



**Meeting Minutes - Draft
City Council**

Monday, January 5, 2015

4:00 PM

Conference Room

Work Session

Call to Order

Council President Wayne Trawick called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call

All Council members were present with the exception of Council Member Vera Quaites, who was absent due to a family medical emergency. Also present: Mayor Koniar, Mike Thompson, Sandra Pate, Vickey Southern, Katy Taylor, Steve Smith, LaDonna Hinesley, Dan Hellmich, Mike Murphy, Larry Lovell, Heather Pritchard, Jessica Middleton, David Vosloh, Miriam Boutwell, Thurston Bullock, John Jackson, Stephen Delahunty, Taylor Davis, Chad Christian, Darrell Russell, press representative Jay Sowers (Gulf Coast Media) and press representative Marc D. Anderson (AL.com/Press Register).

Present: 4 - President Wayne Trawick, Council Member Ralph Hellmich, Council Member Rick Blackwell and Council Member Charles Ebert III

Absent: 1 - Council Member Vera Quaites

Discussion Items

[15-0007](#)

Farmers Market Presentation

Attachments: [FRESH FROM FOLEY AGGREGATION.pdf](#)

Jeff Rouzie reported it has been a little over a year since the Farmers Market has opened and it has been a real success. We want to continue with that success and there are some very good things on the horizon. Baldwin County has been blessed and the farming industry is a big part of our heritage. It is great that it is falling on the 100th year of the City of Foley. The things that are going on with the Farmers Market in a lot of different ways will benefit not only the City of Foley but Baldwin County as well. The City can take advantage of the local food movement with people becoming wiser on healthier choices, which has taken off nationwide.

Heather Pritchard introduced Larry Lovell, a farmer in Baldwin County, and Mike Murphy, with Gulf Coast Distribution. They have been going to Jeff with their ideas and they have a very good plan for an aggregation hub for local foods. "Fresh from Foley" is a tag line they came up for collecting and packaging of local foods.

How was this developed? They came up with the ideas and want to make them a reality. CAFFM's success and the local demand is obvious. The USDA Supply grant funded equipment needed that will grade, sort, size, wash and package whole fruits and vegetables. The equipment will be in this month. The Baldwin County School Board has shown their interest and support but they wanted to know about food safety and they are addressing that issue. The City of Foley has supported the CAFFM development with the Peavey building. Gulf Coast Produce has chosen Foley's location with a commitment to the aggregation center. Larry Lovell has joined Heather and Mike to recruit farmers and manage the operation. They have support from Don Wambles, Director of Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries; Director of the Farmers Market Authority; and he has just been appointed the Agricultural Commissioner as the Director of the "Farm to School" Program. He has been helping Heather with the Farmers Market from the very beginning.

Food Supply Chains From Current to Future - In a long supply food chain this represents the globalized market economy: 1) It is Damaging to our environment, 2) Wasteful of resources in that foods are shipped long distances and wastes our fuels, and 3) It cheapens our food and compromises true quality. In a short supply food chain it supports the local economy. It is financially rewarding, respectful of surrounding ecosystem and preserves our culture and farming communities. The number one killer of people today is food related diseases.

Local Farming - It's our food, our culture and our land. In 2015 these are things we can do on our farms in Baldwin County today. They have worked together in getting a plan to make this work within our farming communities. It means that it would: 1) Help retain farmland and increase farm numbers, not by using more farmland but some of the larger farmers farm on a smaller scale for a more diverse crop selection; 2) Provides marketing opportunities; 3) Increases the value of farmland; and 4) Creates jobs. They will do this with the following: 1) Advances in agricultural practices; 2) Education in food safety; 3) Shared knowledge of resources; 4) Labor management and 5) Crop insurance, which takes the risk out of farming.

In regards to farmland and increasing farm numbers along with land values they plan to introduce agricultural programs into the school system such as, GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) advancing young farmers with the knowledge of safe food. A lot of the end users are requiring GAP certification. Mike Thompson asked if the farmers have to be certified to participate. Heather responded they do not have to be certified. Gap certification began as a service to provide something for the end users. It is not a requirement for all end users; however, some of the end users, i.e. large grocery stores, are starting to require it. They will be able to take food GAP certified and not GAP certified.

Ideas to Reality by providing market opportunities and creating jobs: 1) By linking small and large farmers to buyers; 2) By providing a meaningful connection to coal markets improving the economic viability of local farms; 3) By maintaining the consistency of a safe product; 4) By insuring the reliability of delivery (Gulf Coast Produce); and 5) By keeping the regularity of constant communication (Larry).

Shared Knowledge of Resources - The program will open avenues to new insurance programs for small and large operations in the vegetable growing business. The USDA wants to insure all the farmers and they have to create pilot programs in order to cater to whatever needs we have. They are possible once it is put into place. New farms and farmers will be created with less risk and a place to sell their crops. Labor management crews are available for larger operations expanding the crop selection.

Heather read a note from Larry Lovell, which is attached to the minutes.

Farm to School - They already know they have State and local support for the program. Don Wambles said that this was a dream come true for the Farm to School program in the State of Alabama. The infrastructure necessary to meet food safe demands of the school board will be in place. Grants are certainly available for future support of the Farm to School program. Most importantly, it is healthy for our children.

Distribution - Gulf Coast Produce has a commitment to fresh foods. When they chose their location they wanted the aggregation hub. They put in more refrigerators than they did freezers, which is unlike any company of their type. They have tons of experience and marketing opportunities and potential of sales.

Mike Murphy reported Gulf Coast Produce is partners with four distributors on the Gulf Coast. They are Gulf Coast Produce in Biloxi, Mississippi and Foley, Alabama, City Produce in Destin, Florida and Chaplin Produce in Tallahassee, Florida. Between these four distributors there are 1400 restaurant customers. They don't do too much retail but it is an area targeted for growth. Their current volume in produce sales to restaurant customers is \$65 million. If we can produce in this area they are looking at \$12 million dollars just in their controlled distribution in Foley and they will give every priority to the aggregation center since it is in the same building with them. The "Fresh From Foley" brand placed on the products is very important trend. Their customers, whether Gilley's Restaurant or Lulu's, want to know where the produce comes from. They will have a bulls eye brand on it and it will be sanctioned by the Alabama Department of Agriculture. Customers, like the casino in Atmore, have

a "Fresh From Alabama" theme they are doing over five (5) years. The brand is a big marketing tool that will separate them from their competition. In looking at other distributors they can sell to in the area they are looking at \$18 million with a potential of \$30 million in just distribution to restaurants. The next area is called "Captive Feeding: Alabama Schools" would be approximately \$5 million in produce grown locally. The Southeast Military Troop Issue comes out of Birmingham for all the southeast and they partner with Forestwood Farms for the Gulf Coast. They have 20% set aside and they struggle to get local produce that the Federal Government says they have to get. There is a total amount of \$10 million potential in this area. Retail Markets includes Cain's, Rouses, Fresh Market, and they have already met with them. It is a big deal for them to have local, fresh produce from local farmers. It's just as interesting to them to go to market as the restaurants. At the end of that same category you see Military Produce Group and they do all the military commissaries in the southeast and their distribution is based in Birmingham for the southeast. They have all their local produce providers listed on their website and the State of Alabama is not one of them. The total retail is a potential of \$32 million. Another market channel is the Air Force and what he calls re-distribution to the big produce distributors that distribute to folks like them, i.e., Coosemans, Kontos, General Lang, and 3rd Party Providers). Mike Thompson asked if these were suppliers who distributed to big retailers like WalMart. Mr. Murphy responded yes. They purchase from them the type of products here and the biggest was in Moultrie and Thomasville, Georgia. They have seven sheds like Gulf Coast Produce will have here in Foley. The Aggregation Hub has seven between Moultrie and Tifton, Georgia, They pick up during the growing season. The sales are there because people want local produce. The total sales of \$132 million is a very conservative number. He believes they could easily do \$15-18 million in the first year, and add 25-30 people in just that one building, in addition to the 25-26 they have already hired. It is a great opportunity and something they are looking forward to because it is a big part of the go to market effort at Gulf Coast Produce.

Councilman Blackwell asked what the limit is to be considered to be fresh produce. Mike Murphy reported you can define local several different ways but usually from 500 miles within and then it picks up closer generally 100-150 miles. Councilman Blackwell asked if the aggregation center was just fresh produce or does it include frozen produce, or is it in the future. Heather reported it is in the future. Mike reported they still have peas and butter beans.

Jeff reported there is a lot of farming history in Baldwin County and farmers who farm commodities on a lot of land. If we can give them a sound avenue to grow a certain amount of vegetables and produce that they know they can take it and sell it then it opens up a lot more jobs for those families. It won't happen overnight. That is where Larry Lovell and the educational parts comes into play. We have a lot of interest from Auburn and other universities are willing to pitch in. There are grant funds available for education. This is happening around the Country not just Alabama. We have such an advantage because of the availability of land and the long growing season. Our job is to create a lot of local jobs to stimulate the economy with a lot more income instead of buying vegetables from California or South Florida to keep the money locally. Mike has shown us numbers that could be in Baldwin County and that is a big hit. It is amazing to me that we have the distribution hub in Alabama and we don't have any organization in Alabama providing them any products.

Councilman Blackwell asked if this would require hands on or mechanical. Heather reported it would require both. Mike Murphy already has the software for the GAP Certification. GAP Certification is something we will have to adapt to and a lot of the larger buyers want produce GAP Certified. There is an easier way to get it done because you will need to walk the farmers through it and get the organization to make it easy for them. That is why we think the school systems can really help. If they can teach the GAP Certification and can understand it then that will help. There are a lot of pieces to put together but it is there to be done.

Mike Thompson asked Larry to speak about the farmers in terms of the aggregation hub because it will be based on the farmers. If they don't grow the produce then you won't have anything to aggregate. He was curious about what Larry's conversations have been with the local farmers. Some may be growing 500 acres cotton. His guess is that they will not convert to 500 acres of produce but they would carve out a certain amount of acreage from that commodity crop and create the produce.

Larry reported instead of the farmer that is growing 500 acres the farmer won't have to re-tool. The aggregation hub will come in with the equipment to lay the plastic, put his vegetables in, and they are working on green houses to start those plants. Some or most travel to mid-Georgia to pick up their plants. They will have the plants here. The equipment to put the vegetables in the ground will be plastic culture and will be available. Help to them and the education will also be that way so there is no turning the farmers around with a lot of expense to get into the program. They have 6-7 farms in the program now willing to grow anything they want to grow. There are 2 or 3 large farms with farmers 30 years old that want to put their farms into production under this program already. They haven't even gotten out to some of the larger farmers. The aggregation hub will help the local farmers, within 150 miles, connect all the dots that all the farmers have been missing for generations to put their produce to market with all the things that are needed to get it done. Mike Thompson reiterated that the one avenue we don't have covered yet is the value add chain where you are adding value through washing, slicing, dicing, packaging, etc. Now the farmers can sell raw produce to Gulf Coast Produce but not packaged.

Larry reported they will be leasing or renting the equipment. Heather reported the Extension Service rents it out for \$20.00. Councilman Ebert asked who addresses the product recall insurance in case there is a product in the market. Larry reported the individual farmers, Gulf Coast Produce, and the Aggregation Center will have product liability insurance. When produce is brought into the aggregation center it will be processed in lots that are tracked all the way through to the restaurant. They had two recalls last week but on none of those lots. Usually we get an email at 2:00 a.m. and someone will have to check to make sure we don't have those lots in the warehouse. If we did have them we would have to give a report on where they were shipped to, what customer received them, and what we are doing to get the product back. It is an involved process but we are a lot safer.

Jeff reported Gulf Coast Products had to go through a review/evaluation. Mike reported they had their first review after 90 days (the first part of December) by Silica Industries, which is a worldwide organization on food safety. They were their choice for a third party review and the audit is their customer's guarantee

that they are doing all they are supposed to and they were very happy to have a 98.8 score out of 100 possible points on their first audit. All the temperatures are tracked throughout the day, at each delivery and the reports are printed out so it becomes a second nature they are doing everything right.

Councilman Ebert asked if they were asking for help to provide the facility to house it and some assistance with the grant resources. Heather reported they have already purchased the equipment through the USDA grant. Councilman Ebert asked, "Who is the entity that is actually doing this and selling the product?" Jeff reported the CAFFM will own the facility and Mr. Lovell will be operating the facility and paying us a certain monthly amount to keep operating and will be under Larry's supervision. Larry will be the coordinator between the farmer and the wholesaler and other retail or wholesale outlets that the farmer needs to reach. Jeff reported he sees this a putting the farmer back in control instead of getting the butt end of the deal. Councilman Hellmich reported we have seen this with broccoli, corn, watermelons, and all these different stories. Some would have to work on long term contracts and if something didn't work out and they don't show up and the crops don't get harvested then they are out. Our farmers can grow the produce and some of the best broccoli comes out of Baldwin County but you have to get it to market. Farmers by nature are risk takers and are a conservative group. Once they get in the habit of doing this he thought it would take off.

Discuss Council Meeting Agenda of January 5, 2015

14-0913 Public Hearing to consider zoning ordinance amendments regarding wireless telecommunication towers and tall structures - Miriam Boutwell reported the Planning Commission realized there were more laws and federal litigation. City Attorney Casey Pipes had to do a lot of research on this and then drafted the ordinance, which is being presented tonight for the second reading. The Planning Commission did approve a tower on Michigan and Hickory and they haven't gotten a permit yet because they made it a stealth tower, which looks like a flag pole with no flag. This actually was the driving force that led to these changes. If it is within some view sheds they have to still do a stealth tower and prove they cannot co-locate somewhere else. This item remained on the Council meeting agenda.

14-0927 A resolution re-appointing Joe Cabaniss to the Board of Adjustments and Appeals - President Trawick reported Mr. Cabaniss no longer wishes to serve on this Board because his employer requires him to travel a lot and he is unable to fulfill his commitments to the Board. This item will be removed from the Council agenda.

15-0002 Resolution declaring the annexation of various islands by Legislative annexation is for the public health and good - President Trawick reported these are islands of land surrounded by the City and this is an attempt to keep down the confusions of whether or not the property is located within the City limits and will help Sanitation services, Fire and Police services. Vickey Southern reported this step allows us to allow the advertising process to begin for four consecutive weeks prior to going to the Legislature. Mike reported there were a few island properties that will not come in because Senator Pittman and Rep. Steve McMillan were not comfortable with them coming in without them granting permission. The City is trying to clean up as much as they can.

15-0003 Amending the Pay Classification Plan to Accommodate Police Department Restructure - Sandra Pate reported this resolution is in regards to Deputy Chief Bishop's retirement in March. The PD would like to do some restructuring and the resolution lays that out. They are not asking for a budget adjustment at this time because they feel the salaries will cover it. Chief Wilson reported he sent the Council some information regarding Randy's retirement. In January he would like to promote two lieutenants to captain and let Randy keep working with them on the budget. Some of the things Randy really specializes in and will work with them through March. On the proposal they delete the Deputy Chief's position and upgrade the two lieutenants positions, and then delete one of the lieutenant's positions and then restructure the PD into halves between the two commanders. Sandra Pate reported the new positions were reviewed by the Archer company and they were approved by Archer. This item remained on the Council meeting agenda.

15-0005 Zoning Ordinance Amendment - Billboard conversion to single sign face - Miriam Boutwell reported that if you travel on the Foley Beach Express you have probably seen a lot of billboards with trees and clouds on them. Lamar has a client that would like to combine the two billboards into one single sign face and the trade off for the sign on the back would be they will take them out of service. On those signs they would advertise Foley, not a business in Foley. Councilman Hellmich reported the increase in the size of

the sign would be the gap in between the two double signs. This would fill in the gap, which is approximately 144'. It has taken a lot of time. The Planning Commission worked with Lamar Advertising with their negotiations and they did a great job. There will be a slight reduction in the amount of billboards in Foley. Miriam reported by taking the back two out of service then overall there is a reduction in advertising space. If you take the back of the billboard down you have to look at an ugly structure so it would be better to advertise Foley with generic photos, i.e. the rose trail, the park, etc. Most of the billboards have been grandfathered and most of the 50% in underground and not in the sign face. So losing the grandfather is slim to none that ever happens. This remained on the Council meeting agenda.

