The City Council of the City of Harlem, Georgia met for their monthly Work Session on Thursday, March 23, 2023, at the Public Safety Building at 7:00 p.m. with Mayor Roxanne Whitaker presiding.

Present: COUNCIL: Mayor Roxanne Whitaker, Mayor Pro tem Gregg Stokes, Councilmember Daniel Bellavance, and Councilmember John Thigpen; STAFF: City Manager Debra Moore, City Clerk Leona Holley, and City Attorney Tom Watkins; ABSENT: Councilmember Al Reeves; MEDIA: Stephanie Hill, The Augusta Press.

The Work Session was opened by Mayor Whitaker at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Whitaker asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of Mrs. Evelyn Stokes, mother of Mayor Pro tem Stokes.

The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance was given and led by City Attorney Watkins.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

Consider Award of Bid – Oliver Hardy Court Paving Project – Action: Mr. John McClellan with Turnipseed Engineers addressed Council on the bid for the Oliver Hardy Court Paving Project. Mr. McClellan reported a bid opening was held on March 17th with only one bid. The bidder is LEP Construction, LLC of Augusta, Ga., with a bid of $435,757.56 for the total project. The contractor is proposing to use subcontractors to perform the majority of the project. Mr. McClellan explained the general contractor, and subcontractors (Gearig Civil Works and Georgia Carolina Concrete) appear to have adequate experience. Gearig Civil Works would do the full-depth reclamation on Part A of the project. Georgia Carolina Concrete would be doing the paving work; Mr. McClellan has asked for their references. The initial budget for this project was $284,000.00. Mr. McClelland provided the breakdown of the full project:

- Total Estimated Construction Cost – Parts A & B: $435,757.56
- Contingency: $42,951.54
- Engineering: $39,218.18
- Inspection: $13,072.73

**TOTAL PROJECT COST – PART A & B: $531,000.00**

Project Cost Summary for Part A:

- Total Estimated Construction Cost: $301,813.00
- Contingency: $30,181.30
- Engineering: $36,204.43
- Inspection: $9,054.39

**TOTAL PROJECT COST – PART A: $377,000.00**

City Manager Moore stated a portion of the funding would come from the LMIG grant and the remainder would come from the TSPLOST funds. Mr. McClelland stated the contract allows you to do parts of the
NEW BUSINESS (cont’d):

Consider Award of Bid – Oliver Hardy Court Paving Project – Action (cont’d): project, the whole project does not have to be done. The front end of Oliver Hardy Court is an overlay pavement, nothing structurally, the significant improvement is on the back end of Oliver Hardy Court. Mr. McClellan stated this is a small scope project and it will probably not benefit the city to do another RFP.

Mayor Pro tem Stokes joined the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Consider Variance Application VAR-2023-03-01 For An Accessory Building - Action: Community Development Director David Jenkins reported Kristen and Taylor Camp came before the Planning Commission for consideration of a variance at 275 Recreation Drive to build a large accessory building for a softball training facility. Mr. Jenkins explained at this time there is no home on the property, the large accessory building will be built first and the variance would give them permission to do this. This has went before the Planning Commission for approval; the recommendation of the Planning Commission is for approval with conditions. Mayor Whitaker stated Mrs. Kacee Morris is representing the Camp’s tonight if anyone has any questions. Councilmember Thigpen stated this facility will be great for Harlem.

Consider Conditional Use Application CU-2023-03-01 For A Softball Training Facility Operation - Action: Mr. Jenkins reported Conditional Use CU-2023-03-01 is to operate a softball training facility at 275 Recreation Drive by Kristen and Taylor Camp. This conditional use is being requested as the property is zoned R-3 Residential and the business would be operated in its own dedicated building. If the owners were to no longer operate the business, the building would revert back to residential and the building would be used as a shed. The conditional use application went before the Planning Commission; the recommendation of the Planning Commission is for approval with conditions.

Consider Draft Lease Agreement for the Harlem Civic Center - Action: City Manager Moore explained she drafted a lease agreement after the last quarterly council meeting for the Harlem Civic Center. The lease would be a 30-day term lease; the city is not allowed to do a long-term lease. The lease payment would be $500.00 a month to lease the total building, with the payment due on the first of the month. Ms. Moore stated the backroom of the building was to be leased through the city and that has not always happened. The backroom will become part of the lease. Mayor Whitaker explained the lease says the city has agreed to do the maintenance on the inside and outside of the building and the city would pay the utilities - water, sewer, electric, and gas. The tenant will have to pay for phones and internet. Any upgrades to the building will be at the tenant’s cost. Mayor Whitaker requested a clause to be added in the lease agreement for CenterPoint Church to continue use of the backroom of the Civic Center at the same rate they are doing now. The rent for the back room would go to whoever leases the building.

