

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
AYES: Miller-Cody, Tooley, Howard, Carroll, Gibbs, Norton

Consideration of an appointment to the Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mayor Matheson stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Zoning Board of Appeals has a member, Nancy Hobby, whose term will expire on July 1, 2022. Ms. Hobby has expressed an interest in being reappointed. This appointment was advertised according to the Boards, Commissions, Authorities, and Advisory Committees Policy that was adopted by Mayor and Council. Nancy Hobby was the only applicant to apply.

Mayor Matheson stated that if Council had no objections, Nancy Hobby would be appointed by acclamation to serve a term of three years on the Valdosta-Lowndes County Co Zoning Board of Appeals. There were no objections from Council.

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CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Jim Tunison, Attorney, stated that he wanted to ask for Council’s consideration to solve a public safety concern in Downtown Valdosta. The public is at risk in the Downtown area because of aggressive driving and high-speed traffic. In Downtown, there is the City Hall Building which is the seat of City government, the County Government Building which includes the Courts, the Clerk’s Office, Record Keeping, Probate Court, Magistrate Court, Land Records, and Birth Records. There is a new Amphitheater across from City Hall, major churches, the City Fire Station, the old Courthouse, retail stores, restaurants, 102 apartments/residences, and literally, from birth to death, your records are Downtown and it is worth protecting. There is over \$70 million in fair market value property in the Downtown Development District that is at risk. The City’s website describes the Downtown area as follows: “The stately appearance of the Downtown streets and storefronts have earned Valdosta repeated National Main Street certifications and awards.” It also talks about how beautiful Downtown is and to please come visit. We all know from life experiences that a lack of traffic enforcement leads to aggressive driving, reckless driving, and speeding. He is not talking about a few miles over here or there; however, he is talking about a pedestrian Business District that is burdened by 8,000 to 11,000 vehicles per day through the Downtown District. Those vehicles are tractor trailers, cars, dump trucks, buses, and pickup trucks. Who wants to walk through a high-speed, commercial drag race zone with people being run over in crosswalks, or encounter drunk drivers on the way to work, and have \$70 million worth of investment and hard work put at risk in our Downtown area? There are four areas of statistics for you to consider. The first one is that the Georgia Department of Transportation demonstrates between 8,500 and 11,000 cars flow north and south and east and west through the Downtown Development District. That includes between 6-13% of commercial vehicles so that is between 600 and 1,400 of tractor trailers, dump trucks, and buses through Downtown Valdosta every day. On February 22, 2022, the Georgia State Patrol,

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of May 5, 2022 5:30 PM (Minutes Approval)