CITY OF PLEASANT GROVE, ALABAMA

COUNCIL MINUTES

NOVEMBER 18, 2024

The City Council of Pleasant Grove, Alabama, met in the Council Chambers on Monday, November 18, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. with Mayor Jerry Brasseale presiding. The following were present:

Mayor: Jerry Brasseale

Council Members: Philip Houston

 Yolanda Lawson

 Kevin Dunn

 Eric Calhoun

 Ray Lassiter

Also present: Recarda Cobb (City Clerk), John Williamson (Building Inspector), and Chief Daniel Reid (Public Safety Director).

Prayer: Councilor Ray Lassiter

Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilor Yolanda Lawson.

# APPROVAL OF MINUTES

 Councilor Yolanda Lawson made a motion to approve the minutes from the last regular scheduled meeting held on November 08, 2024.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Eric Calhoun.

Motion passed unanimously.

# APPROVAL OF BILLS

Councilor Yolanda Lawson made a motion to approve payment of November 18, 2024 bills in the amount of $249,340.72.

The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Philip Houston.

Motion passed unanimously.

# APPROVAL OF FISCAL YEAR 2024-25 BUDGET.

Mayor Pro-Tem Philip Houston made a motion to approve Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget.

The motion was seconded by Mayor Jerry Brasseale.

Mayor Pro-Tem Philip Houston, Mayor Jerry Brasseale, Councilor Kevin Dunn, and Councilor Ray Lassiter voted yes.

Councilor Yolanda Lawson, and Councilor Eric Calhoun voted no.

The motion passed by a majority vote.

Recarda Cobb addressed false statements made by Chief Daniel Reid at the Public Safety meeting. Chief Reid stated that the employees working at City Hall receive five (5) free hours per week, close City Hall whenever there’s inclement weather, and the magistrates were not willing to come in to work early so officers can swear to their tickets. Recarda said that all three statements were false. He stated that the employees work nine (9) hours per day Monday – Thursday and four (4) hours on Friday which totals forty (40) hours per week. Whenever there’s inclement weather, Mayor Jerry Brasseale is the only person authorized to close City Hall. The employees do not make that decision. Mayor Jerry Brasseale, Chief Daniel Reid, Patricia Bouyer (magistrate), Zykeishia Randle (magistrate), and Recarda Cobb met to discuss officers not swearing to tickets they wrote. As a resolution Patricia Bouyer and Recarda Cobb agreed to arrive at work early some days to help rectify the problem.

Chief Daniel Reid stated that the employees at City Hall are compensated for a thirty (30) minutes lunch and two (15) minutes breaks, but the Police and Fire Departments are not. Also, he said that City Hall employees are compensated when they leave during bad weather, but Police and Fire Departments are not compensated. Mayor Jerry Brasseale told Chief Reid to have the Public Safety employees to come see him, if they have a problem with how City Hall operates.

John Williamson stated that the employees at City Hall go to lunch, take their breaks, and return to work.

# COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Ray Lassiter thanked the citizens for allowing him to attend the National League of Cities City Summit. Councilor Lassiter talked about how he plans on utilizing the knowledge to help Pleasant Grove continue moving forward. Also, he stated that the City is working on street paving, which is expected to begin soon.

Councilor Kevin Dunn thanked the citizens for allowing him to attend the National League of Cities City Summit, talked about how cities are recruiting officers nationally, and discussed grant writing class attended. Councilor Dunn briefly talked about loosing family members and friends to death, and encouraged citizens to be more thankful. He discussed partnering with Birmingham and the Salvation Army to help with donations, and asked those in need to please contact him. Also, Councilor Dunn said that he’s waiting on several quotes/bids to come in on several projects involving Pleasant Grove parks, and reached out to Pleasant Grove High School Football team players to encourage them after their playoff game lost.

Councilor Eric Calhoun discussed the zoning meeting concerning the forty (46) proposed homes being built on 8th Street. Councilor Calhoun also talked about the Public Safety meeting, and made a motion to move the Police and Fire Departments to the Public Safety payscale. Councilor Ray Lassiter made a motion to table. No further discussion was made at the time.

Mayor Pro-Tem Philip Houston gave an overview of activities being held at Pleasant Grove Library, encouraged citizens to visit, and provided closing information (closed November 27 – 30, 2024) for the Thanksgiving holiday. Mayor Pro-Tem Houston also stated that the City of Pleasant Grove donated Pleasant Grove High School the property it is built on, and contributed one million dollars ($1,000,000.00) to build Pleasant Grove Elementary School.

