



City of West Point

Council Work Session Minutes

Thursday, Dec. 10, 2020 @ 5:30 p.m.

Via teleconference

The Work Session of the Mayor and Council was held by Teleconference December 10, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. with Mayor Pro-Tem Alanteo “Henry” Hutchinson presiding.

Members Participated:

Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III
Councilmember Sandra Thornton
Councilmember Deedee Williams

Members Non-Participate:

Mayor Steve Tramell
Councilmember Gerald W. Ledbetter
Councilmember Gloria R. Marshall

Agenda Reviewed

Mayor Pro-Tem Henry Hutchinson called the meeting to order. He reviewed the agenda and asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Councilmember Deedee Williams made said motion; seconded by Councilmember Sandra Thornton; **passed unanimously**

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

New Business

- **Decriminalization of Marijuana**

Mayor Pro-Tem Hutchinson stated the council has discussed decriminalizing marijuana in several work sessions. He stated the proposed ordinance is in the Council packet. It will delete Section 12-29 in its entirety and insert a new Section 12-29 to be entitled “Possession of Marijuana”. (a) It shall be unlawful for any person to possess one ounce or less of marijuana within the limits of the city. (b) The Municipal Court is granted jurisdiction to try and dispose of cases where a person is charged with the possession of one (1) ounce or less by of marijuana if the offense occurred within the corporate limits of the city. The jurisdiction of the municipal court shall be concurrent with the jurisdiction of any other courts within the county having jurisdiction to try and dispose of such cases. (c) For an offense in violation of this Code Section, a civil fine shall be assessed according to the following schedule: a civil fine not to exceed one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for the first offense; a civil fine not to exceed \$200.00 for the second offense; and a civil fine not to exceed \$350.00 for any third or subsequent offense of this Code Section. The finding of a violation under this Code Section shall be a civil infraction and shall not constitute a criminal offense for any purpose. (d) Any person charged with possession of one ounce or less of marijuana under this section shall be entitled, upon request, to have their case transferred to the court within the county having general misdemeanor jurisdiction over the alleged offense. (e) Each violation of this Code Section shall be considered a separate and distinct offense, punishable as a civil

offense with penalties as set forth under this Code Section. There were no further discussions. The item will be on the next business agenda for consideration.

- **Board & Committee Appointment**

Mayor Pro-Tem Hutchinson stated Kevin Patrick has applied to be considered to serve another 5-year term on the West Point Development Board. Kevin Patrick currently serves as the Chairman of the Board. The consensus of the Council is to re-appoint Mr. Patrick. The item will be on the next business agenda for consideration.

- **Resolution for Franchise Fees**

Mayor Pro-Tem Hutchinson stated the City currently collects franchise fees from cable and video providers. Included in the Council packet is a proposed resolution that will be filed with the Secretary of State office to assure the City will receive a franchise fee of 5% from any cable or video provider that holds a franchise issued by the state. The item will be on the next business agenda for further consideration.

- **Water Sewer Refinance**

Mayor Pro-Tem Hutchinson stated Andrew Tritt Representative of Stifel is a participate in this meeting. He asked were there any questions for him. Councilmember Williams asked if anything had changed from the previous work-session. Mr. Tritt stated there were no changes. The refinancing the City of West Point debt obligations related to water and sewerage system was about \$19,369,688 of principal outstanding debt. These debt obligations interest rates range between 2.50% and 4.50% the climate for refinancing debt is very good. The City of West Point Water and Sewer debt could be refinanced with rates between 2.25 and 3.99 that would save the City approximately 1.3 million dollars over thirty years. He stated lenders are reluctant to re-financing debt with fixed rates for over 15 years. The item will be on the next Business agenda for consideration.

- **Municipal Court Judge Discussion**

Mayor Pro-Tem Hutchinson stated the Council has received applications for the open position of West point Municipal Court Judge. He asked is there any questions on this item. City Attorney stated if interviews were conducted, they will have to be done in open meetings. The appointment of Municipal Court Judge usually takes place the first meeting in January. Councilmember Williams stated the Council need to allow more time to make decisions such as appointments of Judges. The Judge Pro-Tem will conduct Municipal Court until the Mayor and Council appoints a permanent person to the position.

- **Hyundai Transys Georgia Powertrain Memorandum of Understanding**

Mayor Pro-Tem Hutchinson stated a Memorandum of Understanding for 2020 Series Bond between the West Point Development Authority, Troup County Georgia, Troup

County School Board, the City of West Point and Hyundai Transys Georgia Powertrain, Inc. is in your Council packet. Rob McKenna, legal counsel for the West Point Development Authority was available to answer any questions. He stated the WPDA will issue the bonds with the principal amount not to exceed \$241,000,000. The first year through and including the Third year 100% abatement. The fourth year 75% abatement. The fifth year there after through and including the 20th year 50% abatement. Hyundai will invest \$240 million in the new 620,000 square foot manufacturing facility and create 678 full time jobs. Hyundai Transys produces automatic and manual transmissions and is the only company in the world specializing in transmissions. Councilmember Deedee Williams stated she is an employee of one of the parent companies and would recuse herself from the voting. She wanted to know how much the abatements would cost the City of West Point. Mr. McKenna stated the project was a competitive bid project. The company could have chosen just about any city in several states to produce the transmissions. Mayor Pro-Tem Hutchinson, Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III, and Sandra Thornton thanked the Company for choosing the City of West Point for their new facility. The MOU will be on the next Business agenda for consideration.

- **2021 Proposed Budget**

Mayor Pro-Tem Hutchinson stated the proposed 2021 budget process is complete. He asked for any further discussion. Councilmember Deedee Williams stated she would like to educate the public on the budget process. She acknowledged the City is following all the state requirements for advertising and holding the required public hearings. She stated citizens had asked about paving certain streets and was told the streets were not in the budget. She also stated the City should have put money in the budget to pay for early voting during the last General Election. Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III stated the General Elections are the responsibility of the Counties. The City of West Point is only responsible for Municipal Elections. He stated monies are allocated for Early Voting during the City of West Point Municipal Elections. The 2021 Proposed Budget will be on the next business meeting agenda for consideration.

OTHER

Councilmember Sandra Thornton thanked everyone involved in collecting toys for needed children in our community. The toys will be distributed on Monday.

Mayor Pro-Tem Hutchinson asked for a motion to adopt six items for the next Business agenda. The Decriminalization of marijuana, Development Authority Board Appointment, Resolution for Franchise Fee, Water Sewer Refinance, Hyundai Transys Georgia Powertrain Memorandum of Understanding and the 2021 Proposed Budget. Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III made said motion and seconded by Councilmember Sandra Thornton; **passed unanimously**.

ADJOURN

Councilmember Joseph R. Downs III made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Deedee Williams; **passed unanimously**.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned