

**CITY OF HELEN
COMMISSION MEETING
OCTOBER 15, 2013
4:00 P.M.
AGENDA**

1. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR LYNN WHITENER
2. ROLL CALL BY CITY CLERK MARILYN CHASTAIN
3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 1, 2013
6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC
7. ALPINE HELEN/WHITE COUNTY CVB MONTHLY REPORT
8. ADMINISTRATIVE
 - A. Financial Report
 - B. Approval to contract with the Georgia Municipal Association for Natural Gas Purchasing Services
 - C. (added) Discussion of Phase 2 of Island Area Project
 - D. Discussion for approval of a 1 year extension to the Water Supply and Sale Agreement from White County Water Authority
9. FIRE DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT
10. POLICE DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT
11. PUBLIC WORKS, WATER AND WASTE WATER MONTHLY REPORT
12. BUILDING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT
13. ORDINANCES
 - A. Discussion of ordinance for Telecommunications Antennas and Towers
 - B. Discussion of Window Sign Ordinance
14. RESOLUTIONS
15. PURCHASES AND BIDS

16. Executive session for possible litigation

17. CITY COMMISSION COMMENTS

18. ADJOURNMENT

THIS AGENDA WAS POSTED OCTOBER 11, 2013 AT 12:00 P.M.

**CITY OF HELEN
COMMISSION MEETING
OCTOBER 15, 2013
4:00 P.M.
MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Helen City Commission met on Tuesday October 15, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers at Helen City Hall.

Mayor Lynn Whitener called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. City Clerk Marilyn Chastain called the roll and the following were present: Commissioner Judy Holloway, Commissioner Helen Wilkins, Mayor Lynn Whitener, Commissioner Dona K Burke, Commissioner Jeff Ash.

Also in present were Police Chief Jim Couch, Fireman Lee Poteat, Public Works Director Ross Hewell, Building & Zoning Director Patrick Couch, City Manager Jerry Elkins, Finance Officer Debbie Gerchman, City Attorney Carl Free, City Clerk Marilyn Chastain.

City Manager Jerry Elkins asked the Commission to add as item C under Administrative: Discussion of Phase 2 of the Island Area Project. Commissioner Jeff Ash made a motion to add item C to the Agenda, 2nd by Commissioner Dona K Burke. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Motion to approve the Agenda made by Commissioner Dona K Burke, 2nd by Commissioner Helen Wilkins. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Motion to approve the Minutes from October 2, 2013 made by Commissioner Judy Holloway, 2nd by Commissioner Dona K Burke. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Petitions and Communications from the Public: None

Alpine Helen/White County CVB Monthly Report: None

Administrative:

Financial Report: Commissioner Dona K Burke questioned the overtime pay in the report. Finance Officer Debbie Gerchman reported that there had been several water line breaks causing overtime in the Public Works department. Commissioner Dona K Burke also questioned the overtime pay for the Police Department. City Manager Jerry Elkins stated that there had been several Special Events that part time officers worked, and that he had talked with Police Chief Jim Couch about cutting out the part time officers from working week days when not busy. Commissioner Dona K Burke also voiced her concern about people walking around town with alcohol during the day on Saturday. Police Chief Jim Couch stated there were only 2 officers in town working during the day, that the other officers came on duty for the night shift when the need for officers is greater. Motion to approve the financial report made by Commissioner Jeff Ash, 2nd by Commissioner Judy Holloway.

Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

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Approval to contract with the Georgia Municipal Association for Natural Gas Purchasing Services. City Manager Jerry Elkins explained the success that GMA has had for negotiating natural gas prices for other cities. Commissioner Jeff Ash made a motion to approve contracting with GMA to allow them to negotiate natural gas prices for the City of Helen and to approve allowing City Manager Jerry Elkins the authority to execute any necessary documents after Contract is reviewed by the City Attorney, 2nd by Commissioner Dona K Burke. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Discussion of Phase 2 of the Island Area Project. City Manager explained to the Commission the possible savings of having the work done during the Phase 1 construction, as did Fletcher Holiday of EMI. City Manager Jerry Elkins also stated there will need to be a Survey of the property done before the engineering phase could be started. Commissioner Dona K Burke asked what the cost may be. Fletcher Holiday of EMI stated he estimates between \$150,000.00 to \$170,000.00, depending on the amount of drainage to be done. City Manager Jerry Elkins stated there are SPLOST funds available to cover the cost. Motion to go ahead with engineering and surveying made by Commissioner Dona K Burke, 2nd by Commissioner Helen Wilkins. Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Discussion for approval of a 1 year extension to the Water Supply and Sale Agreement from White County Water Authority. City Manager Jerry Elkins stated that the original 5 year contract had expired in 2012, and a new contract had been delivered extending until June 2014. City Attorney Carl Free stated the old contract was originally for 5 years, with negotiated renewals, but that there had been a contract received by the City extending service until June 2014 which was not negotiated, and confusing, so he will look into contacting the County and having the proper 5 year contract drawn.

Fire Department monthly report. Report included as a part of the minutes. Fireman Lee Poteat reported to the Commission the department had been busy with medical calls, snakes in residents, and structure fires, also that the ISO inspection had been done last month and should have the results in May 2014 and hoping the rating remains at 4 or better at 3. Fireman Lee Poteat stated he had a huge concern about the drop in the call volume coming from the 911 emergency center about medical calls. Commissioner Jeff Ash asked City Manager Jerry Elkins to ask David Murphy the Emergency Management Director to come to the next Commission meeting to discuss the matter.

Public Works, Water and Waste Water monthly report. Public Works Director Ross Hewell stated his report was included in the Agenda and the Public Works department had been getting the Christmas decorations ready to install.

Building & Zoning Department monthly report. Building & Zoning Director Patrick Couch stated he had done 1 electrical permit and 4 building inspections since the last meeting.

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Ordinances:

A. Discussion of ordinance for Telecommunications Antennas and Towers. City Manager Jerry Elkins stated that City Attorney Carl Free had been working on the Ordinance and should have it ready by the next meeting for the first reading.

B. Discussion of Window Sign Ordinance. City Manager Jerry Elkins stated the existing ordinance does cover signs inside buildings. City Attorney Carl Free stated the current code as written could be used to enforce the ordinance, but the Commission may want to consider including a distinction of areas that could allow certain larger signs. Don Stegall of DJ'S Collectibles spoke to the Commission about his confusion of what signs are allowed and which ones are not. Commissioner Helen Wilkins stated it is confusing, and the Ordinance needs to be critiqued to be more understood. City Attorney Carl Free asked the Commission to let him know of changes.

Resolutions: None

Purchases & Bids: None

Executive Session for possible litigation. Commissioner Helen Wilkins made a motion to go into Executive Session at 5:35 p.m., 2nd by Commissioner Judy Holloway.

Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

Present for the Executive session were: Commissioner Judy Holloway, Commissioner Helen Wilkins, Mayor Lynn Whitener, Commissioner Dona K Burke, Commissioner Jeff Ash, City Manager Jerry Elkins, City Attorney Carl Free, City Clerk Marilyn Chastain.

Motion to go out of Executive Session at 5:47 p.m. made by Commissioner Helen Wilkins, 2nd by Commissioner Judy Holloway.

Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

No action taken.

City Commission Comments: Commissioner Dona K Burke wanted to remind the Commission to add Mr. Jimmy Wilkins to the Wall of Fame.

City Manager Jerry Elkins said he was approached by a Girl Scout troupe from Gainesville wanting to plant a tree in Helen for a sick child named Emma, and that he had told them the City would donate the tree from the existing Tree Fund account. The Commission agreed it was a nice gesture.

Motion to adjourn at 5:55 p.m. made by Commissioner Judy Holloway, 2nd by Commissioner Helen Wilkins.

Motion approved with a unanimous vote of the Commission.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

CITY CLERK MARILYN CHASTAIN