

The Council of the City of Villa Rica met in a special called meeting and Public Hearing on Monday, March 27, 2006 in the Council Chambers at 101 Main Street, Holt-Bishop Justice Center, Municipal Courtroom. Those present were Mayor J Collins, Councilmembers Verland Best, Danny Carter, Perry Amidon, Joey Kelley and Woody Holland; City Manager Robert Zellner, City Clerk Jane Chastain and City Attorney David Mecklin. Approximately 6 people were in attendance.

Collins called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The invocation was given by Amidon. All recited the pledge of allegiance.

Collins announced this public hearing as being the second hearing on the possible purchase of the Avanti property, formerly the Golden City Hosiery complex then turned the floor over to Zellner.

Zellner said all necessary information and the contract were ready for closing on Wednesday, March 28, 2006 if Council approved the purchase. Zellner also presented a resolution authorizing the purchase with UDAG and other available funds. Best pointed out that the contractor who provided a budgetary estimate, Billy Bob Nix, is president of Nitec Enterprises (remodeling the old Powell House) and a twenty year veteran of construction. Best said that Nix spoke at length with Zellner, Community Development Director Eric Lacefield and him. Nix had concluded that the Avanti building is a sound building. Best said he was confident in Nix's estimate and recommendations. Zellner pointed out that Nix had been recommended by a local citizen, Mike Gill. Kelley asked if anyone else had provided an estimate. Best said no. He said the estimate was for a "turn-key" job and the City could reduce expenses with State inmate labor. Zellner said Nix had called in sub-contractors to render estimates on their specific areas and this was included in the total estimate Nix provided. Carter asked if bids would be required before actual renovation began. Zellner said yes. Holland asked if the estimate included all the renovations presented at the last meeting, the offices and walls. Zellner said yes. Kelley expressed a need to see more estimates. Collins said he supports the purchase but is concerned with the lack of differing opinions. However, he was impressed with the overall opinion of another Nitec official, Michael Anthony. Lacefield addressed Council on the estimate. Lacefield said the estimate includes funds for rough-ins on plumbing, electrical, HVAC [heating, ventilation, and air conditioning]; funds include running wiring for the facility, the offices, running plumbing for the bathrooms, and running HVAC into the office areas. Kelley said he was under the impression, from the last meeting, that the City was going to have the building inspected. After further discussion about obtaining more opinions, Mecklin pointed out that the seller was pressing to get this purchase closed and there is a time factor involved. The seller has indicated that the purchase has to be closed "now or never". Holland asked about the availability of certified engineering firms to examine the property. Lacefield said not to his knowledge. He added that Nix had spent three days going over the property with sub-contractors who put their names on the line to say this is what it would cost to bring about what the City is asking. After continued discussion on the condition of the building, Kelley asked if the building has been checked for any hazardous material. Zellner said S&ME, Inc. has done an environmental study on the property. Mecklin said he had not yet reviewed the environmental study but it is his understanding that the property came back as clean. Council discussed the total cost to the City taking into account that the existing City Hall

building and library building would be sold. Mecklin said there are approximately \$750,000 in UDAG funds which can be used for the purposes of economic development in the city or for buying public buildings which would serve the purpose of improving blighted areas. Mecklin said the UDAG money would not have to be repaid but he urged that the funds be replaced over time. Kelley asked for a clarification on the use of UDAG funds. Mecklin said the fund is from a 1980's grant to the City from the Federal Government to stimulate economic growth and the original sum has been used and repaid several time since then. He said there is a point in time when the grant has been reused enough and can be used without repayment; however, he urged the Council to apply some mechanism for repayment so that the fund's usefulness can continue. Mecklin added that the remaining \$250,000 on the Avanti purchase would come from City reserve funds. Council clarified through Zellner that the recent appraisal for the City Hall building was for \$700,000. The Library building appraisal is still in the works. Best reminded Council that there is still approximately \$900,000 in Wetland Credits. Carter said the purchase is a step in the right direction and moved to adopt the resolution and authorize... Collins interrupted the motion to point out one other option. He said he has been approached by Joann Herrell on the possible purchase of the four story Region's Bank building for three million dollars. Carter pointed out that there still would not be a public works building if that building were purchased instead. Holland made a point of order that Carter had not finished his motion and that there had been no public hearing as of yet. Collins confirmed through Mecklin that the resolution calls for the repayment of the UDAG funds through the sales of the City Hall and Library buildings then yielded the floor to Carter. Carter moved to approve the resolution authorizing the City Manager... Holland made another point of order that there had still not been a public hearing. Mecklin agreed.

Collins opened the floor for public comment. There being none, the floor was closed.

Carter moved to approve the resolution authorizing the purchase of the Avanti building, seconded by Amidon. Motion carried 5/0.

Council discussed the scope of bidding out the renovation and the specific design of the finished project. Zellner asked if Council was agreeable to the initial design drawing being done in-house. They agreed as long as there was an opportunity to approve the final. Collins said the charter grants him the authority to appoint committees and he thought this was an appropriate occasion to do so. Collins asked Council for guidance on the general makeup of the committee. Carter said he thought Zellner should be one of the members and that he would represent the staff going into the building. Collins asked that the committee appointments be placed on the April agenda. He also asked that there be an agenda item on renaming the street in front of the building as it might not be appropriate to have Villa Rica City Hall on Temple Street.

Zellner updated Council on the WSA notice to terminate the water contract in May. The City is taking steps to protect against any adverse results of this contract termination. Collins said it is regrettable that the issue of annexation was being tied to a water contract. After further discussion, Carter pointed out that there is a signed agreement between Villa Rica and Douglas County on annexation procedures which should be honored by Douglas County and not circumvented by the wording in a water contract. Collins asked about the tap fees owed to the City by Douglas County. Council decided to adjourn to Executive Session to further discuss the issue. Carter moved to adjourn to

Executive Session for the purpose of discussing pending and potential legal matters, seconded by Kelley. Motion carried 5/0. Council adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Council reconvened at 7:15 p.m. Collins announced no action taken.

With no further business, Holland moved to adjourn, seconded by Best. Motion carried 5/0. Council adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

J Allen Collins - Mayor

ATTEST:

Robert Zellner – City Manager