OXFORD CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING

DATE:	January 10, 2017
TIME:	6:30 P.M.
PLACE:	Oxford City Hall
PRESENT:	Mayor Alton Craft Mr. Chris Spurlin, Council President Mr. Steven Waits, Council President Pro Tempore Mrs. Charlotte Hubbard, Council Member Mr. Mike Henderson, Council Member
ABSENT:	Mr. Phil Gardner, Council Member

The meeting was called to order by Council President Chris Spurlin and Shirley Henson, City Clerk of the City, served as the Clerk of the meeting.

Jeff Duncan of Calvary Baptist Church gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Spurlin stated we usually have one of our students come to lead the Pledge of Allegiance but tonight we have a unique opportunity. We have Mrs. Jenny Grizzard and she was born in Lima, Peru. Her mother was a teacher and raised her four children mostly on her own. She taught her children to study hard, she instilled in them that education was the key to success. She grew up very involved in her community. She and her group of friends formed a group called Young People Ready to Help. Their goal was to help small children and teenagers and did this by providing food for families there in Peru as well as provide entertainment at Christmas. Mrs. Grizzard went to college and studied Government Relations and Public Administration. She wanted to be a Mayor or in some position of leadership so that she could help young children overcome poverty and drug addiction. She wanted to make a better country and giver her people a better way of life. After graduating college she had the opportunity to come to the United States on a work visa. Her goal was to work, save money and wanted to move back to Peru to continue her dreams. While living in Virginia she fell in love with her husband Matthew, got married and made the decision to stay here. Long story short, Mrs. Grizzard moved here to Oxford in 2003, she enrolled in Jacksonville State University and in 2011 she received her Master's Degree in Special Education. She was hired into the Jacksonville City School System and works at Kitty Stone Elementary School. Her dreams have become a reality. She now has the opportunity to help children reach their full potential and to become better citizens. On October 24, 2016 Mrs. Grizzard became a citizen of the United States after living here for 14 years. She wanted to share a special memory that made this reality come to light. A few months ago during the dedication service of their school at Kitty Stone she and her daughter Isabella were able to say the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States together. She said that was very meaningful to her and she almost feels like a child again learning to love a new land, its history, its geography, its civics and much more. She is proud to live here in Oxford, Alabama.

She will always love the country of Peru but at the same time she is proud to be an American citizen and she looks forward to seeing what God unfolds for her and her family.

It is quite an honor to have her here tonight. Many times we take for granted the privileges that we have here and to see someone who has lived here, has come to love this country, the freedom and the rights that we have and to be a part of that. I am sure she is raising her children to understand that as well. It is great to have you here tonight, you, your daughter and family. If you would lead us in our Pledge of Allegiance.

Jenny Grizzard led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Spurlin stated it is great as we start our new year to have someone who has been a citizen for less than three months that loves our country, appreciates it, has worked hard to become a citizen and sometimes we take that for granted. Mr. Bill Bunn, who is friends with the family brought this to our attention that she has just become a citizen and we thought it would be great if she came and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Thank you.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Spurlin stated each member of the Council had previously received a copy of the minutes of the December 27, 2016 meeting. Mr. Waits made a motion that the minutes be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Henderson.

Mr. Spurlin called for any comments or questions; there being none, on roll call the votes of the Council were as follows: Mrs. Hubbard "Yea", Mr. Waits "Yea", Mr. Henderson "Yea" and Mr. Spurlin "Yea". The motion carried.

Mr. Spurlin stated Mr. Gardner is absent. He is recovering from a procedure he had last week. We will keep him in our thoughts and prayers.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Spurlin called for any old business; there was none.

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance No. 2017-01 – Ordinance annexing the property of Marvin and Mary Jones of 118 Lane Road, Talladega County, containing 1.11 acres, more or less.

Mr. Waits made a motion to suspend the rules for immediate consideration permitting Ordinance No. 2017-01 to be adopted at this meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hubbard.

On roll call the votes of the Council were as follows: Mrs. Hubbard "Yea", Mr. Waits "Yea", Mr. Henderson "Yea" and Mr. Spurlin "Yea". The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Waits made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2017-01. The motion was seconded by Mr. Henderson.

Mr. Spurlin called for comments or questions. On roll call the votes of the Council were as follows: Mrs. Hubbard "Yea", Mr. Waits "Yea", Mr. Henderson "Yea" and Mr. Spurlin "Yea". The motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing

Mr. Spurlin opened the public hearing to receive comments on the request of Marvin and Mary Jones to zone the property located at 118 Lane Road to R-1 (Residential). Mr. Spurlin declared the public hearing open.

