continue to serve as the City's Attorney.

Councilmember Jones moved the appointment, seconded by Councilmember Smalley. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Joint City/County Resolution for the GEFA Loan:

This resolution is an agreement between the City and County giving the City all administrative responsibilities associated with the new Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority loan.

Councilmember Belton moved to approve the Joint Resolution for the GEFA Loan, seconded by Councilmember Smalley. All were in favor. Motion approved.

Approval of Community Development Director Job Posting:

The Director of the Housing Authority, Marilyn Stevenson will retire at the end of February. The City of Thomson and the Thomson Housing Authority met and designed a new job description, for the position of Community Development Director, which broadened this position. The person chosen to replace the Housing Director will additionally manage and lead in the development, administration, oversight and implementation of all other Housing initiatives in the City of Thomson that may come forward.

Councilmember Jones moved to approve the Job posting of a Community Development Director. This motion was seconded by Councilmember Smalley. All were in favor. Motion carried.

The interviewing committee will consist of Boyce Norris (HUD Atlanta office), Marilyn Stevenson and Bob Flanders, Don Powers, Mayor Usry, and Councilmember Belton.

Mayor Usry made the following appointments of the Council members to oversee various departments. Councilmember Belton to Solid Waste, Councilmember Smalley to Fire, Councilmember Jones to Gas, Councilmember Lunceford to Water and the Mayor to the Police.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

TE project is finishing on Railroad Street for sidewalk removal and replacement.

Some of the equipment approved at last month's Council meeting has been received. The rest is on order. The interest rate came in at about 3.39%, slightly below the rate we were quoted in December.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm.

Dianne L. Landers  
City Clerk