

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 22, 2019
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
303 WEST CHURCH ST.
7:00 p.m.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held its regular meeting on Tuesday, January 22, 2019 in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building at 7:00 p.m. with the Honorable Matthew Block, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Mary Jo Adams, Mary Evans, James J. Garby, Jr., Curtis B. Leak, and Andrew G. Williamson, Jr.

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

Mayor Block called the meeting to order at 6:59 p.m.

Councilmember Garby gave the Invocation and then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The City Manager explained that the agenda needed to be amended to include a closed session to consult with the attorney.

Motion was made by Councilmember Leak, seconded by Councilmember Garby, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda as amended.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mayor Block briefly reviewed public comment procedures.

Pastor Michael Edds, 1207 Blue Drive, questioned the use of \$500,000.00 in Powell Bill Funds that the City receives annually. He stated that the streets have not been paved, and questioned if there was a paving schedule. He expressed concern about crime and requested that police coverage be increased in hot spots where crime is occurring.

The City Manager explained that a paving study was conducted approximately three (3) years ago, and that the City had spent \$200,000.00 on paving the past two (2) years.

Mayor Block explained that Powell Bill expenditures are reported to the State every year and the expenditures are monitored. He added that a comprehensive study was conducted that rated each street on its overall condition. He further added that if a citizen has a concern about a particular street to notify the City.

Councilmember Leak explained that street paving is discussed every year during budget discussions, and that is when the street paving list is prioritized.

Mr. Donald Anderson, 10421 Leisure Road, expressed concern about Council's decision the previous month not to hire a crime consultant. He also expressed concern about the decay of downtown Laurinburg and the need for the City, County and citizens to work together to keep storm drains flowing to prevent flooding.

Ms. Shirley McLean, 903 Port Street, expressed concern about water and sewer problems at her home and her neighbors' homes.

Mayor Block explained that Ms. McLean contacted him and he visited her residence. He added that the sewer is bubbling back onto the street because there is so much leakage into the sewer system. He further added that Ms. McLean had a plumber come evaluate her lines, and the problem is on the City's side. He further explained that the McGirts Bridge Road Sewer Project has been funded, but the project has not started, and there would be an update on the project later in the meeting.

Mayor Block explained that he wanted to thank Mr. Anderson for his interest in City business. He added that he and Councilmembers Evans and Garby believed that a crime consultant should be hired, but the majority of Council believed that the North Carolina League of Municipalities study should be completed before considering hiring a crime consultant.

Mayor Block recognized Mrs. Terry Parker to come forward. He thanked her and the Tis the Season Group for their work downtown. He presented her with a lapel pin.

Mrs. Parker thanked Council for its financial support and for the assistance received by City employees, in particular Mr. Jason Lighthall, Mr. Daniel Walters, and Mr. Michael Mandeville.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Block reviewed the Consent Agenda:

- a) Consider minutes of September 18, 2018 regular meeting; September 27, 2018 special meeting/Town Hall Meeting; October 16, 2018 regular meeting; and November 13, 2018 regular meeting
- b) Consider Ordinance No. O-2019-01 Adopting 2018 Fire Code
- c) Approve Semi-Annual Surplus Property Sales Report
- d) Consider authorizing the City Manager to send letter to NC Department of Transportation Regional Engineer to request placement of historical marker honoring Judge J. Dickson Phillips, Jr. as requested by Dr. William Purcell

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

Ayes: Garby, Williamson, Evans, Leak, Adams

Nays: None

PUBLIC HEARING

CONSIDER ANNEXATION OF 29.90 ACRES ON OLD JOHNS ROAD

Mayor Block explained that the public hearing was to consider annexation of the site where the new elementary school was being built. He opened the public hearing.

The City Manager explained that the Scotland County School Board was requesting annexation of the property so that it would be eligible for in-city utility rates.

Ms. Shirley McLean stated that before more money is spent, the old problems should be fixed.

Mayor Block explained that the new school was not a City project and that the School System was spending the money.

