

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 17, 2006
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
7:00 P.M.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held its regular monthly meeting January 17, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the council room of the Municipal Building with the Honorable Ann B. Slaughter, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Rembert DeBerry, Lisa D. Griswold, Curtis B. Leak, Herbert M. Rainer, Jr. and Thomas W. Parker, III.

Also present were: Craig F. Honeycutt, City Manager, Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk, and Charles L. Hicks, Jr., Assistant City Attorney.

Councilmember Leak gave the invocation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Councilmember Leak, seconded by Councilmember DeBerry, and unanimously carried to approve the proposed minutes of the regular meeting held December 20, 2005.

SCOTLAND COUNTY IMAGINATION PLACE

The Mayor explained that Mrs. Jan Schmidt, with the Scotland County Imagination Place has requested to be on our agenda with a request for an allocation from the City of \$2,000.00 to be used as seed money for the Scotland County Imagination Place. She stated that Mrs. Schmidt made a presentation at our November City Council meeting and that, at that time, the City Council had authorized the Mayor to send a letter of support to the organization.

Jan Schmidt appeared before Council and stated that she would like to review the three purposes of the Scotland County Imagination Place which are: an economic catalyst for downtown, education enrichment for our citizens (especially youth), and a community center. She then stated that this project should have a huge impact on the economic well being of the city and county and a great impact on the quality of life for the citizens. She explained that SCIP would certainly appreciate a \$2,000.00 grant. She further explained that this money would help to buy building demonstration projects which could be taken to festivals, schools and other places to demonstrate the different activities that SCIP could do. Ms. Schmidt then explained that she had met with Secretary Lisbeth Evans, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources and other museum folks around the state and all agree that it is important that SCIP have a partnership with the Council as well as with the Scotland County Board of Commissioners.

Councilmember Leak asked if the request was a one time only and how this project would continue with funding. Ms. Schmidt stated that she could not guarantee that SCIP would not request additional funding in the future. She then stated that other funding would come from the people that would visit the Imagination Place, grants, foundations, help from the state and the Department of Cultural Resources, others that deal in sciences and museums, and through sponsorships of corporations.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, Ms. Schmidt stated that she has also taken a request to the County but that because it would be based in Laurinburg has not asked other municipalities within the county.

Upon question by Councilmember Parker, Ms. Schmidt stated that SCIP has received donations from groups and individuals. She explained that they have just started funding requests.

Councilmember Parker stated that this was a good concept and would help to support the downtown area, but as a

Councilmember, he has tried to stay away from funding nonprofit organizations. He further stated that if there were any in-kind services that the City could offer, he would be glad to consider that avenue.

Ms. Schmidt stated that SCIP considers itself a quasi-private or maybe quasi-public organization, but not an individual, independent nonprofit organization. She explained that SCIP really thinks of itself as a partnership with the city and the county.

Upon further discussion, the City Manager asked if Council would like staff to pursue researching a public private partnership agreement.

There was consensus that the City Manager would research a public private partnership agreement. There was no further action on this request.

REQUEST TO REZONE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 14961 REA MAGNET ROAD

The City Manager explained that Mr. Roland C. Bowyer, III is requesting that property located at 14961 Rea Magnet Rd. be rezoned from Residential-20 to General Business-Conditional Use District. Mr. Bowyer's hobby of building racing engines has grown into a full-scale business, and he wishes to continue the operation at its present location.

The Laurinburg Planning Board heard this request at its January 10, 2006 regular meeting and unanimously recommends approval of this request.

Motion was made by Councilmember Griswold, seconded by Councilmember Parker, and unanimously carried to set a public hearing for Tuesday, February 21, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers of the Municipal Building to consider a request to rezone from Residential-20 to General Business-Conditional Use District property located at 14961 Rea Magnet Road.

RESOLUTION TO DECLARE CERTAIN ITEMS AS SURPLUS PROPERTY

The City Manager explained that the City has six (6) large map files that are no longer needed. All maps that were stored in these map files have been scanned electronically and attached to our GIS system. These map files were purchased as military surplus approximately 30 years ago. He also explained that parts of the 1983 Ford Truck (which is also proposed as surplus property) were used towards the purchase of a new bucket truck. He stated that the remaining parts were purchased by Hydraulic Specialist, Inc. He then stated that this process kept the city from incurring additional costs of transporting parts back to Public Works that were no longer needed.