Mr. Spurlin asked if there was anyone here to speak for or against this. There were none.

Mr. Spurlin closed the public hearing.

Ordinance No. 2017-02 – Ordinance to zone the property located at 118 Lane Road to R-1(Residential).

Mr. Waits made a motion to suspend the rules for immediate consideration permitting Ordinance No. 2017-02 to be adopted at this meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hubbard.

On roll call the votes of the Council were as follows: Mrs. Hubbard "Yea", Mr. Waits "Yea", Mr. Henderson "Yea" and Mr. Spurlin "Yea". The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Waits made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2017-02. The motion was seconded by Mr. Henderson.

Mr. Spurlin called for comments or questions. On roll call the votes of the Council were as follows: Mrs. Hubbard "Yea", Mr. Waits "Yea", Mr. Henderson "Yea" and Mr. Spurlin "Yea". The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Spurlin stated Mr. and Mrs. Jones thank you for being here tonight, congratulations and welcome to the City of Oxford. It is great having you.

Ordinance No. 2017-03 – Ordinance annexing the property of Nancy Garrett of 3931 Airport Road, Talladega County, containing 0.50 acres, more or less.

Mr. Henderson made a motion to suspend the rules for immediate consideration permitting Ordinance No. 2017-03 to be adopted at this meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hubbard.

On roll call the votes of the Council were as follows: Mrs. Hubbard "Yea", Mr. Waits "Yea", Mr. Henderson "Yea" and Mr. Spurlin "Yea". The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Waits made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2017-03. The motion was seconded by Mr. Henderson.

Mr. Spurlin called for comments or questions. On roll call the votes of the Council were as follows: Mrs. Hubbard "Yea", Mr. Waits "Yea", Mr. Henderson "Yea" and Mr. Spurlin "Yea". The motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing

Mr. Spurlin opened the public hearing to receive comments on the request of Nancy Garrett to zone the property located at 3931 Airport Road to R-1 (Residential). Mr. Spurlin declared the public hearing open.

Mr. Spurlin asked if there was anyone here to speak for or against this. There were none.

Mr. Spurlin closed the public hearing.

Ordinance No. 2017-04 – Ordinance to zone the property located at 3931 Airport Road to R-1(Residential).

Mr. Waits made a motion to suspend the rules for immediate consideration permitting Ordinance No. 2017-04 to be adopted at this meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Henderson.

On roll call the votes of the Council were as follows: Mrs. Hubbard "Yea", Mr. Waits "Yea", Mr. Henderson "Yea" and Mr. Spurlin "Yea". The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Waits made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2017-04. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hubbard.

Mr. Spurlin called for comments or questions. On roll call the votes of the Council were as follows: Mrs. Hubbard "Yea", Mr. Waits "Yea", Mr. Henderson "Yea" and Mr. Spurlin "Yea". The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Spurlin stated Mrs. Garrett thank you for being here, congratulations and welcome to the City of Oxford. It is great to have people wanting to be a part of our city.

Resolution No. 2017-01 – Change order for Morris Building Contractors for the new Maintenance Facility.

Mr. Spurlin stated this is in the amount of $163,131.00. There is some bad dirt located where the building is to be located and this is the most cost efficient solution that we can come up with to continue the building.

Mrs. Hubbard made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2017-01. The motion was seconded by Mr. Henderson.

Mr. Spurlin called for comments or questions. On roll call the votes of the Council were as follows: Mrs. Hubbard "Yea", Mr. Waits "Yea", Mr. Henderson "Yea" and Mr. Spurlin "Yea". The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution No. 2017-02 – Resolution authorizing the Mayor to sign an easement with Alabama Power Company.

Mr. Spurlin stated this is an easement to grant them the right-of-way to put in the fountain at Choccolocco Park.

Mr. Waits made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2017-02. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Hubbard.

Mr. Spurlin called for comments or questions. On roll call the votes of the Council were as follows: Mrs. Hubbard "Yea", Mr. Waits "Yea", Mr. Henderson "Yea" and Mr. Spurlin "Yea". The motion carried unanimously.

COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMENTS

Mr. Spurlin called for Council Comments.

Mr. Henderson stated I would like to express condolences to a couple of members of our city family. Ben Stewart, Assistant Fire Chief lost his dad a week ago and wanted to express our condolences and sympathies to him and his family. A few days ago we lost Mr. Jack Stovall a long time city employee at our Parks and Recreation Department and would like to express our sympathies to his family.