Councilor Yolanda Lawson congratulated Pleasant Grove High School Football team, and introduced the Beautification Board “Sparkle and Cheer Holiday Decorating Contest”. To enter forms will be available to fill out on facebook and at City Hall. The deadline to enter is December 16, 2024. First place will receive one hundred dollars ($100.00), second place fifty dollars ($50.00), and third place twenty-five dollars ($25.00). Councilor Lawson discussed the number five (5) State of Alabama ranking of Pleasant Grove’s Public Safety Department, and stressed how important she thinks it is to maintain it. Mayor Jerry Brasseale stated that he will not vote on a unanimous consent to move to a Public Safety payscale. Also, Councilor Lawson inquired about the $100,000.00, allocated for Pleasant Grove’s schools being removed from the budget. Mayor Pro-Tem Philip Houston wanted to know who put the $100,000.00 on the budget. Recarda Cobb replied that he put the amount allocated for Pleasant Grove’s schools on the budget. Mayor Jerry Brasseale said that the amount shouldn’t have been on the budget. Councilor Ray Lassiter asked Mayor Pro-Tem Phillip Houston did the auditor say take the $100,000.00 out of Pleasant Grove’s budget. Mayor Pro-Tem Phillip Houston said yes.

Councilor Lawson continued on by saying that the Mayor and Council should stop delaying decisions on issues that are important to Pleasant Grove moving forward.

# MAYOR REPORT

None

# CITIZENS COMMENTS

A Dansby, 709 3rd Avenue, stated that the City of Pleasant Grove shouldn’t have an issue with increasing Public Safety Department pay. She said that no employee is better than the other, but doesn’t agree with Mayor and Council not voting to give the Public Safety Department an increase. Ms. Sanders believes that the Mayor and Council should have deeper discussions about issues in pre-council before council meeting, a proposed budget should be made available for citizens to view, and if a citizen has an issue with the budget it shouldn’t be approved.

Gary Williams, 1456 5th Avenue, asked Mayor Pro-Tem Philip Houston about putting the $100,000.00 for Pleasant Grove Schools back into the budget. Mayor Pro-Tem Houston said it would be put in as a line item. Mayor Jerry Brasseale said it was not supposed to be in the budget because it was coming out of ARPA funds.

A Faye Calhoun, 417 13th Street, inquired about the negative in the budget. Mayor Pro-Tem Philip Houston said that the negative is a reflection of Pleasant Grove spending more than it is taking in. Mrs. Calhoun inquired about the investments. Councilor Yolanda Lawson said that the City is not making money from its investments. Mayor Pro-Tem Philip Houston disagreed.

Councilor Lawson begin breaking down the performance of Pleasant Grove’s investments.

As of August 31, 2024

Raymond James

 YTD 2023 2022

Earnings: 2.91% 3.26% (6.27) %

Ending balance: $3,386,865.26

Stone

Dividends/Interest: $22,861.16

Ending balance: $6,074,999.90

Mayor Jerry Brasseale stated that the investments were on Treasury Bonds, which the Mayor and Council agreed to invest in. Mrs. Calhoun said that she is disappointed and would like the investors to provide an overview of Pleasant Grove investments to its citizens. Also, she discussed the needs of Pleasant Grove’s kids, inquired about the results of Pleasant Grove Zoning Board meeting, and asked Attorney JD Terry about appealing the variances granted to some neighbors parking on their lawns. Attorney J D Terry stated that it can be appealed at the Circuit court within fifteen (15) days after granting variance.

Attorney Jacquese Gary, 1129 4th Way, asked why was the FY 2024-25 Budget able to be passed without a unanimous consent, but moving Pleasant Grove Police and Fire Department to a Public Safety pay scale required a unanimous consent. Attorney JD Terry said that a unanimous consent was not needed to pass the budget. Attorney Gary stated that it should require a unanimous consent no matter what, if the item is not on the agenda.

Darrell Phillips, 621 4th Terrace, talked about the Park Board being able to do more at Pleasant Grove Parks. They would like to see more improvements around the proposed walking trail. Also, Mr. Phillips shared a conversation he had with teachers at Pleasant Grove Elementary School concerning improving the park across from City Hall.

Steve Baxter, 4112 Smithfield Forest Drive, inquired about the Christmas parade on December 07, 2024, and stated that the Neighborhood Association would like to participate. Mayor Jerry Brasseale stated that it would be great to have them, and he will provide them with an application.

# ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro-Tem Philip Houston made motion to adjourn.

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Jerry W. Brasseale, Mayor

 Attest: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Recarda Cobb, City Clerk