15-0006 Purchase of Multi-function Wide Format Printer/Scanner/Copier - Chad Christian reported this item is budgeted in the amount of \$13,000. The actual cost of the equipment is \$12,093.92. This item remained on the Council meeting agenda.

15-0008 Approval of the Foley Library Military Equipment Show - John Jackson reported he would like to have this event to draw new patrons that have not been to the library. It would entail setting up on Thursday and having the event Friday and Saturday, April 17th and 18th, respectively. The large moveable equipment would be located in the front parking lot and only displayed on Friday, and the static displays, i.e. WWII uniform, etc., will be placed in the upstairs meeting room. John has contacted the Fire and Police Departments and has their approval. Richard Miller has a bit of equipment and would like an escort to bring the tank in that he would like to display and Chief Wilson has approved a police escort with stipulations. John has contacted several groups and has access to do the display of colors. There is a lot of potential to make this annual event grow to include speakers. This item remained on the Council meeting agenda.

15-0009 Agreement for the Cooperative Maintenance of Public Right of Way with ALDOT for Pedestrian Bridge - Chad reported ALDOT requires a resolution approving the form. The ads are being placed now for the February 5th bid opening. This item remained on the Council meeting agenda.

15-0010 John Deere 1575 TerrainCut and John Deere Mower Deck - Dan reported this equipment is budgeted in the amount of \$35,000 and the purchase would be through SunSouth in the amount of \$31,540.51. This item remained on the Council meeting agenda.

14-0920 Case 588H Forklift for the Maintenance Department - Dan Hellmich reported this is a budgeted item in the amount of \$70,000. The purchase will be from 1Source Power & Equipment. The first request was in the amount of \$59,950 for a display forklift but is sold before they could purchase it. The next one in line costs \$63,193 and is an all terrain. It was originally on the agenda but when Vickey did the second version it disappeared off the agenda. This item will be an add on to the Council meeting agenda.

15-0012 Resolution adopting a Modified Personnel System Policy (PSP) - Sandra Pate reported she included a summary of the items being amended and they are highlighted in yellow in the document. These items are items that are in practice now but are not included in the current PSP. The main item she brought everyone's attention was new employees have to wait for a year before

accruing any vacation leave. The modified version allows accruing leave immediately; however, they are not allowed to use that leave until they have successfully completed probation. This is comparable to other cities, and it will help with the leveraging factor. There is also clarification on the bereavement leave because of different shifts. This item remained on the Council meeting agenda.

15-0013 Resolution setting a public hearing to consider a zoning ordinance amendment to permit legal nonconforming billboards that have two sign faces aimed in the same direction of travel and stacked one on top of the other to be converted into one single billboard sign face under certain circumstances, terms, requirements and conditions - Vickey reported this is in relation to file id #15-0005 that will have a first reading at tonight's Council meeting. The Council has to have a public hearing prior to the second reading of the proposed ordinance. This item remained on the Council meeting agenda.

15-0014 Resolution approving the John McClure Snook YMCA's request to use \$2500 for a one time New Year's bonus for the Y's employees - President Trawick reported this request is to use \$2,500 of their current funds for a bonus and not to be confused with an additional appropriation of funds. The Performance Contract was very strict in how they were to use those funds. Vickey reported the funds were to be used for capital projects, other programs and marketing efforts. This item remained on the Council meeting agenda.

President Trawick congratulated Sandra Pate on obtaining her national certification she just received. Sandra reported the pass rate is 56% first time around and she sweated. After the three hour exam you stay at the computer to process your answers. It is the elite group that have the certification both public and private.

Mayor's Comments

Mayor Koniar reported this Thursday at 10:00 a.m. is the Centennial celebration dedication of the bell tower.

Visitor's Comments

There were no comments to report.

Adjourn

Hearing no further comments the meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.