Ms. Shirley Campbell inquired if this was involved with the City fixing the drainage.

Mayor Block explained that it did not have anything to do with the City fixing drainage issues.

There being no one else to speak in favor of or in opposition to the request, Mayor Block closed the public hearing.

Councilmember Evans moved to approve Ordinance No. O-2019-02 to extend the Corporate Limits of the City of Laurinburg by annexing 29.90 acre tract of land on Old Johns Road as requested by property owner. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Garby, and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Evans, Garby, Adams, Leak, Williamson

Nays: None

(Copy of Ordinance No. O-2019-02 on file in City Clerk's office)

DELEGATIONS

DR. WILLIAM MORGAN – CONCERN ABOUT ELECTRIC BILL

Dr. Bill Morgan explained that he hoped that Council had read the letter he provided, and that he would answer any questions. He further explained that a 20-year tenant had died, and he was never contacted about the past due account. He suggested that the City have a policy in place to notify everyone on the account. He added that he thought he should pay the past due amount from the first month and the fee; however the second month of the past due account should be waived.

The City Manager explained that Dr. Morgan co-signed on a utility bill for a tenant many years ago. He added that the tenant died, and past-due notices were mailed to the address of

the tenant. He further added that Dr. Morgan had turned the rental business over to his grandson. He further explained that since Dr. Morgan co-signed on the account, the delinquent amount was Dr. Morgan's responsibility. He added that Dr. Morgan was requesting that the past-due amount be waived or partially waived.

Following a brief discussion, it was consensus of Council to study Dr. Morgan's letter and to put this on the agenda for February 19, 2019.

PASTOR TONY FAIRLY

Pastor Tony Fairly explained that he wanted to show a video of a nationwide program that could minimize crime throughout the school system. (Note: Due to a technical difficulty, the video was not played.) Pastor Fairly discussed the program through Pastor Tony Evans which is used in school systems nationwide with the purpose of the program being to provide mentors to youth at risk and also to impact the families. He added that the ones who go through the program will in turn become mentors to other at risk youth. He further added that he needed Council's influence to make this program work and to get in to discuss with the Scotland County School Board.

Councilmember Evans explained that years ago, several people in the community including Police Chief Williams, Former Police Chief Robert Malloy, and others went into the lower grades to talk about drugs and bullying; however the mentor participants aged.

Councilmember Williamson stated that he applauded Pastor Fairly for his idea. He added that meeting with someone from the school system would be a way to make his entry into the schools.

Councilmember Adams suggested that Pastor Fairly talk with Dr. McCallum of the Partners In Ministry organization, with Ms. Jamie Synan of the Scotland County School System, and also to someone with the Juvenile Crime Prevention Commission.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

UPDATE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) FOR PRODUCE MARKET AREA SEWER – MCGILL ASSOCIATES

Mr. David Honeycutt of McGill Associates provided an update on the Community Development Block Grant-Infrastructure (CDBG-I) Project for Produce Market Area Sewer Improvements with highlights as follows:

- Applied for grant in 2017.
- Awarded \$2 million grant in 2018 to fix sewer issues in the Produce Market Road area.
- First major step was submitting the engineering report which was submitted in October, 2018. Approval of that report is on hold with the Department of Environmental Quality State (DEQ) because of other ongoing work, but hopefully would be approved soon.

- Environmental work was being conducted and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) Report must be completed, and work was in progress on that report. Different agencies must be contacted to complete the FONSI Report, and with the federal government shutdown, responses have been delayed. Hopefully the report will be completed in March, 2019.
- Have discussed with DEQ and until the federal agencies respond, completion of the report is on hold.
- Since this is a federal grant program, many steps must be completed in the appropriate order to hold the funding in place. If the City moved forward with the project without completing the steps in order, it would be in jeopardy of losing the funds because the City would have done so without having the project properly assessed according to the grant program.
- Anticipate construction beginning in the fall of 2019.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mr. Honeycutt explained that the sewer pipes in the project area are vitrified clay pipes, are aging and have a significant number of joints. As the piping has aged, leaks have occurred, roots have intruded into the pipe system and caused clogging. This allows more water to enter the sewer system than the pump station can handle.

Mayor Block stated that there is a public health issue with sewage flowing down the streets, and inquired if anything could be done to help the citizens.

The City Manager explained that the City's usual sewer engineer is Willis Engineering, and that McGill was assisting the City with this particular grant project.

Mr. Stacey McQuage, Public Utilities Director, explained that during the month of December, the gravity and the pump systems were full and pumping all that they could pump. He added that at the beginning of January, 2019, the gravity system's flow went down, so a bypass was installed in the force main and pump was brought in. As of January 11, 2019, the whole system was back to normal with no issues. He added that staff cleaned all of the manholes. He further added that all of the work staff completed was a temporary fix for the issues in the area.

Discussion ensued concerning Ms. McLean's continued sewer and water problems. The City Manager explained that staff checked the pressure on the water lines on Port Street today. He added that there was 80 pounds per square inch (psi) on the line in front of her house at the street, and the average throughout the City is 70-75 psi.

Mr. McQuage stated that staff would check the water lines on the City side again this week.

Councilmember Leak explained that the City has been trying to address the sewer issues in the Produce Market area for some time, and that with the grant that has been awarded, the issues can now be fixed; however, it will take some time.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mr. Honeycutt explained that there was nothing that elected officials could do to expedite the grant process.

Upon questions by Councilmember Garby, Mr. Honeycutt explained that the surveying and design of the project could not begin yet until the funds have been released by the governing agency. He added that if those activities began before approved, the grant funds could be pulled from the City. He further added that there are several state agencies involved in the grant process; however, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is the primary state agency.

Mayor Block explained that the sewer issues are an unfortunate situation that has been building and was exasperated by historic flooding. He added that the City has taken some interim steps to alleviate the problems until the project can be done.

SCOTLAND COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND GRANT PHASE 2 BID AWARD

The City Manager explained that McGill Associates was assisting the City with the Industrial Development Fund (IDF) grant for the Scotland County Industrial Park.

Mr. Matt Jones of McGill Associates explained that the bid opening for Phase 2, utilities and roadway, of the incubator project was held. He added that three (3) bids were opened and that the low bidder exceeded the amount of IDF funds available; therefore, negotiations with the low bidder removed some of the sewer line to reduce the cost by \$139,000.00. He further added there were some grant funds remaining so that as construction moves forward, it can be decided where that money is spent.

The City Manager explained that the City received two (2) IDF grants – a \$708,000.00 grant for sewer and access road for the property the City owns off Stewartsville Road, and this \$1.5 million grant for the Scotland County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) for improvements at the Incubator Park.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mr. Jones explained that reduction of the sewer line would not impact the project, since the final building could be connected just before it was occupied. He added that the existing building to the north could be served sewer by a small grinder pump station in the future; therefore it does not prohibit the building from being used.

The City Manager explained that the project grew after submission of the grant application as it was originally sewer and road for the Incubator Park. The EDC purchased property on the other side of the railroad track along US Highway 501, and so the utilities to that property were included in the grant. He further added that Mr. Ward was hoping if an industry wanted the site on US Highway 501, then utilities could be added with other funding available.

Motion was made by Councilmember Adams, seconded by Councilmember Garby, and carried unanimously to award the bid for Scotland Industrial Development Fund Grant Phase 2 to Driggers Construction LLC in the amount of \$827,814.72 and to authorize the City Manager to execute the contract pending approval of the consulting engineer and the City Attorney.

STORM DRAINAGE ISSUES

The City Manager explained that Mr. Stacey McQuage had been working with Willis Engineers concerning the storm drainage issues to develop a priority list with cost estimates to consider during budget time.

Mr. McQuage explained that work was progressing on developing the estimated costs of storm drainage improvements so that Council could budget for repairs in the next budget.

Mayor Block suggested that to simplify the process, that two (2) of the biggest and long-standing problem areas are Cypress Drive and Isabelle Street. He added that the City has reports from Willis Engineers on each of those areas.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mr. McQuage explained that these were the only two (2) areas that already had engineering reports prepared.