Mr. Spurlin stated Mr. Stovall worked for the city for 25 years and it was a sudden passing. He was not just an employee of the city he was an investor of the city. He invested in the lives of the young people he worked with. It was certainly heaven's gain this past week. Ben Stewart, our Assistant Chief at the Fire Department, a great servant and we certainly want to remember his family in the loss of his dad.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mr. Spurlin asked Mayor Craft if he had any comments. Mayor Craft stated Police Chief Bill Partridge and Fire Chief Gary Sparks did a great job on the winter weather situation last weekend.

Mr. Spurlin stated I don't know if you follow them on Twitter or Facebook but they were up all night long making sure the streets were in the best condition they could be in and sacrificed time with their families and being safe at home to make sure our citizens were as safe as could be. We appreciate that as well.

Visitors

Mr. Spurlin called for any comments or questions from anyone present.

Bill Bunn of 2017 Cheatwood Drive stated I would like to ask the Council when two projects that were placed on the backburner for over a year while priority projects were completed, will be taken up and completed. The Fire Stations construction is almost finished; the Garage/Street Department building and offices are completed; the Police Special Operations building is near completion; Police and Fire vehicles and equipment has been purchased or bids awarded for the remaining items; the golf course equipment needs have been funded; Liberty Park is completed; ball fields are completed; and the Choccolocco Park is open. The Council and Mayoral elections

are behind us and the residents have shown their support for each of you by re-electing you and we have a new Mayor.

The two projects are a dog park and pet adoption center. There was a scheduled work session for June 1, 2015 to discuss the dog park and several other items. The 2016 budget planning session allocated $55,000.00 for the dog park. When will the dog park be completed?

At the work session for the December 22, 2015 Council meeting information was provided that an estate would provide $100,000.00 for the adoption center if the City of Oxford would donate 2-3 acres of land near an I-20 exit and perform the site preparation. It was agreed that the Council would let the representative know if the city agreed or disagreed with the request. During the work session prior to the March 22, 2016 meeting there was discussion about two possible locations, the old Exxon station across from City Hall but the purchase price was considered too high. The second location was behind the Exchange on the Water Works site. Charlotte Hubbard was to obtain a cost for appraisal and survey. The Council work session prior to the July 12, 2016 meeting had a discussion about the possible use of the previous YMCA location for the adoption center. It was determined an estimated cost for site preparation and access road was needed. The Council meeting of August 9, 2016 passed Resolution 2016-100 to send a letter to the Cheaha Human Society Animal Shelter committing the city to provide property and perform site preparation after the shelter accepts a contingency clause concerning disposition of the property should the center close. There has been a lot of discussion concerning the adoption center but not a lot actual progress. When does the Council plan to complete this commitment?

The Dog Park and Pet Adoption Center will not produce revenue like the retail stores, restaurants, and lodging business but would provide a plus for the city's pet owners. The adoption center could be a draw from around the southeast and possibly nationwide. Pet owners spend millions yearly on pet expenses, such as veterinary care, grooming, boarding, pet food, and pet accessories. The City of Oxford approved the expenditure of $5,000.00 to the Calhoun County Humane Society to pay for professional spay and neutering services at the January 26, 2016 Council meeting. The city also has a top notch animal control program.

Moving these two projects forward would show the city's commitment to continue to provide first class care for pets and show recognition of the love pet owners have for their pets.

Mr. Spurlin stated both of those projects hinge on the location of property. I know that Ms. Cunningham has been speaking with Mayor Craft. I believe they have located a piece of property that we just recently acquired that would be suitable to her needs. When the price came back on the old YMCA property, the price was just not reasonable to put a retention pond and road that was needed. It was not feasible but I think they have reached an agreement. There is some property that is available that could meet the adoption center needs that would not be an extensive cost to the city but we will have to discuss this as a Council. I believe both of those projects are contingent on locating property that was suitable for Ms. Cunningham as well as the City without going through an extensive expense. The property we had found it was not reasonable that we spend that much money. Since Mayor Craft took office they have been able to discuss it and we are working out some details on some land that will not be as expensive.

Wanda Pettus of 3348 Bobwhite Street stated I am a spoke person for a lot of people in our community. We were wondering if you could enlighten us if there is a future in the vacant

shopping complex for JoAnn Fabrics because a lot of us are going to other cities and spending money at those stores that were coming there and we would love to keep it here in our hometown. We were wondering if you could help us to know what the holdup is and if there is a future for those stores here.

Mr. Spurlin stated Ms. Pettus we do not have a definite date for that. The contractor/developer is running behind schedule trying to work with some businesses for that but we do not have a definite date.

Mr. Spurlin stated City Hall will be closed on Monday, January 16, 2017 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mr. Henderson made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Waits.

Shirley Henson, City Clerk

Chris Spurlin, Council President