

CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF PIEDMONT  
NOVEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2015  
6:00 PM

The City Council of the City of Piedmont met in regular session at the time and on the date above. Present were Mayor Bill Baker, Council Members Ben Keller, Mary Bramblett, Frank Cobb, Kenny Kelley, Brenda Spears, Mark Harper and Terry Kiser.

Following the invocation given by Keith Word and the pledge of allegiance to the flag the minutes were presented for consideration. Mary Bramblett made the motion that the minutes be approved as presented. Terry Kiser seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The bills totaling \$195,326.06 were then presented for consideration for payment. Terry Kiser made the motion that the bills be approved as presented. Ben Keller seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The City Clerk Michelle Franklin presented three different budget proposals to the Council. Budget "A" would be the city giving a one-step increase to the employees pending a satisfactory evaluation and the city absorbing the \$44,408.64 health insurance cost for the employees. Budget "B" would give a \$50,000.00 one-time raise divided by the 87 fulltime employees and a \$100.00 one-time raise to part-time employees. Option "B" would also have the employee pay \$5.00 per week extra on the health insurance. Budget "C" would give no raises to the employees and the city would not absorb any of the health insurance cost and the insurance increase would be absorbed by the employee. After a lengthy discussing and all options considered Terry Kiser made the motion to adopt Resolution 2015-22 to pass the 2015-2016 Budget and to choose Budget "A". Mary Bramblett seconded the motion and the Mayor asked the Clerk to do a roll call vote and the vote was as follows:

<u>YEAS</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Ben Keller Mary Bramblett Frank Cobb Kenny Kelly Mark Harper Terry Kiser	Brenda Spears	None

Following the roll call of 6 yeas and 1 nay Resolution 2015-22 passed with Budget "A" being chosen as the budget for the next fiscal year.

Brenda Spears requested that it be placed in the minutes that she wanted Budget "B".

Next on the agenda Mr. Terry Studdard asked that his property on Wagon Road be de-annexed from the city limits. Mr. Studdard said that he has 4 hogs on his property and would like to be de-annexed in order to keep his animals. Mark Harper made the motion to allow Mr. Studdard to de-annex from the city limits. Frank Cobb seconded the motion and the Mayor asked the Clerk for a roll call vote and the vote was as follows:

YEAS

Mary Bramblett  
Frank Cobb

NAYS

Ben Keller  
Kenny Kelley  
Brenda Spears  
Terry Kiser

ABSTAIN

Mark Harper

Following the roll call there were 2 yeas, 4 nays and 1 abstention to not allow the de-annexation from the city limits of Piedmont.

Next the Mayor asked that the first December Council Meeting be changed from December 1<sup>st</sup> to December 3<sup>rd</sup> due to the Piedmont Christmas Parade being scheduled on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Frank Cobb made the motion to change the meeting date. Mary Bramblett seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The Mayor then read a Proclamation for Alabama Farm-City Week during the week of November 20-26, 2015.

In Other Business Terry Kiser said that he and Carl Hinton had made all the signs for the work orders that had been turned in.

Mary Bramblett asked when the State Championship sign was going to be replaced on the Cedartown Hwy.

Frank Cobb proposed a 2 cent gas tax increase stating that this was the time to do it while gas prices were low. He said that the city could get a \$1.5 million bond to pave 15 miles of road in the city and use the gas tax funds to pay the bond payment. He asked that this be placed on the next agenda.

Mayor asked did we need another bond and how long would it take to pay this off?

In Visitor's Comments Kimberly Dunbar asked the Council to consider renting the city owned building to her to open a family style restaurant.

In Council Reports Ben Keller said he had a tree on Church St. that needed to be removed.

Mary Bramblett reminded everyone that the Piedmont Bulldogs would be playing on Thursday night in the playoffs.

Frank Cobb had no report.

Kenny Kelley had no report.

Brenda Spears Council Comments:

The Bills of Payment for council tonight is \$195,326.08. Payroll and taxes for the week of October 23 was \$57,249.63 and for October 30 was \$57,394.89. The total of tonight's council approval is \$309,970.58.

If anyone would like to look over the 2013-2014 City of Piedmont Audit prepared by Joan Sanders and Associates or the 2015-2016 City of Piedmont Budget, contact Brenda Spears (256-447-1950) and each one will be available at your request.

I would like to thank the Piedmont Downtown Businesses that participated in the Spirit of Halloween on Thursday, October 29.

Scholarships for seniors are available for households that receive electrical power from the City of Piedmont through AMEA. (Alabama Municipal Electric Authority) Seniors must plan to attend a school in Alabama to be eligible. Applications are available from school counselors or the AMEA website [www.amea.com](http://www.amea.com) or call 334-387-3504. The application deadline is Monday, February 1, 2016.

The City of Piedmont Audit (September 30, 2014) Page 45 reflects that \$666,894 in Proprietary Funds (Electric, Water, Gas Sewer) is income earned by not received. Unbilled revenue of \$306,626 represents

service which has been provided and not yet billed. These two totals are \$973,520 of earned revenue that has not been received by the City of Piedmont. Mayor Baker, explain why this clearly is reflected in the audit, and you have not brought this problem before the council to be addressed?

The Budget is a roadmap of the city's future for a year. In my opinion, 2015-2016 budget has been improperly prepared and is unrealistic. The Mayor must supervise the budget process where actual revenues and expenses that have occurred during the current budget year to formulate a workable budget. I have found many discrepancies and incorrect entries throughout tonight's budget. Numbers do not lie, and the budget must be transparent and accountable. I cannot support the current budget as it is presented tonight. It is a budget that is a disservice to the taxpayers.

Mark Harper had no report.

Terry Kiser said that he makes his council decisions on what he thinks is fair and right and it is hard to make these decisions. He said if the attorney advises on something he would go on the advice of the attorney.

In the Mayor's Comments the Mayor said we look at the budget every day and try to cut back whenever and wherever we can and he encouraged anyone on the council to come up and help with the numbers. He also announced the Piedmont Bulldog playoffs would start on Thursday night instead of Friday night due to the chance of rain. The Mayor also announced that the trail bridges would start being repaired in the next few weeks and should be finished within 30 days, weather permitting. He also informed the Council that he had purchased the equipment for a driving range for \$700.00 to be put at the pool. The Mayor thanked Keith Word for his help during the Downtown Trick or Treat. He told the Council that the city gets money from AMEA each year. He said he would like use this money to improve the downtown area with benches, flowerpots and new matching trash cans. Mary Bramblett made the motion to allow the Mayor to use the AMEA money for the downtown improvements. Terry Kiser seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The City Clerk informed the Council that a police officer would be out for an extended amount of time due to an illness and she said this was putting the police department in a bind causing the department to be understaffed and using a lot of overtime. Terry Kiser made the motion to hire a certified officer for the police department. Mary Bramblett seconded the motion and the Mayor asked the Clerk for a roll call vote and the vote was as follows:

<u>YEAS</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Ben Keller	Frank Cobb	None
Mary Bramblett		
Kenny Kelley		
Brenda Spears		
Mark Harper		
Terry Kiser		

Following the roll call the vote was 6 yeas and 1 nay to hire a certified officer for the police department.

With no other business to come before the Council Terry Kiser made the motion that the meeting be adjourned. Ben Keller seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.