Mayor Block stated that it seemed there was good justification to fix the two (2) oldest and most entrenched problem areas, and that rather than getting involved in the whole list, at least knock out these two (2). He added that perhaps three (3) engineering firms could come look at the areas and submit proposals on the best way to fix the storm drainage issues.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mr. McQuage explained that some of the smaller problem areas such as College Drive deserved fast attention. He added that staff could do some of the work in-house, and there would be small amount of design work needed. He further added that the estimated cost for repairing Isabelle Street was approximately \$1 million.

Mayor Block explained that perhaps another engineering firm could come in and find a less expensive alternative than the estimate provided by Willis Engineering.

Mr. McQuage explained that money could be added to the budget to put out bids and determine which engineers specialize in storm water improvements.

Discussion ensued concerning assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) staff on issues related to Hurricane Florence. Mr. McQuage explained that thus far staff had heard that FEMA would and also heard that FEMA would not assist.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, Mr. McQuage explained that the area behind Galilee Methodist Church was not on the tour by Senator McInnis today because the group only toured areas with standing water.

Councilmember Leak explained that the majority of the City's pump stations had been underwater and were just now drying out. He added that with the grant for Produce Market Road Area Sewer Project, now would be a good time to have an engineer look at the water flow in that whole area, from I. Ellis Johnson School and eastward.

Councilmember Garby stated that he thought that the City could afford to hire an engineer. He then asked if the funds would come out of the public enterprise funds.

The City Manager explained that anything dealing with storm water came out of the General Fund.

Councilmember Adams explained that Senator Tom McInnis, Representative Garland Pierce and County Manager Kevin Patterson planned a tour of the flooded areas of the County and City, and they invited the City officials. She added that the tour included Leith Creek and Lloyd's Barber Shop on North Main Street to see what help could be obtained for those areas. She further added that personnel from the Army Corps of Engineers participated in the tour and others from across the State. She further explained that a representative from the United Way was at the meeting after the tour and offered money for hurricane relief on private property.

Upon question by Mayor Block, it was consensus of Council to look at the two (2) problem sites, Cypress Drive and Isabelle Street, and have several engineers look at the areas and come back in time for budget to present the least expensive, most efficient way to address the problems in those areas so that these two (2) areas could be included in the budget.

Mayor Block stated that the other areas that have storm drainage issues are important also; however, Cypress Drive and Isabelle Street have been the most longstanding problems with property damage.

CONSIDER RESOLUTION APPROVING INTERMEDIATE TRACK AGREEMENT BETWEEN LAURINBURG-MAXTON AIRPORT COMMISSION, THE CITY OF LAURINBURG, THE TOWN OF MAXTON, SCOTLAND COUNTY, AND MOUNTAIRE FARMS, INC.

The City Manager explained that Resolution No. R-2019-01 approved an Intermediate Track Agreement between Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission, the City of Laurinburg, the Town of Maxton, Scotland County, and Mountaire Farms Inc. and authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk to execute said Intermediate Track Agreement.

Councilmember Evans moved to approve Resolution No. R-2019-01 approving Intermediate Track Agreement between Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission, the City of Laurinburg, the Town of Maxton, Scotland County, and Mountaire Farms Inc. and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute said Intermediate Track Agreement. Councilmember Adams seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Evans, Adams, Williamson, Leak, Garby
Nays: None
(Resolution No. R-2019-01 on file in City Clerk's office)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Mr. Michael Mandeville, Community Development Director, explained that he talked with Mr. Charles West, one of the property owners involved with the Parking Project, to determine the price that Mr. West would accept for his property. Mr. West would like \$20,000.00 plus payment of the lien on his property, which is another \$3,501.76, for a total of \$23,501.76. He

added that the tax values were redone January 1, 2019, so the tax value of Mr. West's property went up a small amount to \$16,120.00; therefore the difference between the tax value and what Mr. West wants for his property is \$7,000.00.

