

Called Council Meeting----- January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 6pm Alamo City Hall

Mayor Lee called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

1. Invocation--- City Manager
2. Pledge of Allegiance—Everyone
3. Approve Agenda ---The Mayor Mrs. Pamela Lee stated that there are two items on the agenda, and I will need to have you all to vote on a third item if it is to be added to this agenda or wait until the next Council Meeting. The City Manager Jeff Floyd stated that he would like an item to be added to the agenda. It would be for GA logging to collect our storm wood at the plant and pay us for it. A motion was made by Council Member Brownley to add the item to the agenda tonight and 2<sup>nd</sup> by council Member Villegas all unanimously approved. GA Logging was added to the agenda as item number 6. Motion was made to approve the agenda with the item GA Logging added by Council Member Cox and 2<sup>nd</sup> by council member and all unanimously approved

#### NEW BUSINESS

4. Discussing closing of the Alamo Police Department- Council Member Jones stated that several months ago we reached out to Mr. Giles about the possible ability of taking over the Alamo Police department. We were told that night at the meeting he had with him that we would entertain the idea. Mr. Jones said, “so here we are now we talked about this at our last meeting about talking about it at this meeting now. So we are here for Questions, Answers and to gain information Mr. Jones said also would like to make it clear Mr. Giles didn’t come to us we went to him. Wheeler County Sheriff Giles took to the floor. Council Member Geter asked to speak and make it clear that it was not the whole board, That I wish we would of all been on the same page as a council before we came to do this meeting. It was not all of us that came to the Sheriff Giles. Council Member Woodard stated that her take is that I wanted to coast into this how we are going to do it, how are our current employees going to be took care of, I was looking into more of a migration into this not just do it all at once and have no police department no more. Council Member Brownley stated that she thinks that is what all of their thoughts are to make sure our employees are taken care of. Council Member Geter said he wants to speak on a little background of what has been going on. He said I’m a team player, he wants the answers of why are concerning that, Council Member Brownley spoke and said we

didn't get to have that conversation at the last meeting, because you got up and left the meeting. That Meeting the Mayor was out sick, a Council Member was gone on a trip and as Mayor Protem I'm sitting there not know what is going on. I'm on that police committee meeting that meet but I was not invited, I was told that I'm rare available, so they didn't even bother. A major decision like that you want your team all to be there, I was told that night it was on the table, and we needed to vote on it. Council Member Brownley stated that it was being put on the table that night to discuss it not vote on it. Council Member Woodard stated she wanted to see it go through the citizens, see what the citizens want and what Giles can do. We need to have a better understanding. Giles, I know you feel a lot of tension tonight. There hasn't been a lot of communication on it. Council Member Woodard stated that they have talked about Mcrae and a lot of other things but never discussed the City of Alamo Giles agreed with that.

Sheriff Giles said that he did have a meeting with Council Members Jones, Brownley, and Cox. The last time we spoke, I knew what all is going on with Chief Karen. She is my friend, and I want to make sure she is taken care of. Giles stated if I'm not wrong, I think you all have 4 full time positions. The things we discussed is all the equipment the police department has being turned over to the Sheriff department by the officers you have and the sheriff office, also other things discussed was the use of the offices in the new police department you have for the officers to do report at. Giles stated he is here to help us wants whatever is best for the citizens of Alamo which are a part of Wheeler County. I can feel the tension tonight and I don't want to be a part of that but I'm here to help. Council Member Woodard asked to have you look at your budget will your budget allow this. Giles said his budget alone will not support it. What we discussed was money from the city, The amount that was discussed was \$250,000.00 dollars. Council Member Woodard stated that means that the city would have paid the sheriff department \$250,000.00 dollars. Giles stated that yes would be the salary of the city police that came to work at the sheriff department. There is a lot of things to discuss, simple day to day things that we will have to do, there is certain things that involved in closing an agency. Council Member Woodard said I'm throwing a bunch of questions out there because I want to know, If he did do something like this what about the vehicles we owns, the equipment? Giles said from what we have discussed all police department equipment vehicles all would be come the sheriff's departments. Council Member Geter said that is the only thing he is saying that with all the unasked and unanswered questions, this should have been done before coming in front of the public. Council Member Woodard asked if this happened would everything transfer over like their retirement? Giles stated that their GMA retirement will be no more.

Council Member Jones stated that one thing they did discuss with Giles is that Alamo gets 24-7 coverage, Glenwood only gets spots checks. Giles said yes, the deal is that there will be officers available to answer calls here. Council Member Brownley asked what his current staffing numbers are like. Giles stated that he is 2 officers away from having a full staff, and he has people to hire just not the vehicles to put them in and this moment. Council Member Brownley made the comment, so you don't have a problem with getting people to work. Giles stated not that this time but that could change. Council Member Woodard asked Giles to best of your knowledge how much does it take to run your department? Giles I don't know right now the Budget, I apologize I don't know that at this time it has been a world wind since January 1<sup>st</sup>. Council Member Woodard asked if we get to the point we want to do this what is your time frame on it,? One thing I think needs to happen before any of this can happen is Karen and I need to sit down. We need to sit down with each other and with you all, This involve you all the city staff and the Chief. As this go forward I would love to sit down and answer any questions you have. To answer your question we get things inline and then it becomes a time that it's like ripping off a band aid we just do it. And it is over then all of your employees of the police depart become employees of the Sheriff Department. That would be my answer to that question it can't happen tomorrow, I' not ready and you all are not ready. Woodard stated that her main concern is if we start at 250,000 and things go up are we going to see the price go up? Giles stated that we would come up with a negotiation. Mayor Lee asked if anyone of the public had questions or what to say something. Council Member Woodard said she would like to hear from the Chief Karen. Chief Karen Zanders made the comment that the time to ask for her thoughts was when they started this. Nobody has talked to me about this, my thoughts on it I don't agree on it but if that is what you all choice to do I'm not going to fight you on it. There is many things' steps to closing a police department, you just can't turn the light out and walk out the door. There is evidence and so many pending cases all that has to be eliminated. Mr. Lee was the next one to speak he said I have a question because I don't know What Brought this on? Council Member Woodard said it has been talked about for years, but we never got to the point where we were happy. Council member Brownly stated another reason why is because we such a hard time keeping officers, we get candidates we send them to school, and they don't pass or either they pass and then leave to go work somewhere else. Our officers are working to the bone, I feel so sorry for our officers. Marin Howard spoke up next and said first all I'm disappointed with the attitude I see around this table, and you all are supposed to be council Members. I think we need to display a little bit of courtesy to each other for one. 2<sup>nd</sup> I see that not everybody knows what is going on. My point of

view I have been in the public for a long time, I see Different one are having meetings then coming to the table and throwing it all on there. We are the Citizens of Wheeler co we should know what is going on. They want to close the police department, we need to get the citizens together, we don't know the pro or the cons of this. You can fix the police officers leaving by having them sign a 5 year contract. I pay City and County Taxes here you all respect us not your self . You make the best decision for the citizens of the city. I see here we got two sets of council Member, One set know what's going on the other don't and I'm not going to ask the Mayor to speak but I believe not even the Mayor knows what is going on. Council Member Brownley stated that is why we are having the discuss and can we go forward with the discussion and see the pros and cons and bring in the officers and boards then bring in the citizens. Council Member Brownley apologized it was not what she expected to happen. You can't just go into a meeting and say we are going to close down the police department with no discussion. Howard had one more question. Was there a committee sign from this body to go out and discuss with the sheriff. Mayor Lee stated that we do have signed committee, and they would have a meeting then discuss who would go out to talk with the sheriff and that didn't happen in this case. Council Member Woodard stated that you may not all know but we all work well together but there is tension here because we have a police committee the committee consist of Council Member Brownley, Council Member Jones, Council Member Geter and Police Chief Karen. They meet with Sheriff Giles these three Council Member Jones, Brownley, and Cox who is not on that committee Bobby is a good Man but you have three council Member that meet with Giles one who is not on the committee, one Geter who is on the committee was not invited and the police chief who was not invited. So, we are out of order, and we are trying to get in order. Mr. Howard said the last thing I have to say we can't forget our Chief, she should have been the very first person to talk to that is her job. You would all feel the same way if it was your job. Brownley stated we realize we done things the wrong way and we are trying now to go about it in the right way. We will go forward and get passed this and we can say that nothing else will happen unless everyone is involved in the situation. Council Member Jones admitted that mistakes were made, and things were not internal to happen we talked about this last year in February, I got a feeling a lot of people new about it. I want to point out that the last two months 17 shifts were covered by the Sheriff department already. Our officers can't work all those hours, they would not be sharp. This has nothing to do with what happened to Karen in the last couple of months.

5. Resolution for PTSD for 1<sup>st</sup> responders Motion was made to pass the resolution and spokesperson be Mayor Lee by Council Member Woodard and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Brownley all unanimously approved.
6. GA Logging- The City owns 15 acres of land at the cemetery and 7 acres of land at the old pond and this company is already logging in the area and he said he would be interested in getting this wood . I know we normally put this stuff out for bids but the problem with that is he won't be coming back to the area once he is thur. I don't think there is enough there to bid it out. The estimated amount would be like 10,000 dollars , it is all on the ground already . In time the wood would not be good anymore. Motion was made by council Member Villegas to go ahead and let GA Logging get the wood and pay us 2<sup>nd</sup> by Council Member Brownley Council Member Cox, Council Member Jones. opposed by Council Member Geter and Council member Woodard opposed.

PUBLIC Participation

Moore said that when he first moved here, he went around to citizens trying to get more to come to the meeting. The one thing they all would say was no matter what you tell them they are going to do what they want to do.

Motion made to adjourn the meeting by Council Member Villegas and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Council Member Brownley and all unanimously approved

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 pm

Submitted by :

*Pamela Lee*

Presiding Officer

Attest:

*Dana Bulkholder*

City Clerk

Seal:

