

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF ARAB, ALABAMA
AUGUST 20, 2018**

The City Council of the City of Arab, Alabama, met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. for its regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, August 20, 2018, in Arab City Hall, the time and place scheduled for such meeting.

Mayor Bob Joslin called the meeting to order. Upon roll call, the following answered present:

MIKE ALLEN
MARK GULLION
CHRIS HARPER
RENAE WARREN

Also present were Tony Willis (City Clerk), Summer Bixler (Administrative Assistant), Rodney Edmondson (City Attorney), representatives of the media, and the public.

Mayor Joslin declared a quorum present and opened the meeting for the transaction of business. Council Member Warren led the pledge of allegiance. The invocation was given by Council Member Allen.

The minutes of the August 6, 2018, regular meeting were approved by unanimous vote upon a motion made by Council Member Allen and seconded by Council Member Harper.

Mayor Joslin then moved to staff reports. The Mayor stated the next Arab City Council meeting will take place on Tuesday, September 4, 2018. Arab Police Assistant Chief Shane Washburn reported that the traffic plan for the new football stadium worked well during the most recent event and they have adjusted a few things for future events. He also reported on recent arrests of interest. Eric Hayes with the Park and Recreation Department reported that the old Community Center has been torn down and they have already started getting ready for Christmas

in the Park. Melissa Cook stated that the work downtown is about three weeks from being completed. Also a strategic plan is close to being completed as well and should be ready to be presented to Council at the September 18th meeting. Dameon Pittenger reported on two abatements which will be coming before the Council shortly.

With no more staff reports or old business to address, Mayor Joslin then moved to the first item of new business, to approve bid specifications and solicit bids for Asphalt and Milling. Council Member Warren moved to approve the bid specifications. Council Member Allen seconded and all voted yes.

Next, the second item of new business was to approve bid specifications and solicit bids for t-shirts, caps, jerseys and screen printing. Council Member Allen moved to approve the bid specifications. Council Member Gullion seconded and all voted yes.

The last item of new business was a resolution to award the bid for the new Splash Pad. After conversation and review of the recommendation from the City Engineer, it was determined that the lowest responsible bidder was Great Southern Recreation, LLC with a bid of \$296,986.70. Council Member Allen moved to suspend the reading of the resolution. Council Member Harper seconded and all voted yes. Council Member Warren moved to suspend the rules. Council Member Allen seconded and all voted yes. Council Member Allen then moved to approve the resolution. Council Member Gullion seconded and all voted yes.

With no more new business to address, Mayor Joslin then opened up the floor for public comment. Kelley Martin of Haynes Road in Arab spoke regarding the “Dixie” issue. She wasn’t going to discuss whether the debate was racist, but instead she wanted to discuss her concerns over a change being made without any input from the people. She stated that she was concerned that arbitrary changes are being made based on the thought and opinions and fears the same. She

believes over the last 20 years, the School Board has caused our schools to deteriorate and she believes it is because the School Board is appointed and not elected. She thinks that a change to Superintendent is needed. Ron Stone of Holly Pond, Alabama stated he is concerned about Arab City School Board's change of "Dixie" and he believes change was forced by one man and is "killing our southern heritage." Ian Davis of Lisa Lane in Arab asked the Council if it is possible to change to an Elected Board. Mayor Joslin responded that there is a way but it is by legislative Act. He stated the majority of School Systems in Alabama are on appointed boards and that some which are elected are trying to move back to appointed. Council Member Harper stated that he is not certain if an elected board is the answer, he does believe we should open up the process of choosing appointees. Council Member Gullion stated he was also worried of what an elected board would mean due to the small number of potential candidates that have previously indicated any desire for the position. Thomas Shelton of 3rd Street in Arab stated he is excited over citizens coming to this meeting and he wishes we had this number at every meeting. He stated that we need people to get more involved. Stacy Lee George of School Circle in Arab stated that the majority of people in room are in support of prayer at the football game as well as "Dixie." He also stated that he will work tirelessly to beat any member of the Council who doesn't support getting "Dixie" back in and he will be requesting a "non-binding" resolution from the Council in support of "Dixie" if the School Board doesn't properly respond. Carl Jones, State Commander for the Sons of the Confederate Veterans, stated that he believes the South is the most inclusive people in the world. He then cited numerous facts in the South's history to support that fact. He said, "no one in this room hates black people and if they do they are stupid." He thinks this is just part of an agenda. Hannah Matlock of Glendale Road in Arab stated she wasn't planning on saying anything but is concerned of some who are equating

“Dixie” with prayer. Also she is in support of Council and all they do. Wayne Willingham of Westpoint, Alabama stated that he believes prayer is what has kept Dixie as Dixie. He understands that no one shows up until there is a problem. He believes we are losing our heritage in the South. Doc Shuffler of Kimbell Road in Arab asked why the decision was made. He thought Arab was a “neat” place when he moved here. He is concerned that the current superintendent is trying to change our heritage. Reginald Hughes of Albertville, Alabama stated that he believes southern history is being torn down. He helped get a monument protection bill passed and believes people can get this changed. Council Member Allen commended everyone for being present and wanting to have their voice heard. He hoped everyone would get involved in some way with the community. Since no one else sought recognition, Council Member Allen moved to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Harper seconded and all voted yes.

MAYOR BOB JOSLIN

TONY WILLIS, CITY CLERK