

REGULAR MEETING
GOODLETTSVILLE CITY COMMISSION

Date: July 24, 2008

Time: 6:30 PM

Place: City Hall

Present: Jerry Garrett, John Finch, Gary Manning, John Coombs

Absent: Jeff Cordell

Also Present: Russell Freeman, Jim Thomas, Claudia Davis, Julie High, Tim Ellis, Richard Pope, Rick Gregory, Bill Brasier, Phillip Gibson, Tom Tucker, Larry DiOrio, Pam Birdwell, Russell George, Bobby Jones, Bill Vecchione, Ken Castleberry, Bill Carter, Linda Coombs, Brenda Johnson, Brenda Bennett, Mark Garafola, Carter Jennings, Jean Lafferty, Ruby Buchanan, Jay Conyers, Jerry Hall, and others.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Garrett. Rev. Ken Castleberry offered prayer. The City Recorder called the roll: Mayor Garrett present, Vice Mayor Finch present, Commissioner Cordell absent, Commissioner Manning present, and Commissioner Coombs present.

Consider approval of the minutes of the June 26, 2008 regular commission meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Manning to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Coombs and passed unanimously 4-0.

Bill Vecchione, 503 Brick Church Pike; Brenda Johnson, 331 Janette Avenue; Brenda Bennett, 338 Janette Avenue; Cathy Jennings, 425 Janette Avenue; Jean Lafferty, 341 Janette Avenue; Ruby Buchanan, 423 Janette Avenue; and Jay Conyers, 343 Janette Avenue, all voiced opposition to the new sanitation removal monthly fee. They also asked the following questions which include the Commission's responses.

Will the City be charged a billing fee by the utility companies collecting the monthly fee and if the bill is paid late, will the sanitation fee include a late fee? City Manager Jim Thomas responded that there is a nominal fee charged by the utility companies which is much less than the City would spend if the City processed a separate bill for the fee. He added that he does not know the answer about a late fee but he will find out and answer the question at the next Commission meeting.

Is the City going to comply with ADA laws regarding the new charge? Mayor Garrett stated he will recommend that consideration be placed on a future Commission agenda to ask the Commission to consider waiving the \$15 monthly fee for those citizens who are approved for 100% Social Security disability.

Why weren't the citizens made aware of this new charge before it was approved? Mayor Garrett responded that the Commission agenda for the upcoming budget was published on two occasions in the Community Ledger, the public hearing for the budget was also published in the Community Ledger and they were both posted at City Hall and on the City's website.

Why are they being charged an additional fee for trash pickup when they are already paying property taxes, which have always included the trash pickup service? Mayor Garrett responded that 10% of the City's budget is paid by residential property taxes. 13% of the budget is paid by commercial property taxes. The State sends the City approximately \$114 for each resident that lives within the City of Goodlettsville. The State shared taxes and residential property taxes and the local option sales tax, which is 30% of the City's budget, amount to 66% of the total budget. The other 34% comes from a variety of sources. The Commission determined that it costs the City

\$180 for each resident that has trash pickup. The average property tax in the City of Goodlettsville is \$267. A determination was made that the City spends \$2,645 for each and every resident that lives in this City. With an average property tax of \$267 and a cost of \$2,645 per person, there is no way that property tax begins to cover the cost to operate the City. When you consider the Fire, Police, Public Works, Parks Departments, Codes and Planning Departments and the other services that the City provides, it is an expensive operation. Goodlettsville is the only City in the area that has not charged for trash pick-up and all the surrounding cities have been charging a separate fee for many years. Their rates are: Greenbrier \$14 monthly, Millersville \$15 monthly, Portland \$14 monthly, Springfield \$12 monthly, White House \$15 monthly, Clarksville \$16, Gallatin \$8 monthly, and Hendersonville charges \$220 a year as an assessment on their property tax statement and it is not deductible on income taxes. With the decline in local option sales tax collections and the economic conditions, this Commission had to make the serious and painful decision to start charging this fee. It is their responsibility to balance the budget without cutting the public safety or severely cutting any Public Works services. Along with this fee, the Commission made the following cuts: all non-salary operating accounts were reduced by 2%, no new capital projects were funded, six employees were terminated, two vacant positions were not filled, there were no salary increases to employees for the second time in the last five years, the City's contribution to employees' deferred comp plans were not funded, ongoing supervisory training for employees was not funded, the historic sites operation was reduced, and police officers cannot take home their patrol cars. Commissioner Manning further noted regarding property taxes that residents pay \$.66 per 100 of 25% of the assessed value. Commercial property owners pay \$.66 per 100 of 40% of the assessed value. In essence, the commercial property owners have been subsidizing residential garbage collection, while not getting that service themselves.

