

CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF PIEDMONT
JUNE 17TH, 2014
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, Frank Cobb, Kenny Kelley, Brenda Spears and Terry Kiser. Absent from the meeting were Mary Bramblett and Mark Harper.

Following the invocation given by Kenny Kelley and the pledge of allegiance to the flag the minutes were presented for consideration. Terry Kiser made the motion that the minutes be approved as presented. Ben Keller seconded the motion and the minutes were approved with one abstention by Brenda Spears.

Next the Mayor called on local businessman Doug Rosser owner of Piedmont Outdoors, and presented him with a plaque for winning the Small Business Award from the Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce.

The bills totaling \$389,569.99 were then presented for consideration for payment. Kenny Kelley made the motion that the bills be approved as presented. Frank Cobb seconded the motion and the bills were approved for payment with one "no" vote by Brenda Spears.

The Mayor called on the Chief Tidwell to give the police report for the month of May 2014. Officers had 817 total contacts with the public. 1 felony arrest, 20 misdemeanor arrests, 1 DUI, 2 drug arrests, 2 crimes against persons arrests, 1 theft arrest, 9 court/warrant arrests. 38 citations, 7 accident reports and 31 motorist assists. 1 burglary reported, 9 thefts reported, 59 cases investigated and 60 incident reports. The Piedmont Municipal Court collected \$13,345.88 in fine money for the month of May, 2014. Chief Tidwell then gave the Animal Control Report for the month of May 2014. There were 10 calls for service, 3 preliminary investigations, 1 follow-up investigation, 67 animals picked up, 2 animals returned to owner, 65 animals taken to shelter, 30 strays, 25 surrendered by owner, 10 abandoned and 2 reclaimed at shelter by owner. Abatement Officer Charles McDonald gave the Nuisance and Abatement Report for the month of May 2014. 62 total cases (new and on-going), 13 total yard cases, 8 cases being processed and 11 cases completed/Properties in compliance current month.

In Other Business Terry Kiser asked Street Supervisor Ricky Jackson to discuss the possibility of purchasing a new knuckle boom truck for the city street department. Mr. Jackson said the truck would cost \$125,570.00 if purchased new and the truck that the department has now was bought around 1994. After some discussion on payment options, Brenda Spears made the motion to table the matter until the Council was presented with more information. With no one to second the motion, Frank Cobb made the motion to go ahead with the purchase of the truck. Terry Kiser seconded the motion and the motion carried with one abstention from Brenda Spears.

Next Terry Kiser asked Carl Hinton to give a report on the garbage truck to which Mr. Hinton said that the truck had broken down several times in the past year. Carl asked the Council to consider repairing the existing garbage truck and then selling it and purchasing a new truck for the city garbage service. Terry Kiser made the motion to allow Carl Hinton to enter into negotiations for a new garbage truck and also to sell the existing truck. Kenny Kelley seconded the motion and the motion carried with one abstention from Brenda Spears.

Frank Cobb asked if the G.O. Bond could be used to repair the filter plant. He also wanted to stress that the city does not have bad water but the equipment needed to be repaired.

Brenda Spears asked the Mayor what the new cemetery account would be called. She also asked the Mayor for information he received on the McClellan project to which the Mayor stated that he is still waiting on someone to get back in contact with him.

In Council Reports Ben Keller thanked abatement office Charles McDonald and Chief Ledbetter for getting the house burned down in his district. He also said he scraped behind the backstop at the Bethune Baseball field so cement could be poured.

Frank Cobb said he had some abatement issues on Taylor Street with an abandoned house.

Kenny Kelley said if we want revenue it is out there to get and we need to get more people on the outskirts of the city to sign up for the city garbage collection.

Brenda Spears council comments: The bills for payment for June 17, 2014 were \$389,569.99 and salary payments and payroll taxes for June 6 and June 13 were \$119,506.50 for a total of \$509,076.49

The council had a very informative work session Thursday, June 12 with Jennifer Swafford with the JSU Center of Development and Business Research for developing a report for the council to include a Piedmont Financial Analysis and 7 Summary of Indicators to identify ways for the council to reduce costs and more efficient spending with providing services to the citizens.

Our citizens are seeing slow but positive changes and improvements with Piedmont's Abatement Policy. The Anniston Star on June 10, 2014 reported that the Anniston City Council is declaring a "War on Blight" by amending their current nuisance abatement policy and passing a new ordinance for properties overgrown with weeds and grass when owners have failed to maintain them. With the new ordinance in place, the code enforcer declares the property a nuisance and in 10 days the city cuts it and puts a lien on the property. Anniston's city attorney stated that the city can now take civil action against the properties' owners. Piedmont City Clerk could get more information from Anniston's ordinance for the council to consider and hopefully we will be able to see more results in a shorter period of time. The Piedmont Museum has new air conditioners and is now reopened for visitors on Sundays. Terry Kiser said he had some streets that needed to be paved. He also stated that he knew the Council had spent a lot of money tonight but sometimes you have to spend money to make money. He asked the Mayor to have Craig Russell come once a month to give a report on how the pool is doing.

In the Mayor's comments the Mayor informed the Council that he and City Clerk Michelle Franklin had lunch with newly elected Commissioner Lee Patterson and rode him around the City showing him places that were in need of paving. He asked the Council if July 8th at 5:30 would be a good time to have someone from Troy University to come up and speak to the Council about cost saving measures.

With no other business to come before the Council Terry Kiser made the motion that the meeting be adjourned. Frank Cobb seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.