

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION
NOVEMBER 10, 2015
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
303 WEST CHURCH ST.
7:00 p.m.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held a special meeting/work session on November 10, 2015 in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building at 7:00 p.m. with the Honorable Thomas W. Parker III, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Mary Jo Adams, Dolores A. Hammond, Curtis B. Leak, Andrew G. Williamson, Jr. and J.D. Willis.

Also present were Charles D. Nichols III, City Manager; Jennifer A. Tippet, City Clerk; and William P. Floyd, Jr., City Attorney.

Mayor Parker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Councilmember Hammond requested a moment of silence to remember Veterans.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Councilmember Adams, seconded by Councilmember Hammond, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda.

CREECH & ASSOCIATES

The City Manager explained that Creech & Associates had begun design work for a new city hall and police station. He added that representatives were present to update Council, answer questions and get direction from Council on proceeding with the study.

Mr. David Creech thanked Council for the confidence Council placed in the firm. He introduced Brent Green as the lead designer and Mike Supino as the project manager. He added that he and his staff were present to hear Council's input and to begin moving through the process. He further added that the process needs to be done carefully and is not a short process. He discussed the firm's experience with design of civic buildings. He added that Laurinburg is a beautiful city.

Mr. Brent Green explained that the space needs analysis study conducted several years ago was verified and City staff had been questioned and consulted, and a tour of the facilities conducted in order to develop an effective and more efficient building. He discussed the following:

- A new city hall building should be designed with growth in mind and for a lifespan of at least 50 years.
- There should be adequate storage and office areas.

- Consideration for shared spaces such as conference rooms and storage.
- Some offices will be four-walled and others will be open to ensure efficient use of space.
- Safety and security needs are important, particularly on the police department side.

Mr. Green discussed the design for the council chambers and that it needed to convey the right image. He requested input from Council on the following:

- Whether dais would be raised.
- Verification that nine (9) seats on the dais were needed.
- What was need for press tables?
- Desired location for the podium.
- Seating for 50 in the audience.
- Will the chambers be used for other functions?

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, Mr. Green explained that the council chambers would have up-to-date audiovisual including convenience monitors on the dais for Council. He discussed the need for broadcasting and streaming of council meetings is becoming more and more prevalent. He explained that he would need input on how much of a production was needed for filming and broadcasting meetings. He added that this would be coordinated with St. Andrews University as part of the process.

Upon question by Mayor Parker, Mr. Harold Haywood, General Services Director, explained that the Municipal Building has 12,000 square feet and the Barrett Building has approximately 3,000 square feet.

Mayor Parker stated that the City needs at least 5,000 more square feet of space.

Mr. Green explained that as the space needs process goes forward, the amount of space needed will be refined.

The City Manager explained that because there is a need to have climate-controlled server room and the current one at Public Works is insufficient, the IT Director's office and server room would be moved to the new facility.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, Mr. Creech explained that they had not been asked to look at renovating the current facilities. He added that knowing the age of the facility, he knew it would be very expensive. He further added that he was unable to quantify that because they had not been asked to study that.

Councilmember Adams explained that she thought renovation was going to be part of the work. She added that there had been a lot of discussion in the community that the City should renovate the existing facility instead of building a new facility. She added that she did not believe that some people understood that it costs more to renovate an existing building than to build a new building.

Mr. Creech explained that when working with the City of Albemarle, its 7,000 square foot city hall was historic and the City of Albemarle wanted to keep it. He added that the new 30,000 square foot new city hall was built behind the historic building and minor renovations were done to the historic building, making it like a museum. He further added that it was up to Council as to whether renovating the existing building was to be considered.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, Mr. Creech stated that the existing city hall did not meet the current Building Code.

Mr. Green added that there are also functional challenges with the existing building such as separation of police functions and other functions within the building which adds another layer of concern. He cited access to the council chambers and the location of the elevator which are accessed by going through the Police Department.

Upon question by Mayor Parker, Mr. Creech explained that Creech & Associates have been architects for between eight (8) and 10 city hall projects over the last 10 years and none of those involved renovation.

Discussion ensued concerning the existing city hall facility and its shortcomings with regard to space and technology and the difficulty in upgrading it to meet needs.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, Mr. Green explained that the normal life span of a municipal building is 50 years. He cited that city hall was built in the mid-1950's. He added that because the building has cement block load-bearing walls, it would be challenging to renovate and update the city hall building to meet current building code and to provide for technology.

Mr. Green explained that the preliminary design was respectful of the building site, trees and ambiance of Church Street. He explained that having one (1) building instead of two (2) would be more cost-effective. He then discussed two (2) options for location of the new building. Discussion ensued concerning the two (2) options, issues with traffic patterns and the Consumer Billing drive-thru on the fifth of each month and security for the sally port for the Police Department.

Discussion ensued concerning the Barrett Building and its high maintenance costs and its aesthetics as an older home and the need to have all city functions in one building.

Discussion ensued concerning the proposed new city hall building including the following:

- Police need to get in and out quickly, so that department will occupy the first floor.
- The council chambers will be on the second floor.
- Staff will have separate entrance than the public.
- Need for the drive-thru and Consumer Billing to accommodate the heavy use on several days every month.

Discussion ensued concerning the history of the Barrett Building, the maintenance costs as well as the cost to wire it for technology.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager explained that he had spoken with the Browns, abutting property owners to the Barrett Building, and their only concern was to not have a parking lot adjacent to their home.

General discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- Councilmember Williamson expressed concern that if the Barrett Building is not torn down and future owner did not maintain the building.
- Councilmember Hammond explained that there had been discussion about expanding the Municipal Building prior to the Barrett Building being acquired by the city.
- Councilmember Leak liked the idea of bringing everyone under one (1) roof as long as it is not a flat roof.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, Mr. Creech explained that because people are becoming more demanding of government, more staff is needed to accommodate those demands; therefore government entities are requiring more space.

Discussion ensued concerning the project timeline. Mr. Green explained that he and staff would incorporate items from the discussion and be back with revised ideas in about a month.

AGENDA FOR NOVEMBER 17, 2015

The City Manager reviewed the agenda for November 17, 2015 as follows:

- 3) Presentation of Advanced Law Enforcement Certificates to Police Officers-Chris Young and Larry Bowman
- 4) Consent Agenda (**Item A**)
 - a) Consider minutes of October 14, 2015 special meeting/work session and October 20, 2015 regular meeting
The City Manager explained that the October 20th minutes may not be completed in draft form for the November 17th meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 5) Consider request to rezone from Office/Institutional to Residential-20 property located at 8981 Tartan Road
- 6) Consider reduction of electric rates
*The City Manager explained that Mr. Ed Tucker of Progressive Engineering would be present to give a summary of the rate study.
Councilmember Adams suggested that the Interim Finance Director be at the meeting.
Councilmember Hammond suggested that the Consumer Billing Manager also be at the meeting.*

DELEGATION

- 7) FY 2014-2015 Audit Results – Mr. Carl Head

The City Manager explained that the audit is being finalized by the auditor. He added that the auditor feels comfortable in presenting the findings to Council.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, the City Manager explained that the auditor would provide his normal summary of the audit and the management letter, and if Council wanted additional information after being presented with the audit, he would come back to another meeting.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

- 8) Community Development Update
- 9) Consider approving Community Development Strategic Plan
- 10) Consider Ordinance No. O-2015- amending the FY 15-16 Budget Appropriations Ordinance (O-2015-09) for the Art Garden
- 11) Quarterly Financial Report-Carrie Neal

APPOINTMENTS

- 12) Fireman's Relief Fund

The City Manager explained that a closed session for economic development was needed at the November 17, 2015 meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Following discussion, it was consensus of Council to add Item 10 to the Consent Agenda.