The City Manager explained that the City Attorney could have the paperwork ready this week.

The City Attorney explained that before preparing the paperwork, he needed to know the identity of the third party holding the lien on the property. He added that it was unsecured debt.

Councilmember Garby explained that the original agreement was to pay the tax value to the property owners. He asked what would happen if Council agreed to pay Mr. West more than the tax value?

Mr. Mandeville explained that two (2) out of the four (4) property owners have signed the purchase agreements. He added that one (1) property owner will execute the purchase agreement once all of the other property owners have done so. He further added that one (1) way to make it fair to everyone would be to pay all of the property owners the same percentage over tax value as is paid to Mr. West.

Following a brief discussion, motion was made by Councilmember Williamson, seconded by Councilmember Garby, and unanimously carried that once Mr. West has signed the Offer to Purchase at the price of \$23,501.76, the other property owners will be paid the same pro rata increase above tax value that Mr. West was paid.

DISCUSSION OF REGULATIONS CONCERNING BILLIARDS AND ALCOHOL

The City Manager explained that the past several months, the City Ordinance prohibiting the serving of alcohol where billiards are played has been discussed. He added that staff has discussed the matter with the City Attorney and also inquired on one (1) of the University of North Carolina School of Government's listserves, with the general consensus being that the ordinance was out of date.

Following a brief discussion, motion was made by Councilmember Garby, seconded by Councilmember Williamson, and unanimously carried for staff to provide an ordinance at the next meeting to remove this prohibition from the City Code.

The City Manager requested that Items 13, Update and Discussion of the Situation with the State Bank Building, and 14, Consideration of a "Boarded Windows" Ordinance for Historic Downtown District, be combined.

UPDATE AND DISCUSSION OF THE SITUATION WITH THE STATE BANK BUILDING AND CONSIDERATION OF A "BOARDED WINDOWS" ORDINANCE FOR HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

The City Manager explained that staff met with the City Attorney to drafting an ordinance to address issues with downtown buildings including the State Bank Building. He added that staff wanted direction from Council.

Mr. Mandeville explained that he, Mr. Daniel Walters, Downtown Coordinator, Mr. Mac McInnis, Planner and Code Enforcement Officer, and the City Manager met with the City Attorney to discuss concerns about the condition of the State Bank and other buildings downtown.

The City Manager explained that the Downtown Advisory Committee (DAC) has a meeting scheduled in three (3) weeks to readdress the Committee's proposed ordinance concerning building conditions downtown. He added that he and staff met with the City Attorney to develop a draft ordinance so that any window or door downtown could not be boarded up.

Upon question by Mayor Block, the City Attorney explained that any building downtown that had a space for a window could not be boarded up, and that there would be no grandfathering of existing boarded up windows.

Mayor Block explained that Council was proposing a "no boarded windows" ordinance in the historic downtown area that would not be City-wide.

Councilmember Garby explained that the proposal would hold downtown property owners accountable, but that the City did not want to nit-pick.

Mr. Jay Todd, Chairman of the Downtown Advisory Committee (DAC), explained that the Committee agreed with Council that something needed to be done about the buildings downtown, and that property needed to be maintained. He added that the purpose of the March 5, 2019 meeting is to include the City's Code Enforcement Officer and others who would be impacted by a stricter ordinance. He further added that one (1) of the concerns raised about some buildings in the downtown is that they have been neglected for some time, and the property owners may not have the resources to address the issues. He further explained that the DAC had been discussing an ordinance from the City of Hendersonville that had much stricter guidelines for downtown buildings. He added that this ordinance would also be discussed at the March 5, 2019 DAC meeting.

The City Attorney explained that a time period for a comprehensive ordinance would probably need to have time for public input. He added that an ordinance similar to the one in Hendersonville was very detailed and could become burdensome for Mr. McInnis as the Code Enforcement Officer. He further explained that the proposal concerning boarded windows would fall under a General Statute dealing with commercial structures and would be enforced under the general nuisance provisions in the Code.

Further discussion ensued concerning the proposal for a "no boarded windows" ordinance and the more comprehensive ordinance being discussed by the DAC including enforcement provisions.

Upon question by Mayor Block, the City Attorney explained that if a property owner does not remedy the situation causing the nuisance, the City would file a lawsuit, get a court order. It could be a fine associated with it.

Following further discussion, the City Manager explained that the DAC would review the proposed ordinance concerning “no boarded windows” and the ordinance would be on the February agenda for Council’s consideration.

DISCUSSION ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The City Manager explained that Mr. Mark Ward, President of the Scotland County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) was present to respond to questions raised by Mayor Block.

Mayor Block explained that he requested this item be included on the agenda and it was not to be critical or controversial; however, he and the majority of Council were not aware that the EDC was purchasing two (2) buildings downtown. He added that as a matter of process and courtesy that Council and the Mayor be involved when purchasing buildings downtown.

Councilmember Williamson explained that the EDC was informed that an offer would be made by the EDC to consider purchasing the two (2) buildings (former Harris Furniture building and former Creech Hardware building) at its December 4, 2018 meeting, and then Mr. Ward appeared at the next Council meeting on December 11, 2018, and informed Council and the Mayor.

Mr. Ward explained that minutes of the EDC are made available to Council once they are approved.

Mayor Block explained that he wanted to ensure that when big projects are going on with the EDC that Council and he were made aware.

Councilmember Leak explained that the EDC meetings are open to the public except when it goes into closed session.

Councilmember Adams requested that Mr. Ward provide a summary of his interview on WLNC Radio earlier in the day.

Mr. Ward explained that the roof on the former Harris Furniture building should be completed by Friday, January 25, 2019. He added that the City graciously allowed him to close part of Roper Street to get the roof replacement completed. He further added that cleaning up and interior work would also begin this week. He further explained that University of North Carolina-Greensboro had agreed to work on interior and exterior designs, which would be presented to the City and Scotland County.

Mayor Block stated that his other concern regarding the EDC was whether the City should consider changing its representation on the EDC Board since Councilmember Leak has served on the Board since its inception in 2007.

Mr. Ward explained that according to the EDC by-laws, City Council determines the City's representation on the board, and there are no term limits for board members.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Councilmember Leak stated that he would let Council know if he wanted to resign from the EDC board.

Councilmember Leak explained that the meetings are held on the first Tuesday at 3:00 p.m. at the Small Business Innovation Center after the Scotland County Commissioners' meeting.

Councilmember Evans expressed interest in learning more about the EDC, and Councilmember Leak explained that the meetings are open and she can attend.

UPDATE AND DISCUSSION OF SITUATION WITH THE STATE BANK BUILDING

The City Attorney explained that the concerns express by Council and citizens about the State Bank Building will be addressed by the ordinance previously discussed to be on the agenda in February, 2019.

UPDATE ON LAW ENFORCEMENT – POLICE CHIEF WILLIAMS

Police Chief Darwin Williams explained that the murders in the City bothered him as he knew the victims, the victims' families and usually the accused.

He explained that some of the law enforcement activities that he could discuss include teaming up with the Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms Agency (ATF), North Carolina Alcohol Enforcement Agency (ALE), the Highway Patrol and the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) on July 14, 2018 for a covert operation to deal with stores selling illegal spice. This operation resulted in charges to 34 individuals for selling illegal spice, and in all 139 charges that night including firearms charges, drug charges, reckless driving, operating vehicle without a license, and others. He added that another operation was Operation Fed Up in April 2018 which occurred in the Laurinburg Housing Authority areas to connect with citizens in those areas. He further added that he met with Ms. Karen Laviner, Executive Director of the Laurinburg Housing Authority (LHA), to discuss making the areas safer. LHA would like to purchase some Tsunami cameras; however, since LHA is now Section 8, the ability to tap into federal funding has been limited. The latest operation was Winter Fest which occurred January 19, 2019. This operation put two (2) officers in each car to determine who was moving around the City at night.

Chief Williams explained that he had was leaving the decision on hiring a crime consultant up to Council. He added that he would like to have a crime analyst position which could be as a consultant or a part-time position. He added that a crime analyst would analyze all of the crime data and then make predictions of when and where crime would most likely occur.

Chief Williams explained that Laurinburg is not in the top ten most dangerous cities in North Carolina. He reviewed statistics from the SBI for 2017 which showed that out of 10 categories of crime, the City had reductions in seven (7). He requested that Council seriously consider

adding a crime analyst to his arsenal. He added that more Tsunami cameras would be very beneficial.

Upon question by Councilmember Williamson, Chief Williams explained that the crime analyst could be a contract position.

Discussion ensued concerning the monthly Police Department report. Mayor Block suggested that the report should include activities from the same month of the prior year.

Councilmember Garby suggested that the report have a year to date total and the same month of the prior year.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Chief Williams explained that he would check on the number of speeding tickets issued; however, his officers were busy watching the shopping centers due to the holidays, and also that in order to get allies among the community, sometimes warning tickets are issued depending upon the situation.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Chief Williams explained that he would provide to Council the number of police officers certified on radar and exactly how many radar devices the department has.

Mayor Block discussed the use of GPS devices by the Scotland County Sheriff's Department. He added that the Sheriff indicated that the GPS provides not only location of cars but idling time of the vehicle when officers leave the cars running.

Following further discussion, Chief Williams explained that he would look into the GPS devices.

Upon questions by Councilmember Evans and Mayor Block, Chief Williams explained that shoplifting was a misdemeanor. He added that if the business wants to prosecute the shoplifter and the value of the shoplifted items is \$1,000.00 or greater, then it is a felony.

Mayor Block suggested that the Mayor and Council ride along with the Police Department.

The City Manager explained that the City Attorney would need to check on the liability issues of a ride-along.

CONSIDER AMENDING FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM

The City Manager explained that the Downtown Advisory Committee (DAC) made recommendations for amending the City's Façade Grant Program including extending the program for 12 months and changing some of the grant amounts. He added that there had been good response to the program.

Upon question by Councilmember Garby, the City Manager explained that the Façade Grant is for exterior improvements to downtown buildings.

Upon question by Councilmember Williamson, Mr. Mandeville explained that after Hurricane Florence, staff talked with business owners about replacing damaged awnings.

Motion was made by Councilmember Garby, seconded by Councilmember Adams, and unanimously carried to approve amendments to Façade Grant Program.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND/OR COUNCILMEMBERS

Councilmember Adams provided information on services offered by the Lumber River Council of Governments.

Councilmember Adams explained that because Council required the tenants of the Laurinburg Housing Authority (LHA) to pay delinquent amounts during the LHA transition to tenant paid electric bills, she did not believe it would be fair to grant Dr. Morgan's request.

Mayor Block expressed appreciation for all of the Martin Luther King, Jr. events held over the weekend.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:31 p.m. Councilmember Adams moved to go into closed session to consult with the attorney pursuant to N.C. G.S. 143-318.11(a) (3). Councilmember Garby seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

At 10:04 p.m., Councilmember Adams moved to adjourn the closed session and resume the regular meeting. Councilmember Garby seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ABOUT FLOODING LEITH CREEK

The City Manager explained that Leith Creek is the primary drainage for historic Laurinburg. He added that the City maintains Leith Creek, but it is owned by the Army Corps of Engineers. He further added that the Army Corps of Engineers were present during Senator McInnis' tour of the areas with standing water. He further explained that it could be up to two (2) years before Leith Creek could be rehabbed. He added that it was beneficial that the Army Corps of Engineers saw that the City maintains along the banks of Leith Creek.

Councilmember Adams explained that the Debra Drive area is in a Carolina Bay. She suggested that perhaps the FEMA or state buy-out programs could be utilized.

ADJOURN

Motion was made by Councilmember Garby, seconded by Councilmember Evans, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

Matthew Block, MD, Mayor

Jennifer A. Tippett, City Clerk