

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 18, 2007
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
6:00 P.M.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg reconvened its regular meeting held on August 21, 2007, which had been recessed until September 18, 2007 in the council room of the Municipal Building with the Honorable Ann B. Slaughter, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Rembert DeBerry, Amanda B. Faulk, Curtis B. Leak, Thomas W. Parker, and Herbert M. Rainer.

Mayor Slaughter called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Councilmember DeBerry gave the invocation.

COUNCIL RETREAT DISCUSSION

Mr. Dick McMahon appeared before Council to explain that he was present to facilitate discussion of Council's upcoming retreat. He explained that his role is to be an independent observer and occasionally recommend processes and not to get in the midst of Council's discussions. However, he will intervene to facilitate communications. Mr. McMahon cited several examples of situations where he might intervene in the discussion. Mr. McMahon then addressed the list of proposed agenda items suggested by the City Manager and the Management Team.

1. Review of Roles and Expectations.

Following discussion, it was consensus of Council to include a review of Roles and Expectations and to include Roles and Expectations of the Management Team. Additionally, it was consensus that no more than 45 minutes be spent discussing the Roles and Expectations. Some of the concerns expressed about roles and expectations included the following:

a. Councilmember Parker explained that he felt discussing the roles and expectations was important because everyone needs to know and understand what their roles are. He added that Council should set policy, hold people accountable and not try to micromanage.

b. The City Manager explained that the current Roles and Expectations do not include the Management Team. The Management Team needs to know what Council's expectations are of them such as for meetings and sharing information.

c. Councilmember Parker stated that an example of what Council expects from the Management Team is that the approved budget be followed. He cited the over-expenditure in the Fire Department budget which was not known about until Council had to approve a budget amendment. He added that if Council and the Management Team communicated better, there would be fewer surprises such as this.

d. Councilmember Leak requested information concerning censorship of a councilmember. Mr. McMahon is to check with his colleagues at the Institute of Government to obtain said information.

e. The City Manager explained he has felt that there has not been full trust between Council and himself and staff, such as with personnel issues and budgetary issues. He further explained that it is important that Council, the City Manager and staff be on the same page and work together as a team.

f. The City Manager discussed the possibility of having an agenda meeting to go over the agenda before the council meeting. Any questions or concerns that Council had regarding agenda items could be discussed and any further information that Council needed could be researched and provided. He further explained that he and the City

Clerk set the agenda. Councilmember Parker stated that the Mayor should be a part of planning the agenda. Mayor Slaughter stated that if any council member wanted something on the agenda to let her know, and she will let the City Manager know his/her interests.

2. Short-term Goals and Objectives.

a. *Merit Pay.* Mayor Slaughter stated that she has been told that merit pay is one issue that Council has problems with and wants to discuss.

b. *Fire Chief.* Mr. McMahon explained that it needs to be discussed whether to make the Fire Chief position permanent and full-time. Councilmember Leak requested information on responsibilities and fire certifications.

c. *Revenue.* The City Manager explained that the lack of revenue and options for creating revenue need to be discussed.

d. *Wireless Issues.* The City Manager explained that Council will be provided with updated revenue and expenditure figures.

Councilmember Leak stated that Southeastern Utilities Development (SUD) was supposed to provide Council with the number of installations done in Robeson County.

e. *Police Captain Position.* The City Manager explained that this position would be either a police captain or assistant chief. Chief Evans explained that he would like the police captain position to be in charge of the four patrol shifts. He further explained that currently each shift operates differently, and he would like to see all four shifts working under one command and operating the same.

Councilmembers Parker and Leak expressed concern over the cost involved with creating a new position especially considering the City's flat revenue.

f. *Need for New Fire Truck.* Following discussion, it was consensus of Council to remove discussion of a new fire truck from the retreat agenda.

g. *Replace Well.* The City Manager explained that one of the City's wells was lost in the drought. Upon request by Councilmember Leak, the City Manager stated that he would provide cost information on replacing the well.

h. *Market Furniture Building.* Councilmember Faulk explained that she had been approached by Mrs. McRae, one of the individuals affiliated with the owner of the Market Furniture Building, regarding the City's acceptance of Market Furniture Building. She added that she felt that the City Manager and Lenora Dawson, the City's intern, had explored every option for saving the building, and unfortunately, it is not economically feasible. She concluded her comments by stating it was time for Council to either accept the building or turn it down.

The City Manager stated that Councilmember Rainer wants to discuss an urban process zone and the IT Department. He added that the State has a new plan for development in urban areas.

3. Long-Term Goals and Objectives.

a. Councilmember Parker explained that with a flat revenue projection, it was important to consider looking at efficiency as a way to cut down costs.

b. *Consolidation.* The City Manager explained that service consolidation may be tied in with Councilmember Parker's concern about efficiency. He stated that Council would be provided a list of possible areas for consolidation with the County.

c. *Joint Communication.* The City Manager stated there is no report yet on joint communication.

d. *Economic Development.* The City Manager explained that with the retirement of Jim Frank Henderson, Executive Director of the Chamber, there may be further discussion with the County concerning economic development. He added that he will provide Council with a status update on the shell building.

e. *Clergy Involved with Council Meeting.* Following discussion, it was consensus of Council to remove this item from the retreat agenda.

f. *Facility Needs.* The City Manager explained that there is a lack of office space, and he would like to discuss utilization of the Richmond Community College (RCC) Speller Building. He added that the Economic Development Administration (EDA) approved the one million dollar grant for construction of the new RCC facility.

Following further discussion regarding the Fire Department, the City Manager stated that at next month's council meeting, he will provide an update on fire equipment.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember DeBerry, and seconded by Councilmember Leak to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Ann B. Slaughter, Mayor

Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk