

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 15, 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 September 15, 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, and Andrew G. Williamson, Jr. Councilmember J.D. Willis was absent.

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 Williamson gave the invocation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

AGENDA FOR SEPTEMBER 22, 2015

The City Manager reviewed the agenda for September 22, 2015 as follows:

- 3) Consider minutes of July 8, 2015 special meeting; July 14, 2015 special meeting/work session; July 21, 2015 regular meeting; August 11, 2015 special meeting/work session and August 18, 2015 regular meeting

DELEGATIONS

- 4) Stephanie Speece – Update on Project Greenbuild
- 5) Pastor Michael Edds-Request for Curfew or Other Method to Deal with Crime
A brief discussion ensued concerning Pastor Edds's concerns regarding incidents with juveniles and a curfew for youth. Councilmember Adams requested that the minutes from previous meetings when a curfew was discussed be included in the agenda packet.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

- 6) Consider authorizing the City Manager to execute contract with Creech & Associates for design services for new City Hall and Police Department
Upon question by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager explained that this contract is for the company to verify the previous Space Needs Study, to hear Council's ideas, and

that no construction would be done. He added that Mr. Haywood would discuss at the meeting.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, the City Manager explained that there are some Contingency Funds in the budget that can be used to pay for this step, and no budget amendment will be necessary until the next step.

Discussion ensued concerning waiting on this project until after the Electric Rate Study was concluded. The City Manager explained that Council can decide whether now is an appropriate time or not to move forward with the new City Hall and Police Department. He added that the electric engineering consultant started the Electric Rate Study on August 1, 2015.

Councilmember Adams expressed concern that the City needed to be in a position to move forward with a new City Hall and Police Department because of the citizens at last month's meeting who were struggling to pay their electric bills.

- 7) Set public hearing to be held at 7:00 p.m. on October 20, 2015 to consider text amendments to the City of Laurinburg Unified Development Ordinance
The City Manager explained that Council was informed when the amended Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) was approved several months ago, that there might be some changes or errors corrected, and this amendment is to correct some errors discovered by staff. He added that it was heard by Planning Board earlier this evening and the changes were approved.

- 8) Consider authorizing the City Manager to execute loan documents for financing an automated side loader in the amount of \$265,000.00
The City Manager explained that this financing was approved in the budget to purchase a side loader and finance it over 10 years at 1.8% interest.

APPOINTMENTS

- 9) NCLM voting and alternate delegates
The City Manager explained that in the past the City Manager has been the voting delegate and the last several years Councilmember Leak has been the alternate delegate.

DIRECTION OF ITEMS TO BE PLACED ON CONSENT AGENDA AND DEPARTMENT HEADS NEEDED AT REGULAR MEETING

The City Manager explained that in addition to direction on items to be placed on the Consent Agenda, he was requesting direction on which Department Heads Council wanted present at the September 22, 2015 meeting.

Councilmember Hammond expressed concern that there are several items on the agenda tonight that should be discussed at the regular meeting so that citizens can see what the City is doing. She suggested that the update on the billing issue, update on police department activities and update on community development be discussed next week at the regular Council meeting. She added that since there were citizens at the August Council meeting expressing concern about their electric bills, she felt it only fair for the billing issue update also be presented at the regular Council meeting so that citizens can see what is being done.

Upon question by the City Manager, it was consensus of Council that department updates need to be presented at the work session and at the regular meeting.

Councilmember Williamson explained that with the regular meeting being televised, it was a chance to show citizens all of the good things happening in the City.

Based upon the City Manager's recommendation, it was consensus of Council to add Items 7 and 8 on the Consent Agenda.

The City Manager stated that as of now, Mr. Haywood is the only department head needed at the meeting, and possibly Ms. Simmons, Police Chief Williams and Mr. Warner.

CONSIDER BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Councilmember Hammond stated that since she does not have the ordinance in front of her to review, this item needs to be on the regular Council agenda.

The City Manager explained that if goods or services are not received by June 30, then the goods or services are supposed to go on the following year's audit. He further explained that in the past, if the goods or services were not received by June 30, the funds budgeted for the goods or services rolled over into Fund Balance, and the payment for the goods or services was cut out of the next year's budget.

Following discussion, it was consensus of Council to put this item on the Consent Agenda.

UPDATE ON JULY BILLING ISSUE AND PROCEDURES GOING FORWARD

Ms. Tammie Simmons, Customer Services Manager, explained the following with regard to the July billing issue:

- The normal reading cycle varies between 28-38 days.
- Because of the July 4th holiday and medical issues with two (2) of the meter readers' families, the July billing for some customers was longer than the normal reading cycle.
- For the customers receiving billing for a longer cycle for July, the previous month's cycle was shorter than normal.
- July was a very hot and humid month, which affects electric consumption.
- Water and electric meters are read for customers on the same day. Since water meters are still read manually, it takes longer to read meters.

Ms. Simmons explained that staff would like for Council to consider allowing electric meters to be read in one (1) day, separate from the water meters to expedite the process and ensure that the days in a reading cycle remain within the normal cycle.

Discussion ensued concerning the meter reading process. The City Manager explained that as the City became more efficient, less meter readers were necessary. He also discussed how this type situation has occurred in the past and could occur in the future due to software problems or ice and/or snow conditions.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, Mr. Harry Gale, Meter Reading Supervisor, explained that it would be easier for the meter readers to read electric meters at one time.

