REGULAR MEETING January 14th, 2019

The Bessemer City Council met in regular session on Monday, January 14th, 2019 at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers of City Hall.

Members Present

Mayor Becky S. Smith, Council Members: Joe Will, Sonny Boyd, Kay McCathen, Dan Boling, and Donnie Griffin were all present. Council member Alfred Carpenter was absent. City Manager, James Inman and City Attorney, David Smith, were also present.

Call to Order, Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order. Mount Pleasant Baptist Church Pastor, Thurman Clark led the audience in prayer. Mayor Smith led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the January Agenda

By motion of Dan Boling and unanimous vote, the January agenda was approved with the following revisions:

- (Item #7) Appeal 01-2018: 204 E. Virginia Avenue be removed as City Staff has resolved issues pertaining to the appeal.

Special Presentations

City of Bessemer City Distinguished Award- Mayor Smith and City Council recognized Council member, Dan Boling's "Dan's Restaurant" for being selected as the Bessemer City Chamber of Commerce's 2018 Business of the Year. All present were invited to congratulate Mr. Boling on his accomplishment.

Student Appreciation- Students from Bessemer City High School, Bessemer City Middle School, Bessemer City Central Elementary School, and Bessemer City Primary School were recognized by their principals and City Council as part of the Student Appreciation Program:

Dr. Sheila Wyont, Principal of Bessemer City High School, and Mayor Smith, recognized the following students of the month: Annelie Etherton and Nathan Marlow, 9th grade representatives; Ebony Quezada and Colby Bridges, 10th grade representatives; Lance Bumgardener and Monica Rico, 11th grade representatives, and Onterious Ratchford and Jonnae Boulin, 12th grade representatives.

Mr. Treva Boone, Assistant Principal of Bessemer City Middle School, and Mayor Smith, presented certificates to all Middle School representatives: Gracie Fowler, Mason Maag, Zoey Gordon, Allison McCumbee, Alicia Avila Arellares, Alondra Rolon Sanchelzy, Keyvon Barnett, Keyana Darby, Marcus Rubin, Jamileth Garcia- Garcia, Michael Orareyour, Macy Anderson, Ny'Adria Beam Phillips, Areona Butler, Xiang Zhang, Elijah Cruz, Kaylon Davis, and Katie Richardson.

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Mr. Patrick Watson, Assistant Principal of Bessemer City Central Elementary, and Mayor Smith, presented certificates to all Central Elementary School representatives: Naomi Ramirez Velasco and Kaydence Ellis, 3rd grade representatives; Emelia Seeley and Kimberly Alvarado, 4th grade representatives; Nicole Cisrenos and Haley Brown, 5th grade representative.

Dr. Conley, Principal of Bessemer City Primary School, and Mayor Smith, presented certificates to all Primary School representatives: Easton Warren and Chezness Funderburk, Kindergarten representatives; Annabel Howell and Timothy Huss, 1st grade representatives; and Addyson Morehead and Marissa Kiser, 2nd grade representatives.

Request to Speak/Opportunity for Public Comment

Mayor Smith opened the floor for public comment and reiterated the new public comment procedure. All citizens wishing to address Mayor & Council will be required to sign in prior to the meeting. The following individuals came forward:

- Eugene Miller & Melissa Kelly of 116 W. Alabama Avenue- Ms. Kelly addressed Mayor and City Council on behalf of her father Eugene Miller. Ms. Kelly expressed her father's concern regarding an unnamed alley behind their house. For years Mr. Miller and his family have resided at 116 W. Alabama avenue. However, recently emergency and medical personnel have begun experiencing difficulties locating the house. Since the house's entrance is located off the alley. Mr. Miller request that the street be named to alleviate emergency and medical personnel difficulties when locating the home . Mr. Miller suggest the name "Janet's Way", in memory of his late wife. City Manager Inman informed Council that Gaston County Planning Department requires three (3) potential names, to ensure no duplicate street names exist.

  By motion of Dan Boling and unanimous vote, City Manager Inman was permitted to submit "Janet's Way" and two other names to the County for their review.

- Brent Guffey of 547 Costner School Road- Mr. Guffey addressed Council regarding the success of the 2018 Polar Plunge. Money was raised to aid 27 local area families for the holiday season.

Consent Agenda

The following items on the Consent Agenda were unanimously approved by motion of Kay McCathen:

- Approval of Minutes- Regular Meeting Minutes of November 13th, 2018 and Work Session Meeting Minutes November 27th, 2018.

- 2019 Annual Meeting and Holiday Schedule- City Staff would like for Council to consider approving annual meeting schedule for Council Regular Meetings (the second Monday of the month at 7:00 PM), Council Work Sessions (the last Tuesday of the month at 3:00PM), and Planning Board/Board of Adjustments Meetings (the first Monday of the month at

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6:30PM). Said schedule will also establish the holiday schedule for the City of Bessemer City.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Proclamation

Mayor, Becky S. Smith read the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Proclamation aloud and declared Monday, January 21st, 2019 as Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

By motion of Kay McCathen and unanimous vote, the proclamation was adopted. A copy of the proclamation is available at City Hall.

Resolution-Declaring Property Surplus

City Manager Inman and staff recommend that the Swenson Salt Spreader, 3 Dodge Police Chargers, and a 1985 Ford F-250 Fire Truck be declared as surplus property.

By motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, said items were declared as property surplus. Thus, permitting City Manager Inman to dispose of them as he deems fit. A copy of the resolution is available at City Hall.

Demolition Ordinance- 807 W. Alabama Avenue

Code Enforcement Officer, Dave Taylor addressed Council regarding the demolition ordinance of property at 807 W. Alabama Avenue. In December 2015, a minimum housing case was opened and a notice of needed repairs to meet code was issued. A lender tried to foreclose on the home in 2010; however, all action ceased as it appeared that the homeowner was covered under the Soldiers Relief Act.

Light discussion was held regarding a possible course of action. Attorney Smith noted that a lis pendens could be filed at the Clerk's office on the property. A lis pendens indicates to potential purchasers that the property has a pending legal matter.

By motion Joe Will and unanimous vote, a lis pendens will be filed with the Clerk's office and this item will be tabled for six (6) months.

City Manager's Report

City Manager, James Inman addressed Council regarding the following items:

Opening Day for City Hall Annex

The building has officially received a certificate of occupancy (co). A temporary sign will be placed outside, and the permanent sign will arrive sometime in late February. We plan to open to the public on Monday, January 28th.

Drive-Thru Policy for City Hall Annex

A drive-thru policy was drafted for Council's review regarding the City Hall Annex. The policy states that every customer that plans to utilize the drive-thru must have their printed bill in order to process payments efficiently. We will only accept the following forms of payment: cash, check, money order, and Visa/MasterCard Credit Card. No debit cards will be accepted via the drive-thru. Customers seeking to use a debit card must come inside City Hall Annex.

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By general consensus, said policies were approved.

Kiser Senior Center for Renovations

As the Customer Service and Finance departments move out of the Kiser Senior Center, City Manager Inman would like to move forward with renovations. The floor and other issues will need to be addressed. City Manager Inman projects that the center will be closed for sixty (60) days. A grand re-opening will be held to welcome citizens back to the center.

By general consensus, said Kiser Senior Center renovations are permitted to begin once the Finance and Customer Service departments have moved out.

Public Works Construction Schedule

Council was presented with a construction schedule for the Public Works building. However, due to the government shutdown the project has been placed on hold. City Manager Inman will provide an update on the project at the next meeting.

Approval of 2019-2020 Rolling Stock Plan

A new rolling stock plan that includes natural gas, general public works and police department vehicles is requested. The rolling stock plan allows the City to lower maintenance cost while providing quality service to citizens.

By motion of Kay McCathen and unanimous vote, the 2019-2020 Rolling Stock Plan was approved.

Police Department Radios

A new system will be needed for the Police Department in the upcoming year. The City will have to purchase around 50 radios. The new system will allow the fire and police departments to communicate more efficiently.

Establish FY 2019-2020 Annual Budget Retreat Meeting Date

By motion of Joe Will and unanimous vote, the 2019-2020 retreat will be held Thursday, February 28th and Friday, March 1st, 2019 at Dole Foods located at 330 Southridge Parkway.

General

City Intern, Mikel Graham and Code Enforcement Officer, Dave Taylor have worked hard on identifying homes that have been vacant for more than a year with no utility service. It is against City ordinance to have a house vacant for more than a year. Letters to property owners in violation of City ordinance will be sent out in the coming weeks.

The Stinger Park Project has been placed on hold due to the government shut down. City Hall HVAC problems are still being addressed by engineers. City staff has applied for grant funds to address needed water plant renovations.

City Council General Discussion

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Mayor Smith opened the floor for Council general discussion. Mayor Smith led the discussion by thanking City Intern, Mikel Graham for his hard work. With the help of City Intern Graham, the City has received a $750,000 grant to aid in neighborhood revitalization. Mayor Pro Tem Will inquired about the progress of street lights being fixed. City Manager Inman informed Mr. Will that an agreement had been made. City street lights will be fixed; however, the City will have to cover the cost over the next 10 years. Council member Sonny Boyd expressed concern regarding a storm drain and excessive flooding along Hartford Avenue. City Manager Inman assured Mr. Boyd that these issues would be addressed. Council member Donnie Griffin commended City Manager Inman for saving the City money.

Adjourn

Being no further business to come before the board, by motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

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Becky S. Smith, Mayor Hydeia Y. Hayes, City Clerk

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