

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 20, 2020
CITY HALL AND POLICE DEPARTMENT
303 WEST CHURCH ST.
7:00 p.m.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held its regular meeting on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 in the Council Chambers of the City Hall and Police Department at 7:00 p.m. with the Honorable James T. Willis, Mayor, presiding and physically present. The following Councilmembers were physically present: Mary Jo Adams, James J. Garby, Jr., Donald Rainer, and Andrew G. Williamson, Jr. Councilmember Mary Evans arrived at 7:08 p.m.

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

Mayor Willis called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The City Manager requested that the agenda be amended to include "Update on North Fire Station" as Item 11.

Motion was made by Councilmember Rainer to approve the agenda with the requested amendment. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Williamson, and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Rainer, Williamson, Adams, Garby

Nays: None

(Note: Councilmember Evans had not yet arrived.)

RECOGNITION OF RETIREE

Mayor Willis read the following recognizing retired employee John Terry:

IN SINCERE APPRECIATION

to

***JOHN EDWARD TERRY
SANITATION SERVICES COORDINATOR***

FEBRUARY 1993 – SEPTEMBER 2020

In special tribute for over 27 years of dedicated public service as an employee of the City of Laurinburg in several different positions for the Sanitation Department. Hired first on February 15, 1993 as a Sanitation Worker; then promoted to Sanitation Equipment Operator I on June 3, 1993; then promoted to Sanitation Equipment Operator II on October 28, 1993; then promoted to Sanitation Equipment Operator III on September 4, 1997; then promoted to Sanitation Assistant on July 1, 2014; then transitioned to Sanitation Crew Leader on August 8, 2018; and finally promoted to Sanitation Services Coordinator on February 28, 2019, where he remained until his retirement on September 30, 2020. During his time with the Sanitation Department, John was instrumental in the implementation of the conversion to curbside garbage pickup, conversion to automated collection truck routing, re-opening of the Recycling Center, providing excellent customer service and enforcement of solid waste policies, and assisting with response and recovery efforts in several natural disasters, such as ice storms and hurricanes, all to better serve the residents of Laurinburg, just to name a few of his many accomplishments.

The Mayor and the Laurinburg City Council express their sincere appreciation for his unselfish professional service to the citizens of Laurinburg and this community. His tenacity, strong work ethic, intense dedication, and attention to detail ensured that the citizens of Laurinburg received the best possible solid waste services offered by the City. John dedicated his time and talents to the citizens of Laurinburg and is the epitome of a true public servant. He worked tirelessly and effectively to serve the citizens of this community and to make our City a better place to live for all the citizens of Laurinburg.

We wish him many more years of continued success in this next chapter of his life.

Presented this the 20th day of October, 2020.

James T. Willis, Mayor

*Mary Jo Adams, Councilmember
James J. Garby, Jr., Councilmember
Andrew G. Williamson, Jr., Councilmember*

*Mary Evans, Councilmember
Donald Rainer, Councilmember*

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No public comments were submitted.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Willis reviewed the Consent Agenda:

- a) Consider minutes of September 22, 2020 regular meeting
- b) Consider Amendments made to Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Laurinburg and the Scotland County Board of Education for a Firefighting Academy and Authorize the City Manager to Execute Contingent upon Approval by the Scotland County Board of Education

Councilmember Garby moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Adams, and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Garby, Adams, Rainer, Williamson

Nays: None

(Note: Councilmember Evans had not yet arrived)

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

REQUEST FROM DOWNTOWN ADVISORY COMMITTEE – MR. JAY TODD

Mr. Jay Todd, Chairman of the Downtown Advisory Committee (DAC), explained that on behalf of the DAC, he was requesting that Council approve application to North Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT) to declare Main Street from the US 15-401 Bypass to Church Street as a “No Through Truck Zone” for truck tractors longer than 30 feet. He added that the DAC believed that this restriction on through trucks would enhance the downtown area by providing a safer environment for pedestrians, and to reduce the noise and exhaust fumes. Twenty-two municipalities or communities in North Carolina have this declaration in their downtown areas.

Councilmember Mary Evans arrived at 7:08 p.m.

A discussion ensued concerning this request, the potential issues with enforcement, and how the designation would be made known to truck drivers if the request is approved by DOT.

A discussion ensued concerning tractor trailers in residential areas.

Following discussion, Councilmember Williamson moved to authorize the City Manager to prepare an application to NC DOT to designate Main Street from US 15-401 Business to Church Street as a “No Through Truck Zone”. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Garby, and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Williamson, Garby, Adams, Evans, Rainer

Nays: None

Councilmember Evans expressed concern about tractor trailers in residential areas and the City’s procedure.

Mayor Willis explained that this item should be on a future agenda.

QUARTERLY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE – MR. MARK WARD

Mr. Mark Ward, Executive Director, Scotland County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and Scotland County Economic Development Director, presented a quarterly update to Council of economic development within the City limits with highlights as follows:

- Economic activity in Laurinburg before COVID-19 and current:

	Pre-COVID-19	CURRENT
Potentials	minor activity	increased activity
Retail	very little	increased activity
Jobs available*		879

* source: ncworks.gov

Mr. Ward explained that the available jobs do not require a 4-year degree. He discussed the availability of skilled trade jobs and potential salaries.

- Economic activity in the City over the last seven (7) years:
 - Four (4) business expansions/creations that have increased tax base by \$72 million and created 165 jobs in **Laurinburg**
 - Assisted approximately 650 individuals with training/interviews or continuing education
 - Increased Water/Sewer and Electrical revenues for the City
 - Annexed 42 acres with potential to annex another 150+/- for which the City provides electric, water and sewer services
 - Purchased two (2) anchor buildings in Downtown Laurinburg- renovation of one (1) almost completed
 - Railroad Bar and Grill will be the tenant for the former Art By Design building on the corner of Main and Railroad Streets. The renovations should be completed by the end of November, first of December for move in and installation of equipment.
 - \$2 million Economic Development Agency (EDA) grant to construct a new \$50,000.00 incubator building behind the Small Business Innovation Center (SBIC)
- He presented the following active projects that have had sites inside the City with the exception of Drive Line submitted for consideration:

PROJECT NAME	#OF JOBS	INVESTMENT	CREATED	SITE(S) RECOMMENDED
Greens	30	\$35 million	8/5/2019	Incubator and Industrial Park
Drive Line	22	\$10 million	9/1/2019	Meritor
SPC	465	\$60 million	1/8/2020	501-Laurinburg Scotland Park

Brooker			1/15/2020	501-Laurinburg Scotland Park & Laurinburg-Maxton Airport
Gulf/Ohio	45	\$5 million	1/16/2020	Carter Site
Dry	30	\$40 million	2/24/2020	Incubator Park
Twin River	50	\$18 million	3/2/2020	Purchase of local company
Nivana	100	\$70-80 million	6/3/2020	Laurinburg Scotland Park
Base	30-40		8/18/2020	Wallace Warehouse
House 1	10	\$2 million	9/26/2020	Expansion of existing industry

Mr. Ward presented potential site layouts for The Incubator Park (Attachment A), Laurinburg Scotland Park (Attachment B), potential site layout for the North Fire Station (Attachment C), the Laurinburg Scotland Park with a possible distribution center (Attachment D), and the Laurinburg Industrial Park/Smart Site. An engineer will review the potential site plans to determine best layout for marketability. The Scotland County Economic Development Corporation has agreed to deed over to the City three (3) acres of land for the North Fire Station. The location will provide fire suppression for the Industrial Park, which will be a huge selling point to market to industries. The Laurinburg Industrial Park/Smart Site is an excellent site with the exception of getting tractor trailer trucks in and out. DOT is working on possible ingress and egress off Dixie Guano Road to ease this problem.

CONSIDER DONATING USED AMBULANCE AND EQUIPMENT TO THE WAGRAM VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The City Manager explained that The City of Laurinburg Fire Department received this truck several years ago from Richmond County via donation. The volunteers of the department then collected supplies from stakeholders around the community to up-fit the truck with communication equipment. This equipment is now outdated and the Laurinburg Fire Department has no use for the vehicle nor the communication equipment any longer. Staff would like to donate the ambulance and equipment to the Wagram Volunteer Fire Department.

Councilmember Adams moved to donate the ambulance and equipment to the Wagram Volunteer Fire Department. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Evans, and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Adams, Evans, Williamson, Rainer, Garby

Nays: None

CONSIDER SETTING PUBLIC HEARING FOR REQUEST FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

The City Manager explained that Mr. Christopher Knight has requested a Conditional Use

Permit to operate a music venue at 127 Fairley Street. A public hearing on the matter needs to be set for November 17, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers.

Councilmember Williamson moved to hold a public hearing on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers to consider a request for a Conditional Use Permit for a music venue to be located at 127 Fairley Street. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Garby, and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Williamson, Garby, Evans, Rainer, Adams

Nays: None

DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION CONCERNING FUTURE COUNCIL MEETINGS

The City Manager explained that because the public hearing scheduled for November 17, 2020 is a quasi-judicial hearing on the request for a Conditional Use Permit, and the UNC School of Government recommends that quasi-judicial hearings be held in person, Council will need to allow up to 25 individuals in the council chambers. The City Clerk will send a letter to the requester and to abutting property owners requiring that they notify her that they will be attending the hearing. However, if an abutting property owner or an affected party does not notify the City Clerk but instead comes to the council chambers, providing that the maximum number of people at an indoor event (25) is not exceeded, they will be allowed to come into the council chambers.

UPDATE ON NORTH FIRE STATION

The City Manager explained on September 29, 2020, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved the required Environmental Assessment, and on October 30, 2020, the required comment period will end. There have been no comments submitted. Once the comment period has ended, the City can move forward with the North Fire Station. FEMA allowed the City to send out State of Qualifications for Architect Firms and Design Firms. Twelve Statements of Qualifications were received and were reviewed by Fire Chief Jordan McQueen, Mr. Harold Haywood, Purchasing Director and the City Manager. Two (2) firms were selected to be interviewed, and thus far, one (1) has been interviewed, with the other one (1) scheduled next week. Once the architect firm has been selected and the 30 day comment period has ended, the process can begin and the FEMA money and the grant from The Golden Leaf are available for the City, approximately \$1.4 million of non-taxpayer money for the project. Both architect firms have been told that the engineering fees, construction, site plan and everything cannot total more than the amount of the FEMA funds and The Golden Leaf. Options for the North Fire Station will be brought to Council once the architect is on board and has had time to draft some plans. Once the design has been approved, the project will go out for bids for engineering and construction.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND/OR COUNCIL

Mayor Willis congratulated Fire Chief Jordan McQueen and the Fire Department for receiving The Save Award from the Commissioner of Insurance and State Fire Marshall Mike Causey and Chief State Fire Marshall Brian Taylor recently.

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:50 p.m., motion was made by Councilmember Garby to go into closed session pursuant to NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(4) for economic development. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Rainer, and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Garby, Rainer, Adams, Williamson, Evans

Nays: None

At 8:08 p.m. Councilmember Williamson moved to adjourn the closed session and resume the regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Evans, and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Williamson, Evans, Rainer, Adams, Garby

Nays: None

ADJOURN

Motion was made by Councilmember Evans, seconded by Councilmember Williamson to adjourn the meeting. The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Evans, Williamson, Rainer, Adams, Garby

Nays: None

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

James T. Willis, Mayor

Jennifer A. Tippet, City Clerk