Councilmember Leak expressed concern that since there are three (3) electric providers in the area, electric bills are not equal. He cited that his bill and someone's bill at Scotch Meadows are very different due to the different electric providers.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, Ms. Simmons explained that there are three (3) meter readers, including the supervisor.

Further discussion ensued concerning manpower. Upon question by Mayor Parker, Ms. Simmons explained that her manpower is sufficient, that this situation was just a glitch. She added that Mr. Gale is being trained on billing procedures.

The City Manager explained that staff would like to read the electric meters in one (1) day to keep the electric meter cycle relatively uniform. He added that staff did not want to make the change in a month when there would be high electric bills, such as in July, August, January or February.

Further discussion ensued concerning the proposed change for reading electric meters and the need to educate citizens.

Ms. Simmons explained that staff tries to be as transparent as possible, and suggests energy audits for citizens who have high electric bills.

Discussion ensued concerning the suggested read cycle for electric meters. The City Manager explained that staff would look at the calendar and develop a schedule for electric meters to be read.

Councilmember Hammond suggested that electric meter readings should be no more than 33 days, realizing that there may be times when it is beyond the City's control to stay within that timeframe.

UPDATE ON POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES

Police Chief Williams discussed the following activities in the Police Department:

- The body cams have been delivered, and policy has been written.
- He and the Assistant Chief attended youth forum at Nazareth Church Sunday.
- Community cook-out held at Stewartsville Road Community Center to connect with the community.
- Gang Unit is working hard to identify gang members and is also cross-training with the Fayetteville Police Department.
- Talked with Sheriff about a local task force.
- Working with federal agents on charging repeat offenders at the federal level to face stiffer penalties and get them out of the community.

- Worked with the Innocence Project and helped locate evidence that released wrongly-convicted man.
- Hiring young, local kids for the department.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The City Manager explained that Mr. Warner will discuss the final comprehensive plan at next month's meeting and that because Mr. Warner would be out of town, he would not be able to present the Community Development update at the regular meeting.

Mr. Warner thanked everyone who participated with the fruit orchard project. He added that staff was working on a sign for the orchard.

Mr. Warner reported that the City was selected as a certified retirement community which will be a marketing tool for the City. He added that this project will be managed by the Scotland County Tourism Development Authority and there should be no expenses for the City.

Mr. Warner explained that the City was selected for the Downtown Associate Program. He added that there would be a public presentation from the Department of Commerce on Wednesday, September 23, 2015 from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. He added that after the presentation, the City Manager, Mr. Mac McInnis and he would be meeting with the Department of Commerce personnel about the program.

Mr. Warner provided an update on the Art Garden design by Adam Walls of UNC-Pembroke.

Discussion ensued concerning the Art Garden, its lighting, sidewalks and security cameras.

Mr. Warner explained that he was working with the City Attorney with regard to the timber/greenway project.

The City Attorney explained that the Army Corps of Engineers will have to make a determination on what can be done with the timber and greenway space along Leith Creek.

DISCUSSION OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION FORMS

Mrs. Galloway discussed performance evaluation forms for City employees. She explained that the Leadership Team had reviewed three (3) options and unanimously preferred one form.

The City Manager explained that Mrs. Galloway and he wanted to have policies in place to make sure employees were evaluated annually. He requested Council provide any feedback on the performance evaluation form.

EOC/911 CENTER UPDATE

The City Manager explained that there are concerns with dispatching from the EOC/911 Center which have been discussed at the Dispatch Board meetings. He added that an option for training

from the Hoke County 911 Center could be considered. He further added that the Fire Chief and Police Chief have done an excellent job of presenting their concerns. He further explained that a learning curve was expected; however staff felt that dispatching would be better by now. He further added that the County Commissioners have added two (2) dispatch positions and have not been able to fill the positions. He stated that Mayor Parker has talked with Chairman McCook.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager explained that staffing and training are issues. He added that Ms. Lisa Howell who has worked with Hoke County EOC/911 since it consolidated services in 1989, suggested Hoke County and Scotland County could exchange an employee to help with training on the job. He further added that dispatch on the police side had moved in a positive direction, and issues remained on the fire side.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, the City Manager explained that he, Fire Chief Gibson, and Police Chief Williams represented the City on the 911 Board. He added that Assistant Police Chief Sessoms and Ms. Howell were also attending the meetings.

DISCUSSION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Discussion ensued concerning the revised bylaws for the Scotland County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) that were provided to Council and County Commissioners for review.

Councilmember Adams suggested that the Scotland County Tourism and Development Authority (TDA) be added as a non-voting member.

Councilmember Williamson explained that he thought the TDA had a role as part of the marketing component.

Councilmember Hammond suggested that an attorney needed to review the bylaws.

NCLM ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND SCHEDULING OF OCTOBER SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION

The City Clerk explained that since all of Council, the Mayor and the City Manager would be returning from the North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) Annual Conference on Tuesday, October 13, 2015, Council might want to consider changing its special meeting/work session from that evening until Wednesday, October 14, 2015.

Following a brief discussion, it was consensus of Council to hold the special meeting/work session on Wednesday, October 14, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

The City Clerk explained that the Mayor, Council, the City Manager and she were registered to attend the NCLM Conference. She requested that everyone review the events for which they had been registered and notify her of any changes as soon as possible.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Thomas W. Parker III, Mayor

Jennifer A. Tippet, City Clerk