



CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

300 Martin Luther King Blvd.

June 4, 2024

TIME: 6:00 PM

1. A CALL TO ORDER

President Smith called the council meeting to order at 06:00 pm and asked Mr. Jones to call the roll.

2. ROLL CALL

The Mayor and all City Council members were present.

1. George Allen, Erica Norris, Tim Aja, Todd Rauch, Eddie Smith

3. INVOCATION

Mr. Dunbar provided the invocation.

1. Paul Dunbar from First Baptist Church Opelika.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Russell A. Jones, CMC - City Clerk.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

1. Minutes from the 05-21-24 council meeting.

President Smith stated that a copy of the minutes had been previously received by the council and asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Aja made a motion to approve. Mr. Rauch seconded the motion. President Smith then asked if there were any additions, deletions, or corrections to the minutes. President Smith stated having no corrections, the minutes stand approved.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7. MAYOR COMMENTS AND RECOGNITIONS

1. Proclamation for Bryson McGlynn from Fox Run School.

Mayor Fuller invited Bryson and his parents, Mike and Shannon, up front. Mayor Fuller then read the proclamation and presented it to them. Mike McGlynn stated that it was an honor for Bryson to represent Opelika, and then thanked the city and city schools for allowing Bryson the opportunity.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS (Limit comments to 3 minutes or less)

President Smith asked Mr. Jones to present the public hearings.

1. Public Hearing - Demolition - 1300 Spring Drive.
Mr. Jones presented the public hearing. President Smith opened the public hearing and asked if anyone present would like to speak for or against said demolition. Brittany Sandlin of 303 Lee Road 706 Lot 7 Opelika, Alabama spoke against the demolition. Chief Building Inspector Jeff Kappelman then spoke for the city in favor of the demolition. President Smith closed the public hearing.
2. Public Hearing - Weed Abatement Assessment - 815 1st Avenue.
Mr. Jones presented the public hearing. President Smith opened the public hearing and asked if anyone present would like to speak for or against said weed abatement. No one came forward to speak. President Smith closed the public hearing.
3. Public Hearing - Weed Abatement Assessment - 4 Avenue A.
Mr. Jones presented the public hearing. President Smith opened the public hearing and asked if anyone present would like to speak for or against said weed abatement. No one came forward to speak. President Smith closed the public hearing.
4. Public Hearing - Amend Zoning Ordinance: Section 7.3C District Regulations Use Categories for the Institutional District (I-1).
Mr. Jones presented the public hearing. President Smith opened the public hearing and asked if anyone present would like to speak for or against said text amendment. No one came forward to speak. President Smith closed the public hearing.

9. AGENDA-RELATED PUBLIC COMMENTS (Limit comments to 3 minutes or less)

Evelyn Mickle of 1003 Glenn Street spoke first. Ms. Mickle began speaking about various topics when President Smith asked her what specific item on the agenda she would like to address. Ms. Mickle answered that she did not know. President Smith asked if she would please be seated, and she would have an opportunity during the second-roster of public comments to speak on all other items not on the agenda.

10. GENERAL BUSINESS

President Smith asked Mr. Jones to present the general business.

1. Request Downtown Street Closure - Bourbon Festival on 10-12-24.

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

SECONDER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen

AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch

NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

11. AWARDING OF BIDS

President Smith asked Ms. Finley to present the bids.

1. Uniform Cleaning - OPD.

RESOLUTION NO. 134-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris

SECONDER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

2. Weed Abatement Services - REV.

RESOLUTION NO. 135-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris

SECONDER: Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja

AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

3. McCoy Street Improvements - ENG.

RESOLUTION NO. 136-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

SECONDER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen

AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

12. RESOLUTIONS

President Smith asked Mr. Gunter to present the resolutions.

1. Expense Reports from Various Departments.

RESOLUTION NO. 137-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: 4 TO 0

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch

SECONDER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris

2. Designate City Personal Property Surplus and Authorize Disposal.

RESOLUTION NO. 138-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

3. Approve Bullet Proof Vest Grant Application - OPD.

RESOLUTION NO. 139-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

4. Approve Certain Tax Abatements and Exemptions for Daewon America, Inc. - ED.

RESOLUTION NO. 140-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

5. Approve Contract Extension with Valley Rescue Mission, Inc. - ADMIN.

RESOLUTION NO. 141-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja

AYES:	Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

6. Demolition - 401 N 16th Place - (Tabled).

Mr. Gunter explained that the item was on the table, and it was the recommendation of City Administration to leave the item on the table at this time. President Smith asked if there was a motion to remove the item from the table. No motion was given.

7. Demolition - 1300 Spring Drive.

During discussion, Mr. Rauch asked Ms. Sandlin if this was something she planned to work on and also asked Mr. Kappelman if he would recommend approval of this based on giving her at least 3 months to begin work on the property. President Smith gave Ms. Sandlin permission to speak. Ms. Sandlin answered that she was prepared to begin work on the property but needed longer than 90 days. President Smith explained to Ms. Sandlin if she could present a plan and make significant progress on the home during the 90 days, they could suspend the demolition, but that would be left up to city inspections. Ms. Norris stated concerns about the city being held liable if someone entered the property and was injured because they extended the time on this. Mr. Gunter answered he did not believe the city could be held liable for an extension for rehabilitation of the property. Mr. Gunter also explained that either the house needed to be demolished according to the building inspectors, or Ms. Sandlin needed to present a plan, hire a contractor, and start rehabilitating the property up to all code standards. Mr. Rauch asked how long the demolition would take to bid out. Mr. Kappelman answered that it would depend, but she would have the ability to appeal to the circuit court as well. Mr. Allen then stated that the council should not deviate from what they normally do, which was to approve the demolition now per the building inspector's recommendation, see if the owner would then work with the Mayor and building inspectors to rehabilitate the property within a reasonable amount of time, and if not, they could go ahead and move forward with the demolition of the unsafe structure. Ms. Norris closed by asking Mr. Kappelman if, after hearing everything, it was still his recommendation to move forward with the demolition. Mr. Kappelman answered "absolutely". President Smith then asked Mr. Jones to call the roll and the following vote was recorded:

RESOLUTION NO. 142-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja
SECONDER:	Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
AYES:	Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

8. Weed Abatement Assessment - 815 1st Avenue.

RESOLUTION NO. 143-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

9. Weed Abatement Assessment - 4 Avenue A.

RESOLUTION NO. 144-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

10. Special Appropriation to GEMS Empowered for Juneteenth Celebration.

RESOLUTION NO. 145-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

11. Special Appropriation to Envision Opelika for Renovations to the Southside Center for the Arts.

RESOLUTION NO. 146-24

MOTION TO APPROVE: UNANIMOUS

RESULT: **Passed**
MOVER: Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris
SECONDER: Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
AYES: Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

13. ORDINANCES

President Smith asked Mr. Gunter to present the ordinances.

1. Repeal Section 22-5 of the City Code of Ordinances: Ending Funeral Escort Services - 2nd Reading.

President Smith asked if there was a motion to approve the ordinance at second reading. Mr. Rauch made a motion to approve. Mr. Aja seconded the motion. President Smith asked if there was any discussion. During discussion, Mr. Allen stated that after speaking with many of the funeral home directors, he would like to have more time to discuss possible alternatives to this ordinance before making a decision. Mr. Allen then made a motion to table the agenda item. Mr. Aja seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the following vote was recorded:

MOTION TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM: UNANIMOUS

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Councilman Ward 1 Willie Allen
SECONDER:	Councilman Ward 3 Tim Aja
AYES:	Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith, Councilman Ward 5 Rauch
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

2. Amend Zoning Ordinance: Section 7.3C District Regulations Use Categories for the Institutional District (I-1) - 1st Reading.

FIRST READING: INTRODUCED

President Smith asked for a member of the council to introduce the ordinance. Mr. Rauch introduced the ordinance.

3. Approve Annexation Petition by Antione Harvis, 48 Acres, 2051 AL Highway 169 - 1st Reading.

FIRST READING: INTRODUCED

President Smith asked for a member of the council to introduce the ordinance. Ms. Norris introduced the ordinance.

14. APPOINTMENTS

15. SECOND ROSTER OF PUBLIC COMMENTS (Limit comments to 3 minutes or less)

Evelyn Mickle of 1003 Glenn Street spoke first. Ms. Mickle stated concerns about the city not having an overall plan to address traffic in certain areas of the city. Ms. Mickle closed by stating that she hears traffic from her home at all times of the day and night, and the city needs a plan to address it.

Jacquetta Ward, no address given, of GEMS Empowered spoke next. Ms. Ward thanked the Mayor and council for their years of support with the Opelika Juneteenth celebration.

Kevin Lunsford of 4006 Stratford Way spoke next. Mr. Lunsford stated that he and his family chose to move to Opelika for many reasons and thanked the council for their part in making Opelika a thriving community. Mr. Lunsford stated that he recently joined Circles of Opelika as an advocate for poverty in the community. Mr. Lunsford closed by stating he was excited to work with the city to address the issue of poverty in the community.

Patricia Quinn of 815 6th Avenue spoke next. Ms. Quinn stated that after

watching the last Planning Commission meeting, she was still concerned about the Renfro House, how they got where they are, and how to move forward. Ms. Quinn stated that she respected people's difference of opinion on the matter, but there has been a lot of misinformation and personal attacks. Ms. Quinn stated that she personally thought the renovation and plans for the Renfro House would make it similar to the Heritage House and that would be a good thing for the community. Ms. Quinn closed by asking the council to consider both sides and to have a vision for the city as a whole when doing so.

Billy U. Allen of 930 Redan Trace, Stone Mountain, Georgia spoke next. Mr. Allen stated that everything he says and does is to make Opelika the best city in Lee County. Mr. Allen then stated he had a list of issues that were brought up by candidates running for office in the 2020 election that would need to be addressed to make Opelika the best city in Lee County. Mr. Allen stated he would attend every city council meeting between now and the next election to address these issues brought up by the candidates. Mr. Allen closed by addressing the issues of poverty, urban forests, wild animals in neighborhoods, and blighted and neglected properties in the city.

16. ADJOURN

The City Council meeting minutes of June 4, 2024 are hereby adopted and approved this the 18th day of June, 2024.

/s/ Eddie Smith

President of City Council
City of Opelika, Alabama

ATTEST:
/s/ Russell A. Jones, CMC

City Clerk

- 1. Character Trait of the Month - Cooperation, the process of working together to the same end.
President Smith read the character trait of the month and asked for a motion to adjourn.
- 2. Motion to Adjourn.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: UNANIMOUS

RESULT:	Passed
MOVER:	Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Erica Norris
SECONDER:	Councilman Ward 5 Todd Rauch
AYES:	Councilman Ward 5 Rauch, Councilman Ward 1 Allen, Councilwoman Ward 2 - President Pro-Tem Norris, Councilman Ward 3 Aja, Councilman Ward 4 - President Smith
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

The council meeting ended at 06:48 pm.