

Mental health agency asks city for building

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Officials with West Alabama Mental Health are asking the City of Demopolis for the deed to a building for the purpose of acquiring a loan for renovations.

According to Patricia Moore, WAMH executive director, her organization is required to hold the deed to the property in order to acquire a loan. She said the renovations would allow for additional office space, which is much needed at the facility.

Currently, WAMH is leasing the property on S. Walnut Street from the city.

“The bond we are seeking requires that the (WAMH) board holds the deed to the property. We cover five counties and the Marengo County facility is our main office,” Moore said.

Members of the city council stated that others have made building improvements through bonds without the city having to give up the deed, citing the hospital as an example.

Mayor Mike Grayson asked if there was a possibility that WAMH could purchase the building from the city. Moore responded that the bond issue would likely not provide enough funds to purchase the property, but said she would look into the possibility.

“We have to have additional space and we would like to do that here in Demopolis,” Moore said.

Moore was also asked if the city and WAMH could sign a long-term lease agreement that would cover the extent of the bond issue.

The council opted to consider the matter further and review options with the city’s finance committee, tabling it until the next council meeting.

Other items discussed by the council included:

- approving to hire the accounting firm of Mason Gardner to provide financial reporting to the city council.

The firm will provide city officials with current financial reports on a monthly basis. The cost for the services will be \$1,500 each month.

“It is important to have timely and accurate information. So, to me, this is a good deal,” Grayson said.

Councilman Charles Smith said the city had a similar agreement in the past and that it helps council members in matters of financial oversight.

The measure was approved unanimously.

- Yvonne Walker and Anita Rushing, local massage therapists, approached the council with a request to change the business license category in which their professions fall. Currently, massage therapists are under health and licenses are \$300.

“As massage therapists, I can’t tell you what is wrong with your shoulder, I would send you to your doctor (for a diagnosis),” Rushing said.

The two presented costs for similar business licenses in other cities, stating that in Thomasville the cost is \$125 and in Northport it is \$25.

The council discussed whether it would be them, or the planning commission, that could change business license categories. The council opted to table the matter to ensure the correct body would consider any change.

- The council re-appointed Jay Reynolds to the Water Works and Sewer Board.

The next council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 3, at 5:15 p.m. at Rooster Hall. The public is welcome to attend.

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