Councilmember Parker moved for the adoption of Resolution No. R-2006-01 which declares certain items as surplus property. Councilmember Griswold seconded the motion and it was adopted by the following vote:

Ayes: Parker, Rainer, Griswold, Leak, DeBerry

Nays: None

(Resolution No. R-2006-01 on file in the City Clerk's Office)

MID-YEAR FINANCIAL REPORT

The City Manager explained that in preparing the City's 10-year plan and in getting ready to begin work on the 06-07 Fiscal Year Budget, staff wanted Council to be aware of the City's current financial situation at the mid-year. He further explained that the City is on track with current revenue and expenditure projections and should finish the year in excellent shape.

UPDATE ON TELECOMMUNICATIIONS

In connection with the proposed partnership to offer broadband service, the City Manager explained that in October 2005, working with Southeastern Utility Development (SUD), had conducted a test and survey of the 900 MHz

spectrum in the City of Laurinburg. He further explained that SUD found spectrum interference with some paging frequencies which adversely affected the proposed broadband system. He stated that an experimental frequency band filter from Motorola was placed onto the signal on individual residences to determine if adding a filter would help eliminate the interference. The filter did work but the cost is \$390.00 per filter. He also explained that SUD is trying to locate where the major problems are because the interference is not system wide and therefore not everyone would need a filter. He then explained that, depending upon the number of filters that the City would have to provide, it might be cost prohibitive (i.e. the expense would not be recoverable within the \$24.95 that the City was anticipating as the charge for broadband service). He then stated that the City and SUD are in the process of trying to work with Motorola to find different filters and suppliers in order to bring the cost down. He said that we are now waiting to determine where the major problems are and where the filters would be needed as well as trying to find a less expensive supplier in order to keep the cost to the citizens as low as possible.

Harold Smith stated that everything the City Manager had discussed concerns residential broadband wireless. He explained that industrial service could be provided if Council so desired.

The City Manager explained that broadband service would be a big benefit for the City's citizens and trying to locate the problems with the paging and broadband signal and identifying less expensive filters would be a cost savings to the citizens. He stated that the industrial and the large users of broadband are still being pursued, but right now, the issue is trying to make it affordable so that it can be offered to all of the City's residents.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF A FINANCING AGREEMENT AND TO ALSO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AGREEMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF PURCHASING THE LAUREL HILL WATER SYSTEM

The City Manager explained that, since September, the City has been working with the Laurel Hill Water Company/Z.V. Pate, Inc. on the possible purchase of its water system since September. He stated that the system has approximately 488 customers and an average use of about 29.28 million gallons annually. He also stated that the proposed purchase price is \$225,000.00, payable over four years at 0% interest. He further explained that to meet the Local Government Commission requirements, the City held a public hearing last month on the proposed debt financing. He then stated that at that time there was no comment either for or against the proposed debt financing. In order to file our application with the LGC for approval, Council needs to pass a resolution.

He then explained that, in addition to a proposed resolution, also attached is a proposed agreement for the purchase of the Laurel Hill Water System that has been worked on with Staff, our City Attorney, and Laurel Hill Water Company/Z.V. Pate, Inc. He then asked that Council authorize the Mayor to enter into an agreement for purchase.

The City Manager explained that there are still some minor changes that are in the process of being worked out with respect to the agreement.

The Assistant City Attorney stated that he had spoken with the attorney for the Laurel Hill Water Company and there are a couple of issues that need minor changes. One issue is whether the City will receive the deposits that the existing customers have made and the effective date of the contract. He also stated that the purchase price is payable over what will be four fiscal years for the City but will be three calendar years because the first payment will be upon transfer and then three annual payments thereafter.

Councilmember Parker moved for the adoption of Resolution No. R-2006-02 which authorizes the filing of an application for a financing agreement authorized by General Statute 160A-20 and authorize the Mayor to execute agreement subject to City Attorney approval for the purchase of the Laurel Hill Water System. Councilmember Leak seconded the motion, and it was adopted by the following vote:

Ayes: Parker, DeBerry, Leak, Griswold, Rainer

Nays: None

(Resolution No. R-2006-02 on file in the City Clerk's Office)

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE NORTH CAROLINA HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE-OLD SCOTLAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

The City Manager informed Council that, for clarity, the Assistant City Attorney had prepared a revised resolution that is slightly different from the one in the agenda packet.

