

City of Lanett

Work Sessions Minutes

401 N. Lanier Ave.
Lanett, AL 36863

Tuesday, July 12 2022

5:30 PM

Lanett Council Chambers

Work Session -

The City Council of the City of Lanett, Alabama, met in a work session on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, in the Council Chambers of the Lanett Municipal Complex at 5:30 P.M.

Council members present were Tony Malone, Tamalita Autry, Ronnie Tucker, Angelia Thomas and Tifton Dobbs. Mayor Heard presided over the meeting.

Mayor Heard called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Councilman Dobbs gave the invocation.

Mayor Heard stated that he had a proposal from Clearwater for Lanett Water and Waste Water Department that he wanted to council to review.

Chief Johnny Allen gave an update on the airport. He explained the process of having an FBO (Fixed Based Operator) working for the airport and feels that it would be beneficial for the city. Councilman Malone mentioned the need for having an Airport Manager, which Chief Allen concurred stating that we must have a manager that is knowledgeable of airports operations, planes and jets, etc. Councilman Dobbs stated that the job description had been sent to Attorney Gray. Gray stated that he would check on it. Councilman Tucker wanted to know if the hangar, gas tank and runway were sufficient, which Allen stated that the runway is over 5400 feet, which is plenty enough where even a corporate jet could land there. Allen stated that there is a huge demand for hangar space and the city needed to make a move on this. The city, however will not build the hangars but will lease the land for hangars to be built. Allen projected an opening date of around November 1st. In regards to the gas tanks, Allen stated that we have updated the tank with a new card reader and will need jet fuel, the council need to decide whether we will have a tank or lease a tanker truck for the jet fuel.

Mayor Heard stated that in the process of working on the budget for next year and would like to increase the pay for city employees. Tucker asked if we were looking at doing a percentage. Mayor Heard stated that he would like to change from the Steps and Grades system that we are currently using and that he would have something more to present to them at a later date.

Mayor Heard noted that we would present at the next meeting a Resolution Authorizing Award Badge and Service Weapon to Chief Johnny Wood upon his retirement.

Mayor Heard proposed to start having a work session every 2nd and 4th Monday of each month at 5:30. Thomas asked to make it later at 5:45 or 6:00.

Mayor Heard stated that at the next council meeting he would make an appointment of Interim Police Chief. He stated that we have received 5 applicants for Police Chief's position. Malone asked if there was a state website that we could advertise on. Dobbs said the Alabama Chiefs Association could be used for advertisement.

Chief Johnny Allen gave an update on the repairs to the fountain. He stated that after the final sealant we would have to wait 7 days to fill it with water and after 48 hours work could be done on the pump. He stated that if everything goes as scheduled, we may be able to turn it on by Monday week. Mayor Heard stated that he would like the Council to be there when it is turned on.

Mayor Heard recognized Street Department Head Rockey Bolt who discussed road paving on South 7th. Mayor Heard, Councilman Dobbs and Mr. Bolt both agreed that this street was one of, if not the worst street in Lanett and was in desperate need of paving. Bolt stated that this road had not been paved since around 1952. Mayor Heard asked all of the Councilmembers to let him know if there was a street in their district that is in bad shape and needed paving.

Councilman Dobbs discussed the water rising next to his business stating that we need to pave below the curb.

Mayor Heard stated that Amwaste had done a better job in the past week as well as this week. He stated that the subject had come up about operating the garbage ourselves and also the possibility of combining with another city. Councilmember Thomas stated that District 4 was in bad shape when it came to the garbage. Councilman Malone asked when the contract with Amwaste was up and if we had an option to opt out. Attorney Gray stated that he would take a look to see. Mr. Malone thanked Mayor Heard for waiving the garbage fees. Mrs. Thomas asked about the schedule for roadside pickup. Grounds Department Head Bo Lauderdale explained the process as starting on one side of the city and moving across the city until complete and starting over. Mayor Heard stated that this schedule was something that he was working on and also stated that some of this had gotten out of control to where contractors are placing building scraps on the curbs. He said that the Code Enforcement Officer has been making contact with the homeowners in this instance letting them know that it is the contractors' responsibility to remove this.

Councilman Malone asked about the recent flooding in the city. Chief Johnny Allen replied stating that this past Saturday, we had 5 inches of rain. He complimented the city workers that had been called out during this bad storm. Allen stated that Highway 29 was impassible for a little over 2 hours and that he needed to notify the Alabama Department of Transportation. ALDOT did come to Lanett to investigate and take pictures.

Councilman Tucker stated that there was lot of flooding at his house and that he had received several calls about it. He wanted to know if there was anything that the city could do to prepare them for the next time. Chief Allen stated that it may have been that we just got so much water so quickly and compared it to the flood of 2015 flood when we

lost some bridges. Tucker stated that behind his neighbor's house there was a creek that appeared to be dammed up and asked if it was the city's responsibility to clean creeks out. Rockey Bolt replied that no, the city was not responsible. Bolt says that the State of Alabama says that the city cannot touch a free running creek year-round, that it is the land owners' responsibility. Councilman Tucker asked if there was anyone in the audience that could speak to that because he noticed someone had their hand up. Residents Steven Wright from N. 2nd Court had comments. Councilman Malone stated that it was a safety issue in his opinion. Attorney Gray stated that the city was not allowed to go on private property unless the city caused the problem. Mayor Heard said that he and Mr. Bolt would ride out and look at it on tomorrow. Mr. Tucker stated that he would like to be there as well.

Councilman Malone asked Clearwater representative in the audience what exactly did they do. Jeff Ashton from Clearwater stated that they are certified operators that handle Water Distribution system as well as the Waste Water Treatment and Sewage Collection system. Ashton also stated that they handle water errors in operating and managing. He also stated that they were responsible for reporting and compliance. Mr. Richard Smith stood up and stated that he wanted to brag on Clearwater, that they had been very helpful. He stated that he lived next door to Mr. Wright on N. 2nd Ct and he had witnessed the rise of the water. Mr. Dobbs stated that he had gone to this area in previous years about the same issue. Mayor Heard says that he understands how they feel because he had bad flooding at his house this past weekend as well. He reminded them that they were coming to look at it the next morning.

Mayor Heard asked for a motion to adjourn, which was given by Councilmember Dobbs and seconded by Councilmember Thomas. Mayor Heard stated that there being no further business to come before this council, motion duly made, the meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Attest:

Jamie L. Heard, Mayor

Deborah Gilbert, City Clerk/Treasurer