Councilmember Bellavance would like to wait about the lease until the Harlem Arts Council has time to review the lease agreement. Ms. Moore stated an email was sent to the Harlem Arts Council (HAC) with the proposed lease agreement to let them know this was going to be presented to council tonight. She stated they had questions pertaining to a longer lease and Ms. Moore explained the city is not able to do a lease longer than 30 days. The Arts Council had questions pertaining to the replacement of the floor in the backroom and if the city would consider replacing the floor. Harlem Arts Council members Keith
NEW BUSINESS (cont’d):

Consider Draft Lease Agreement for the Harlem Civic Center – Action (cont’d): Wallace, Jena Reynolds and Cynthia Koscinch addressed council. Mr. Wallace has concerns about Item #5, Repairs in the lease agreement, and parking. Ms. Moore explained the city will maintain building maintenance; if there is any damage by the tenant or tenants’ customers, guests, or agents to the building, the tenant would be responsible for those repairs. Ms. Moore explained if there is an event downtown people would be allowed to park at the Civic Center. Mr. Wallace asked if the council could review item 5 of the lease for the wear and tear of the building and if the city can help with flooring in the back room of the building. City Attorney Watson stated he will take a look at the lease agreement in regards to item 5. Councilmember Thigpen explained a government entity is different from a private entity. The city is dealing with taxpayer’s funds and there are certain things that must be done. Mr. Wallace stated the Harlem Arts Council are excited and grateful for what the city has done for them. Mr. Wallace stated they wanted clarification on the lease, and they are interested in leasing the building.

Consider Resolution No. 2023-03 A Resolution Recognizing April 23-29, 2023 as City Government Week - Action: Mayor Whitaker explained Resolution 2023-03 is a resolution to recognize April 23-29 as City Government Week. This is an opportunity for the city to recognize all city employees.

Consider Resolution No. 2023-04 A Resolution Pledging to Practice and Promote Civility - Action: Mayor Whitaker explained Resolution 2023-04 is a resolution pledging to practice and promote civility, to appreciate each other’s opinions and to treat each other with respect.

Consider Resolution No. 2023-05 A Resolution to Approve FYE 12-31-2022 Interdepartmental Budget Amendments & Additional Budget Amendment - Action: City Manager Moore explained this is a Resolution for the approval of the year end Interdepartmental budget amendments for 2022. The amendments will result in an increase in the Revenues and Expenses in the amount of $79,699.00 for a total overall operating budget FYE 12/31/2022 in the amount of $5,607,432.00.

Consider Resolution No. 2023-06 A Resolution for the Acceptance of Streets for LMIG Purposes - Action: Mr. Jenkins explained Resolution 2023-06 is a resolution for the acceptance of streets for LMIG purposes, and to confirm accurate road mileage for the Department of Transportation. Mayor Whitaker asked who does the inspection on the roads. Mr. Jenkins replied Turnipseed Engineers does the inspections. Councilmember Bellavance stated he would like to see a two-year warranty on the roads after the subdivisions are complete.

Consider Proclamation – Arbor Day April 28, 2023 In the City of Harlem - Action: The Proclamation recognizes April 28, 2023 as Arbor Day in the City of Harlem. Discussion was given on planting trees at Sandy Run Walking Trails and dedicate the trees in memory of Chuck Hyatt and former Councilmember C. D. Morris.
NEW BUSINESS (cont’d):

**Columbia County Government Efficiency and Functionality Study – Discussion Only:** Mayor Whitaker reported at the recent Columbia County Commissioners Meeting, the Commissioners voted to do a study on incorporation and consolidation for all the unincorporated areas in Columbia County.

**Other:** Mayor Whitaker has been asked for Public Comments to be moved to the start of the meeting. Mayor Whitaker asked council to consider this.

**Executive Session: N/A**

With there being nothing further for discussion, Councilmember Bellavance made the motion to adjourn the meeting; 2nd by Mayor Pro tem Stokes. The motion carried with Councilmembers Bellavance, Stokes, and Thigpen voting in the affirmative. The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leona H. Holley
City Clerk