He then explained that the City has been contacted by the North Carolina Historic Preservation Commission about the City's desire to demolish the Old Scotland Memorial Hospital. He further explained that in order to satisfy its concerns and to allow them to comment on the proposed demolition, the City is required to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office to look at the possible historical significance that the site may hold.

He then explained that any time funding is received from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Department that the Environment Protection Agency requires that the State Historic Commission be contacted.

He then stated that the resolution states that regardless of the possible "historical significance" of the hospital, the City still sees the greater good for the community by the demolition of the old hospital structures and requests that the project not be delayed.

The Assistant City Attorney explained that it is his understanding that what the Commission is really looking for are pictures and documentation of the structure to go into the state's archives.

Councilmember Parker moved for the adoption of Resolution No. R-2006-03, as revised by the City Attorney, which authorizes the Mayor to enter into an agreement with the North Carolina Historic Preservation Office regarding the proposed demolition of the old Scotland Memorial Hospital. Councilmember Rainer seconded the motion and it was adopted by the following vote:

Ayes: Parker, Rainer, Griswold, Leak, DeBerry

Nays: None

(Resolution No. R-2006-03 on file in the City Clerk's Office)

TEN-YEAR PLAN AND MINI-RETREAT UPDATE; SETTING OF ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT DAY

The City Manager explained that Council met on January 6 to review the input from the City Council workshop on October 11, 2005; the two public input sessions on November 1st and 3rd, and input from the Management Team. The Council at that time listed priorities to place within the 10-year plan, and Council has a draft of those priorities.

He stated that now the City Council needs plan for its annual retreat. He then stated that in order to allow appropriate time within which to get all of our information ready, the suggestion would be to begin looking at a date after March 18 to have the retreat.

It was a consensus that the annual planning retreat be held Friday, March 24, 2006 beginning at 1:00 p.m. and continuing until conclusion.

Mayor Slaughter asked if Council would like the City Attorney to attend the annual planning retreat.

There was consensus among Councilmembers that the City Attorney did not need to be present.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

The City Manager stated that Rice-Williams, the City's cable franchise renewal consultants, would be conducting a random telephone survey of the City's local cable customers during the week of January 19-27. The survey is part of the cable refranchising process.

He also informed Council that an initial meeting with Scotland County representatives to discuss the consolidation of the City and County GIS systems would be held tomorrow morning (January 18, 2006). He stated that an agreement may be brought before Council in the next sixty days for review.

He then stated that Buxton Co., a company that specializes in recruitment of retail business, would be in town to discuss how it could help our community. Representatives from the Laurinburg Downtown Revitalization Commission, the Chamber, and Scotland County will attend the meeting.

He then informed Council that he has been asked by the Chamber to Chair the Chamber Transportation Board. He added that if Council has any questions or things it would like to see addressed with respect to transportation issues to please let him know.

RESIGNATION OF COUNCILMEMBER GRISWOLD FROM THE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL-LUMBER RIVER RURAL TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION AND APPOINTMENT OF RECOMMENDED

Mayor Slaughter explained that Councilmember Griswold has asked to resign from the Lumber River Rural Transportation Organization Transportation Advisory Council.

Councilmember Griswold explained that the meetings are held at noon in Lumberton and that it is impossible for her to attend based on her current schedule.

Motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Leak, and unanimously carried to accept Councilmember Griswold's resignation from the Lumber River Rural Transportation Organization Advisory Commission and to recommend Mayor Slaughter as the municipal appointee.

FORT BRAGG/POPE AIR FORCE BASE REGIONAL LAND USE ADVISORY COMMISSION

Mayor Slaughter stated that Mr. Bill Peele has been serving as the voting delegate to RLUAC since the departure of the previous City Manager. She then stated that the previous interim manager (Dee Hammond) was serving as the alternate. She concluded by stating now that a new manager is on board, her recommendation is that he be appointed as the voting member and Bill Peele as the alternate to serve on this commission.

Motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Rainer, and unanimously carried to appoint Craig Honeycutt, City Manager, as the voting member to RLUAC and to appoint Bill Peele as the alternate member on the commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no one present to speak during the Public Comment Period.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember DeBerry, seconded by Councilmember Parker, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Ann B. Slaughter, Mayor

Dolores A. Hammond, CMC, City Clerk