Gates Drive and Melissa Drive have had new concrete curbs installed. Why hasn't this been done for Janette Avenue? Also, who is responsible for the drainage problems and debris in Dry Creek? Public Works Director Bill Brasier responded that Commissioner Coombs asked recently for a cost estimate for concrete curbing on the south side of Janette. The first rough estimate is \$15,000, for curbing from Monticello to Hardaway, to partially curb Janette in the area where the worst drainage problems occur. Vice Mayor Finch responded that this is an example of problems that exist with the lack of funding for capital projects. The City has needed capital projects totaling \$3.5 Million that should have been done years ago. The only way to fund that is an additional tax increase. Any cut results in citizens complaining. If these capital needs are met, it will be necessary to raise taxes. Mrs. Johnson has complained that City Hall and Public Works is not ADA compliant. He estimates it would cost \$250,000 to make City Hall totally compliant. All the complaints presented are money issues. All these things cannot be done without additional revenue, and this audience is complaining about an additional \$15 per month fee. Brasier stated that the paving and sewer work that created problems described by citizens was done by Metro, not the City of Goodlettsville. Mayor Garrett recommended that they call Councilman at Large Tim Garret and Councilman Rip Ryman to get those problems resolved. Brasier stated that trees and problems with Dry Creek are handled by the City of Goodlettsville on the Goodlettsville side of the creek and Metro is responsible for the half of the creek on their side. The City's chipper service has been reduced, but will be by to remove trees at the curb on a monthly schedule.

Are property taxes going to be raised? Mayor Garrett responded that they do not know what the economy will do in this budget year and it may be possible that property taxes may have to be

increased. If the sales tax revenue starts to increase, hopefully that will divert a property tax increase. He strongly urged the citizens to be a part of the budget process next spring.

Vice Mayor Finch expressed that the budget decisions were not made lightly and he takes all their comments very seriously. Mr. Conyers stated he remembers his property taxes used to be \$10 a year. There is nothing else in his life that costs the same. Everything that citizens pay to the City has gone up at an extremely far lower rate than anything else that they spend money on. When you look at the entire budget, the garbage fee and the property tax and all the services this City provides, you have to come to the conclusion that you have the bargain of the century. You cannot move anywhere else for \$.66 property tax plus the garbage fee and get the services that you receive here. He expressed that he feels the property tax is much too low and he thinks they are going up. This Commission has scoured this budget line by line item and made some difficult choices. In the end, the citizens of Goodlettsville are getting a bargain.

Can anything be done about a sex offender that lives near the elementary school? Mayor Garrett asked that Police Chief Pope follow up on this request.

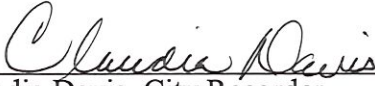
Jerry Hall, 701 Elba Drive, a resident of Goodlettsville for twenty years and he agreed with the comments of Vice Mayor Finch that the services in Goodlettsville are the best he has ever seen. He works with the ADA Compliance Division of Metro Government and what the federal law requires is that programs, services and activities covered under Title II, are required to be accessible. He suggested that citizens with expertise could volunteer to help out the City the next time a building is going to be constructed or redone, to make sure that it complies with the federal laws. There are ways to make existing buildings compliant without a major remodel project.

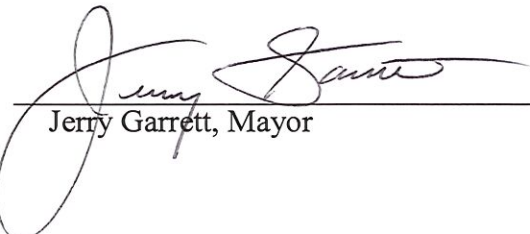
Mark Garafola, 1969 Tinnin Road, requested again that the Commission consider amending the ordinance regulating the number of liquor stores in the City to two, to allow for a third store. Mayor Garrett thanked him for the request.

Commissioner Coombs invited anyone in the audience to submit any solution to a better way to disseminate the information that involves the business of the City.

Consider Ordinance No. 08-818 on second reading, an ordinance to amend the Goodlettsville Municipal Code Title 17, Section 17 – 109, special pickup, chipper service, and bulk rubbish. City Manager Jim Thomas summarized that the Municipal Code states that large items or bulk items will be picked up on a regular and unannounced schedule. This ordinance amends the Code to accurately reflect what will be in place on October 1, 2008 when the bulk rubbish fee goes into effect. A motion was made by Vice Mayor Finch to approve Ordinance No. 08-818 on second reading. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Manning and passed unanimously 4-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.


 Claudia Davis, City Recorder


 Jerry Garrett, Mayor