DISCUSSION OF FIRE SUBSTATION

The City Manager explained that he had been attending the Fire Commission meetings and there had been discussion concerning sites for the substation. Upon questioning as to whether the City property behind the water tank on McColl Road was no longer being considered, the Fire Commission requested Council consider clearing the property for the Fire Commission. He added that because of the mature timber on the property, staff is not able to remove the timber in-house. He further added that the timber can be harvested off the property at no cost to the City provided the contractor is allowed to have the timber, staff can dig up the stumps and clear, and if the County waives the tipping fee for the stumps, there would be no cost to the City. The City Manager explained that he informed the Fire Commission that before proceeding with clearing the lot, Council would want assurance from the Fire Commission that the substation would be built on this property.

Upon question by Councilmember Willis, the City Manager explained that instead of paying the timber contractor to remove the timber, the contractor would take the harvested timber as payment.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, the City Manager explained that the Fire Commission is still discussing options for the substation and the type of building to be built. He added that the City would run utilities to the substation.

Councilmember Hammond clarified that once the substation is completed, the City would maintain the building and equipment.

The City Manager explained that since the City would maintain the building once completed, he wanted to ensure that the City had input on the type of building to be constructed to ensure that the City would not be responsible for maintaining a costly building.

Upon question by Councilmember Willis, the City Manager explained that if the Fire Commission chooses to purchase property elsewhere, then the City would not maintain the substation.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, the City Manager explained that if the substation is built outside of the city limits, then he would not recommend that City staff maintain the fire truck for the Fire Commission.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, the City Manager explained that since the building would be constructed on City property, it would become property of the City.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager explained that the Fire Commission had discussed optional sites whereby Fire Commission funds would be used to purchase the property. He added that he stressed to the Fire Commission that the City property would be made available free to the Commission for constructing the substation. He further added that the Fire Commission asked if the City would clear the property for the Commission.

The City Manager explained that he would let the Fire Commission know that the City would clear the timber off the lot located behind the City's water tank on McColl Road if the substation is built on that property.

DISCUSSION/UPDATE ON CITIZEN REQUEST FOR CURFEW

Police Chief Darwin Williams explained that he had researched a curfew for youth based upon a request by citizens for such a curfew. He added that a curfew would require the following four (4) additional officers (one per shift) and four (4) additional vehicles for those officers. He further added that a curfew would also affect the court system and the Department of Social Services. He further explained that most of the arrests of 16-17 year olds and those under the age of 16 occur during school hours.

Upon question by Mayor Parker, Chief Williams explained that at this time, he does not believe that a curfew is the solution to the problem with youth; however, he will continue to monitor juvenile crime. He added that he will talk with the citizens who requested the curfew.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION FOR RECOGNITION OF AN INDIVIDUAL

Mayor Parker explained that he had received a request for a Key to the City for the speaker at the Veteran's Day Ceremony being held tomorrow. He explained that giving a Key to the City requires Council adopting a resolution.

Following discussion, it was consensus of Council to provide lapel pins to the speaker.

DISCUSSION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mayor Parker explained that the Scotland County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) had hired a new Director, Roger Johnson who begins working on December 2, 2015.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, the City Attorney explained that he and the County Attorney are working on the EDC by-laws.

DISCUSSION AND INPUT FOR NOTECARD FOR MAYOR AND COUNCIL

The City Clerk presented information on a notecard for the Mayor and Council. Following discussion, it was consensus of Council for the City Clerk and Councilmember Adams work on the design.

UPDATE ON PAPERLESS AGENDA PROJECT

The City Clerk explained that after the first of the year, the paperless agenda project would begin with the purchase of i-Pads and then training will be conducted by Mr. Josh Coble, IT Director.

CLOSED SESSION

At 8:55 p.m., Councilmember Adams moved to go into closed session pursuant to N.C. General Statute 143-318.11(a)(4) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the City. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hammond, and carried unanimously.

At 9:06 p.m., Councilmember Adams moved to adjourn the closed session and resume the regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hammond, and carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Adams, seconded by Councilmember Hammond, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Thomas W. Parker III, Mayor

Jennifer A. Tippet, City Clerk