

Anniston, Alabama

February 27, 2024

The City Council of the City of Anniston, Alabama, met in Special Called Session in Room B at the Anniston City Meeting Center in the City of Anniston, Alabama, on Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at approximately 5:01 o'clock p.m.

Ciara Smith, Council Member, prayed the Invocation.

Ciara Smith, Council Member, led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mayor Draper called the meeting to order. On call of the roll, the following Council Members were found to be present: Council Members Jenkins, Roberts, Smith, Harris and Draper; absent: none. A quorum was present and the meeting opened for the transaction of business.

Steven Folks, City Manager, was present.

Bruce Downey, City Attorney, was present.

Mayor Draper made a motion to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded by Council Member Harris and on call of the roll the following vote was recorded: ayes: Council Member Jenkins, Roberts, Smith, Harris, and Draper; nays: none. The motion carried and the agenda was adopted.

Mayor Draper made a motion to award the bid for the Chief Ladiga Trail Project to B&B Developers in the amount of \$7,267,263.39. The motion was seconded by Council Member Harris.

Council Member Jenkins stated that he and Council Member Smith met with the engineering team to see if there were any potential savings; and from that the engineering team developed a list of seven items. He stated that he makes the following recommendations:

1. Reducing the base down from 3 inches to 2 inches
2. Cut the Construction Evaluation and Inspection budget down to 75% inspections
3. Council Members would take a portion of their paving dollars, which would amount to no more than \$25,000.00 per council member and they could finish the section from 11th street to 4th street with those paving dollars. (He recommends option 3c)
4. Cut the contingency monies
5. Reduce the binder layer (lower binder) from 250lb to 220lbs per square yard- 2inch binder 1 ½ wearing surface
6. Eliminate the sod grass and replace with seed

He stated that he does not recommend the engineer's recommendation of item 5, because it takes the wear and tear off of the length of the trail from Michael Tucker Park to the finish. He does not believe that would be a good decision. He stated that if the council agrees with his proposals it would yield a \$669,000.00 reduction to the contract amount. He stated that they have a parking lot they are getting ready to bid at 12th and Noble, and he recognizes the parking lot is important but he recommends putting a pause on that until they know where they stand on receiving additional funding from the state and federal government. He stated that would yield a savings of about 1.2 million which would allow the council to leave that in reserves.

Council Member Jenkins made a motion to amend the motion to award the bid for the Chief Ladiga Trail Project to B&B Developers in the amount of \$7,267,263.39 to include his cost saving recommendations with the understanding that they are still dealing with unit prices and those numbers may not be exact

numbers. The motion was seconded by Council Member Smith and on call of the roll the following vote was recorded: ayes: Council Member Jenkins, Roberts, Smith, Harris, and Draper; nays: none. The motion carried and the motion was amended.

Council Member Smith stated that this decision is being forced upon them very quickly because of the endangered species but they need adequate time to make a decision, which they don't have.

Council Member Harris thanked Council Member Jenkins and Council Member Smith for coming together and finding some solutions on how they can save money with this project. She stated that the cost of this project is disconcerting and she understands Council Member Smith's reservations.

Council Member Roberts asked that if there are other projects on the table that they could kick down the road? He stated that they are giving 1.2 million dollars to the Homeless Task Force for the homeless center. He stated that he understands this is an issue but there are other funding sources out there. He stated that the homeless issue is not an Anniston issue, but an issue that Anniston is being forced to deal with. He stated that Anniston is the only entity funding the project.

Council Member Smith stated that she hates that the homeless shelter is being brought into the conversation. She stated that the parking lot and Chief Ladiga Trail mostly benefit tourists. She stated that there are people in Anniston that would greatly benefit from the services of this transitioning center. She urges the council to leave this project alone. She stated that they are basing decisions regarding the trail, on what we think will happen. She stated that they will be in violation of their ordinance and they will not have the 17% in reserves. She stated that her reservations are purely based off fiscal responsibilities and this project is not fiscally responsible. She stated that in good faith she cannot support this project because it will potentially put this city in a financial risk.

Mayor Draper stated that he understands everyone's concerns but he believes that the city's future economic development is contingent upon the completion of this trail. He stated that this will not only be an economic boom for regional businesses but a boom to the general fund via sales tax revenue. He stated that he is confident that the sales tax revenue will increase and that the city will receive outside funding for this project from both state and federal sources.

And on call of the roll the following vote was recorded: ayes: Council Member Jenkins, Roberts, Smith, Harris, and Draper; nays: none. The Jenkins amendment was approved.

Mayor Draper reiterated for the record that in regards to the motion to award the bid for the Chief Ladiga Trail Project to B&B Developers subject to the approved Jenkins amendment.

And on call of the roll the following vote was recorded: ayes: Council Member Jenkins, Roberts, Harris, and Draper; nays: Council Member Smith. The amended motion was approved.

There being no further business to come before the council at that time Mayor Draper made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Council Member Smith; and on call of the roll, the following vote was recorded: ayes: Council Members Jenkins, Roberts, Smith, Harris and Draper; nays: none. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:26 o'clock p.m.