

RE-ELECT

# Jason Pitman

## Magistrate District 2 Dedication and Determination #3 on the Ballot

Paid for by Candidate

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# VOTE Kelli ABSTON COUNTY JUDGE EXECUTIVE

I'm asking for your vote for Clinton County

Judge Executive. I've spent the last 7 years working in the County Judge's Office as both Finance Officer and Administrative Assistant, giving me the experience and understanding

needed to serve our community well.

Paid for by Kelli Abston



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## Council

Continued from page 1

Little has called the situation an administrative oversight and not an intentional act.

He said the second phase of the process would be to give the PSC information about the calculation changes (for the water increases over time).

The attorney said the process could take several months.

The total amount the city could owe the Cumberland Water District could be a little over \$200,000, but local officials hope there can be a compromise between the two that the PSC would agree on, since the situation apparently was an administrative oversight that has occurred over the years.

Also, it was noted at a meeting last month by the Cumberland Water District Manager that over 1,600 Cumberland County residents rely on water that is purchased from Albany.

Councilwoman Renee York asked Little whether or not the Cumberland County Water District was going to sue to get their money back due to the PSC complaint.

Little indicated he was not sure, but said he didn't expect any further investigation and "we are looking at a technical violation."

Councilman Reed Sloan also asked if the city wanted to charge Cumberland more than the current \$2.92, what process would they have to take.

Little said the city would have to file a tariff (some-

thing of a notice) to Cumberland Water District, stating its intent to change rates.

It was noted again that at one point, when Albany asked the price to purchase water from neighboring Wayne County, their price per 1,000 gallons was \$3.50, this noting CWD is basically already receiving a bargain price.

The council then moved on to other business, with Albany Mayor James Bray informing the council that bids for new roofing at the old fire department had been advertised and it was explained that new roofing was also needed on the pig barn (city's maintenance/storage) building.

The mayor also stated that the drop-off at the old city hall is back open for customers who wish to drop off their bills at that location and plans are in the works to possibly install some type of outdoor mailbox drop-off in front of the building.

The council again briefly discussed putting city labeling on all city used/owned vehicles, with the mayor saying that was still in the works to be done.

Councilman Eric Smith asked about any progress made on the nuisance site on Tennessee Shortcut Road, with Mayor Bray saying that Attorney Hoover has all the documentation on file and is ready to take legal action if necessary.

Under the city's nuisance ordinance, if a site or location that is considered a nuisance exists, someone has to file a complaint, and can do so anonymously. Anyone wishing to report such a location can fill out a nuisance form and return it to City Hall and the complaint will be investigated.

Due to most city workers, primarily water department employees, out working to repair water leaks last Tuesday evening, department head reports were not included on the meeting agenda.

However, Mayor Bray did give a brief water department and water distribution report to the council, pertaining to water that was treated over the past month at both plants.

Both Plants A and B combined treated over 3.9 million gallons of water, or a 79 percent usage rate—below the state recommended cut-off rate of 85 percent.

The mayor noted, when discussing the current ban on new taps until the rate meets state standards, a year-long study has been ongoing and that year is almost up. He said the percentage over the past year combining monthly averages should be under the 85 percent mark.

Councilman Sloan also asked if anything (like a ban) could be done with Cumberland County since they purchase water from Albany.

Mayor Bray also updated the council on the ongoing funding search for monies to construct a new treatment plant, which he estimated would cost approximately \$34 million.

He admitted the city may have to "piece meal" the project, getting funding as it becomes available.

Councilman Smith thanked the mayor for his work on the recent \$7.3 million in federal funding announced by U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell.

The mayor said the city, after action taken later in the meeting, had about \$10 million toward the final goal needed.

Commonwealth Engineer Travis Harper also told the council their firm is keeping updated on possible funding sources, with Councilwoman York thanking the engineers for their assistance with the project.

Under the water department report, the mayor noted over the past month, up to last Tuesday, there had been 41 water leaks repaired, 33 of which were service lines and eight mains.

The council then voted on two resolutions, one pertaining to a grant application which would go toward funding of the proposed new water treatment plant.

Councilman Junior Gregory made a motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the completion and filing of a Government Resources Accelerating Needed Transformation Grant of 2024 project for application for up to \$6.22 million from the Cabinet for Economic Development. The motion passed unanimously.

The second resolution was to accept supplemental assistance under the Clean

Water Act, and pertained to leftover funds from the Duval Valley water line construction project.

On a motion by Councilwoman York, the council unanimously approved a resolution accepting assistance in leftover funds in the amount of \$72,388 to be used for other water related projects.

Mayor Bray then gave appreciation to all city employees, especially those in the water department, for their work. He noted their long hours in the nighttime and cold temperatures in repairing water leaks and trying to keep water to customers. He noted the previous period had been a "trying week."

He also noted that the weather had delayed the start of installation of new master meters, which he says will further help detect water leaks sooner.

Councilman Randy Speck also thanked the local EMS for their work during the most recent winter storm.

Sydney Parmley, a local business owner in downtown Albany, addressed the council about traffic issues at crosswalks.

Parmley said there are no traffic signs in front of her store, near the corner of South Cross and Jefferson Streets, and she would like to see more signage put out.

The business owner noted poor visibility between parked vehicles and the streets. More foot traffic with the addition of stores and an apartment building made it dangerous for pedestrians, especially children.

It was noted that the road (127) is a state roadway. The highway department would have to be asked for assistance in putting up signs there and the mayor said he would gather information and ask the state for help.

Albany Police Chief Mark Bell also agreed that crosswalks were a problem area and that the 25 mph speed limit should be 15 mph instead through those areas.

There was a question of whether or not the city, with it being on a state roadway, could take steps to reduce the speed limit on its own, since the streets are in the city limits. Officials will check into that possibility as well.

Councilman Reed Sloan then made a motion that the city begin posting water leaks and other outage information on its Facebook page. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The next regular meeting of Albany City Council is scheduled for Tuesday, March 3, at 5 p.m. at the Clinton County Adult Education Building on N. Hwy. 127 Business and is open to the public.

## Clinton County News



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