

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
SPECIAL MEETING/
CITIZEN INPUT SESSION
FEBRUARY 7, 2017
A. B. GIBSON BUILDING
322 S. MAIN ST.
LAURINBURG, NC
6:00 P.M.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held a special meeting/Citizen Input Session on February 7, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the board room of the A. B. Gibson Building located at 322 South Main St., Laurinburg, NC with the Honorable Matthew Block, MD, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Mary Jo Adams, Curtis B. Leak, Dolores A. Hammond, Andrew G. Williamson, Jr. and J. D. Willis.

Also present were Charles D. Nichols III, City Manager, and Jennifer A. Tippet, City Clerk. Leadership Team members present included: Robert Ellis, Treatment Plants Director; Harold Haywood, General Services Director; Stacey McQuage, Public Utilities Director; Tim Pierce, GIS Administrator; Darwin Williams, Police Chief; Randy Gibson, Fire Chief; Michael Mandeville, Community Development Director; Betty Galloway, Human Resources/Risk Management Director; and Josh Coble, IT Administrator.

Mayor Block called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Mayor Block gave the invocation. He then recognized elected officials and other dignitaries in attendance.

The City Manager introduced himself and then introduced the members of the Leadership Team in attendance.

The City Manager explained that a member of the City's Leadership Team would be at each table to write up the ideas and suggestions that citizens want Council to consider in the upcoming budget process. He added that the findings would be presented this evening, and then staff will compile and send out to attendees via email or regular mail. He thanked everyone for attending.

Councilmember Hammond expressed appreciation for everyone coming to the Citizen Input Session to provide important input on the upcoming budget.

The City Manager briefly reviewed the budget calendar as follows:

Date	Description of Action Items
January 17, 2017	Capital Requests Due from each department
February 7 or 8, 2017	Public Input Session
February 1, 2017 - February 28, 2017	Council Retreat held during month to set budget priorities (set by Council)
March 17, 2017	Operating Budget Requests Due from departments
March 21, 2017	Council receives update of CIP
March 20, 2017 - March 31, 2017	Operating Budget Discussion Meetings with Depts.
April 3, 2017	Budget working draft due to City Manger
April 18, 2017	Council Preview of Budget Working Draft
April 4, 2017 - May 15, 2017	Staff Meetings for Budget Revisions
May 16, 2017	Official presentation of Manager's recommended budget to Council
May 17, 2017 - June 20, 2017	Council budget work sessions as directed
May 16, 2017	Set public hearing for FY 18 budget for June council meeting
June 20, 2017	Hold public hearing on budget
June 20, 2017	Budget and fee schedule adoption (or no later than July 1)
July 1, 2017	Operating and capital budgets loaded and active in Munis
July 1, 2017	Adopted budget document delivered to departments
July 8, 2017	Adopted budget posted on website

Following group discussions, the following results were presented:

RANKING	ITEM/DESCRIPTION
Table 1	
1	Substation/feasibility of adding more police officers "Consultant"
2	Feasibility - youth center
3	Beautification/litter
Table 2	
1	Crime
2	Funding education. Train youth for industries and more skilled jobs. Partner with school system. Make them more ready for workforce. Technology, work keys
3	Recreation
4	Attract businesses (north side)
5	Street lighting
6	Litter. Need more education, more pick up. Push Adopt-A-Street.
7	Team building training for leaders
8	Maintain and restore business district

Table 3	
1	Complete City/County broadband initiative
2	Expand clean-up/litter effort
3	Protect public utilities/water supply
4	Resources for youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring • Youth City Council • Expand Police/Fire Explorer programs • Partnerships with churches
5	Keep community more informed
6	Flooding in storm drain
7	Better way to notify City of issues
8	Cooperation/partnership of City/County
9	Civility of local government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Training
Table 4	
1	Greenways and bikeways
2	Rec/youth center
3	Downtown improvements
4	Increase police force – community relations
5	Youth activities/Programs. Get youth off the street.
6	Abandoned residences/businesses
7	Litter
Table 5	
1	Litter/refresh Adopt-A-Street
2	Abbott Building/Appearances
3	More money for more employees
	Tree/limb removal
	Vacant houses – Code enforcement
	Inoperable vehicles
	Rights-of-way in Laurin Lakes were torn up when annexed
	Draining problem in Laurin Lakes
	Neighborhood Watch
	Have everyone work together
	Get rid of the negativity in Laurinburg
Table 6	
1	More of a law enforcement presence in the business areas. Example-downtown and shopping centers. (foot patrols)
2	Expansion of City fiber network to offer businesses in city and other users

3	Surveillance cameras in City (Downtown District) (High risk/crime areas) (Shopping centers)
4	Community Development – Recruitment of entertainment and retail venues. (Possible incentives) (City as a whole and downtown)
5	Broadening beautification efforts – streets and properties
6	Safe Exchange Zone at Police Department
7	Presentation of accomplishments from this meeting 1 year later for review and evaluation
Table 7 (Items not ranked)	
	Crimestoppers (implement with 911 system)
	Officer on foot downtown during business hours (police presence)
	Live LEADS software program \$2,000 – pawn shops, scrapyards (cut manhours)
	Increase employment opportunities (economic development)
	Recreation – afterschool programs, etc.
	Downtown revitalization
	Increased neighborhood patrol (more officers)
	Fence at Water Treatment Plant
	Substation (power)
	Police substations in high crime areas
	Beautification (trash pickup) April 3-8 – Say No to Litter (Chamber supported) (need more programs likes this)
	Sidewalks in southern part of town
	Water/sewer rate decrease
Table 8	
1	City/County communication with citizens. Civility (no personal attacks). Cooperation with each other. Education on roles/responsibilities of governmental bodies and members (services offered)
2	New City Hall. Sell idea to community. PD needs more space, updated. Reiterate what has been done.
3	Cooperation of Fire Departments – City/County
4	Old skating rink – recreation center (private property) (County)
5	Address crime rate (how to?) Look into law enforcement consolidation.
6	Street paving (more)
7	More sidewalks (pedestrian safety)
Table 9 (Items not ranked)	
	Civility

	More police protection/property crimes
	Litter
	Zoning issue/disrepair of homes and businesses
	Appearance
	Research outside grants – COG
	Juvenile Crimes – public/private partnership
Table 10	
1	Civility – No cost Communication and coordination
2	City Hall – Investigate and exhaust alternatives to building a new site
3	Community and recreation centers. Build where it will impact the greatest number of people.
4	Crime and Safety A. Increase salaries of officers to be competitive and retain qualified police staff B. Increase number of officers.
5	Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road repair • Electric grid • Sidewalks • Litter
Table 11	
	Do something for Black History Month
	Get involved with youth. Do something for our youth.

Mayor Block explained that in reference to a comment from one (1) of the participants, Council will have follow-up from this input at next year's Citizen Budget Input Session. He added that the issues are pretty much the same every year – crime, recreation, beautification, business recruitment and employment. He further added that what he heard from the citizens tonight was that they wanted more from the City and for the City to be more involved in putting order into the City's beautification work, more law and order, and more recreation.

Mrs. Lynne Mabry explained that one (1) of the main issues listed was civility.

Mr. Devonte Alford explained that the crime issue is broader than just sending police into neighborhoods, and that consideration should be given to what to do with individuals when they are introduced into the criminal justice system.

An unidentified female praised Mrs. Annie Cureton and Councilmember Adams for their guidance while she was in the school system.

Mr. Earl Brown explained that he formerly worked at the Laurinburg Housing Authority's Youth Center in Washington Park, and that he felt that program should be reopened.

The City Manager explained that the results would be compiled and will be sent to attendees. He added that if citizens had any other ideas to email him at cnichols@laurinburg.org or call him at 276-8324.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Matthew Block, MD, Mayor

Jennifer A. Tippett, City Clerk