

**CITY OF THOMSON**  
**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
March 8, 2007

7:30PM

CITY HALL

**PRESENT**

Robert E, Knox, Jr. Mayor  
Kenneth Usry, Councilmember  
Alton Belton, Councilmember  
Mike Carrington, Councilmember  
John Smalley, Councilmember  
J.T. Wiley, Councilmember  
Donald Powers, City Administrator  
Jimmy Plunkett, City Attorney  
Dianne L. Landers, City Clerk  
Robert L. Flanders, Past City Administrator

**ALSO PRESENT**

Lee Anne Cowart  
Rusty Lovelace  
Mary Anne Coussons  
Jason B. Smith  
John Hathaway  
Jim Wallace  
Scott Huff

Mayor Knox welcomed all present. Invocation was offered by City Attorney Jimmy Plunkett, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MINUTES**

Councilmember Usry moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting on February 8, 2007, seconded by Councilmember Belton.

**OLD BUSINESS**

In the January 11, 2007 meeting, the City Council reviewed the building permit fees for its uniformity. Suggested fees were sent to McDuffie County for their concurrence. Approval of the building permit fee schedule was sent back to the City Council for action.

Councilmember Usry moved to accept the increased fee schedule and to become effective May 1, 2007. After a second by Councilmember Wiley, the motion carried unanimously. (Fee Schedule attached)

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Review of Request for Audit Services for Annual Audits of City Funds:**

Lee Hammond of Baird and Company presented the bid proposals that were submitted from two firms, Thigpen, Jones, Seaton & Co. of Dublin, GA and Elliott Davis, CPAs of Augusta, GA.

Thigpen, Jones, Seaton & Co. submitted \$155,047 (plus out of pocket), Elliott Davis, CPAs submitted \$106,200 (all inclusive). Mr. Hammond recommended Elliott Davis out of Augusta, GA to be engaged for 5 years with the flexibility that if the proposal does not work out, we have the option to change. Motion by Councilmember Wiley and seconded by Councilmember Carrington to accept the recommendation for Elliott Davis, CPAs. Motion carried.

Presentation by the Historic Preservation Commission(HPC):

The Historic Preservation Council spokesperson Rusty Lovelace gave a report on the proposed Historic District. The Commission proposed boundaries for establishment of a historic district. This large boundary is requested for the purpose of preserving history, encouraging new businesses and promoting beautification in the historic downtown area.

City Council agreed for the Commission to proceed with the enlarged boundaries. The Commission also asked for a \$15,000 match for façades and a larger boundary here as well. (Map of proposed District and Façade Grant program enclosed) City Attorney Plunkett asked Council and Commission to look at the easements associated with the façade grant program and be sure they are in the guidelines as well.

Bids for Cleaning and Altering Police and Fire Uniforms:

Two bids were submitted for cleaning and altering of Police and Fire Uniforms.

	Cleaning of (1) uniform	Altering
Sunshine Cleaners Thomson, GA	\$17.05	\$29.00
G. Smith Cleaners Thomson, GA	\$11.65	\$11.50

This contract would start March 1, 2007 thru March 1, 2008. Councilmember Carrington moved to accept the low bid from G. Smith Cleaners, seconded by Councilmember Belton. Motion carried

Purchase a truck tractor for hauling sludge:

A request was submitted to purchase a 2000 Mack truck for the purpose of hauling sludge for the Wastewater Department. The cost of purchasing a new truck would be more than was budget. The cost of the requested truck is \$31,100.00. The amount budgeted is \$50,000. Motioned by Councilmember Carrington and seconded by Councilmember Wiley to give permission to purchase the used truck for \$31,100. Motion carried.

Resolution supporting and joining the Georgia Municipal Association appeal to the courts for relief from an adverse decision by the Public Service Commission regarding payment of municipal franchise fees.

This is a resolution whereas the Georgia Public Commission granted the relief sought by the Association County Commission of Georgia and Cobb County ordering that half of the municipal franchise fees negotiated by cities with Georgia Power Company for GPC's use of city rights-of-way be billed only to municipal customers by 2009.

Councilmember Usry moved to support said resolution, seconded by Councilmember Smalley. Motion carried.

Resolution authorizing the filing of a 2007 Community Home Investment Program (CHIP) application to DCA for \$300,000.

This resolution allows the City of Thomson to file for a 2007 Community Home Investment Program application to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The amount of said application is for \$300,000 with an April 2, 2007 deadline.

Resolution authorizing the filing of a Joint City of Thomson and McDuffie County \$200,000 CHIP Application.

The City of Thomson and the Board of Commissioners of McDuffie County will jointly apply for \$200,000 in Community Housing Improvement Program Funds. These funds will be used for the Revitalization Area Strategy adopted by the City and County for housing units in need of renovation and repair. The City of Thomson will be the last agency.

Resolution of support for the McDuffie County Application of the CHIP Grant for \$300,000.

This resolution pledges full support for the McDuffie County 2007 CHIP Housing Program in the amount of \$300,000.

Motioned by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Carrington to accept the above three resolutions for CHIP applications. All in favor. Motion carried.

Police Department demonstration on use of Taser Weapons.

The City of Thomson Police gave a presentation on electronic weapons used in Georgia, better known as TASERS. It was made known that electronic control weapons, when used properly and in accordance with the law, is an appropriate tool for law enforcement because it prevents injuries to suspects, prisoners and law enforcement. The Police Chief stated that the cost is \$500-600 each and that he would purchase them from his condemnation funds.

Councilmember Carrington motioned for the Police Department to be given permission to purchase and use Taser weapons, seconded by Councilmember Wiley. The motion carried.

First Baptist Church request to hang banner between March 19-29, 2007.

First Baptist Church of Thomson has requested to hang banner for annual Revival on Monday, March 19 thru Thursday, March 29, 2007.

Councilmember Carrington moved to approve the banner request, seconded by Councilmember Wiley. Motion carried.

Raysville Boat Club request to hang banner from June 24-July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

Raysville Boat Club Fireworks Committee requested to hang a banner between June 30 and July 7, 2007.

Councilmember Carrington motioned to approve the banner request, seconded by Councilmember Smalley. Motion carried.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Scott Williams of Williams Sewer and Drain spoke on the concerns of plumbers performing work in the city and county and not having the appropriate license.

Don Powers assumed the position of City Administrator on March 5, 2007. Mr. Flanders will be retiring after a brief period of orientation and training with Mr. Powers.

On Thursday, March 1, 2007 at about 8:15p.m. The city was struck by a tornado with winds at 200 mph that inflicted severe property damage in Hickory Hills and proceeded to also damage the area east of Main Street at the National Guard Armory to Martin Luther King Street. City workers which included, Police, Fire, Gas, Water, Sewer, Streets and Solid Waste were called to the scene to secure the area, repair leaks, open roads, and to assist homeowners and Georgia Power.

The President has declared McDuffie County a disaster area, this makes the City and County eligible for reimbursement for some of the expense incurred in the clean up. FEMA and GEMA will be in town to help homeowners and businesses. The Red Cross has been here since March 2, 2007.

Firefighters welcomed a new 75-foot ladder truck to Thomson-McDuffie County. The cost of the truck was \$517,000 and will be available to answer fire calls in the city and help in county calls when needed.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 8:45p.m.

Dianne L. Landers  
City Clerk