

**CITY OF LAURINBURG  
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
303 WEST CHURCH ST., LAURINBURG, NC  
APRIL 15, 2008  
6:30 P.M.**

**Minutes**

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held a work session on April 15, 2008 beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the upstairs council room of the Municipal Building with the Honorable Matthew Block, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Rembert DeBerry, Amanda B. Faulk, Curtis B. Leak, and Thomas W. Parker, III. Councilmember Rainer was absent.

Also present were Craig F. Honeycutt, City Manager, and Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk.

Mayor Block called the meeting to order. The invocation was given by Councilmember Leak.

**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS OF PROPOSED AGENDA FOR COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD APRIL 22, 2008**

The City Manager reviewed the proposed agenda for the regularly scheduled meeting to be held April 22, 2008.

Councilmembers discussed several items on the proposed agenda. The following changes and staff direction were given by Council:

1. The proposed Beautification Committee Guidelines be revised before the next meeting to reflect a change in the composition of the committee. It was suggested that a member be appointed from each election district (District One, District Two, and the At Large District).
2. That staff review utility customer applications to be sure that if a renter is the customer that homeowner information is also included in the application.
3. Remove resolution regarding the General Fund Balance and have a member of the Local Government Commission (LGC) come and speak to Council about the LGC's requirements for minimum fund balance reserves.
4. Mayor Block volunteered to serve on Scotland County's BRAC Steering Committee (to be voted upon at the regular council meeting of April 22, 2008)

**CEMETERY**

Bill Riemer, Director of Administration and Development, appeared before Council to discuss the change in the Cemetery Ordinance that Council adopted at its March meeting.

Mr. Riemer apologized and also took some of the blame for the apparent controversy regarding the change in the Cemetery Ordinance for Hillside Memorial Park. He informed Council that many of the decorations now in the cemetery should never have been allowed to remain and should have been addressed some time ago. He explained that Hillside Memorial Park was

designed for flat permanent markers. He stated that the vases are designed specifically for the markers and just for flowers. He then stated that staff believes that this is all that should be allowed. He then explained that the previous regulations were probably enough to eliminate some of the decorations that are currently at the cemetery. He further explained that he feels that staff did not do a very good job in monitoring the placement of items at the cemetery. He further stated that staff was trying to be compassionate and, as a result, more items were placed and left in the

cemetery that should have been removed.

Mr. Riemer stated that he has been told that petitions are being circulated concerning the solar crosses in the cemetery and that the indication is that the City does not allow crosses. He explained that this is not the case as crosses are allowed as long as they are attached to a permanent marker in the cemetery. He explained that there are crosses on the permanent markers which comply with the cemetery regulations. It is only the solar crosses and other decorations that are not permanent flat markers that are not allowed.

He then provided Council with information about cemeteries in the surrounding area and noted that there is only one cemetery that does not have regulations regarding the placement of decorations in the cemetery.

A discussion ensued on the information provided by Mr. Riemer.

Mr. Riemer explained that it is the intent of staff to notify cemetery owners about the new change in policy and to provide them with a time frame for the removal of the decorations. He stated that, in reviewing the ordinance, that there does need to be some clarity on the placement of flags on cemetery plots especially on Veteran's Day.

Council suggested that holidays such as Christmas and Easter be considered when staff reviews the ordinance for recommendations to Council.

He concluded by stating that the majority of phone calls received were in favor of the change that was adopted by Council.

#### **NORTH MAIN ST./ABERDEEN ROAD IMPROVEMENTS**

The City Manager stated that staff has prepared a cost estimate for the proposed curb and gutter and sidewalk improvements from the Main Street railroad tracks to Hillside Avenue and the installation of curb and gutter and sidewalks along North Main Street/Aberdeen Road.

Mr. Riemer reminded Council that a few years ago the North Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT) put in sidewalks from the railroad tracks north to McGirt's Bridge Road. He explained that the curbing is in terrible condition and the estimate to repair that section is approximately \$477,850.00. He then explained that Aberdeen Road is a state road and that DOT does not allow sidewalks unless curb and gutter is in place along the road. He stated that to put in a sidewalk on one side of the street and curb and guttering along North Main Street where Aberdeen Road breaks off would cost over one million dollars.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mr. Riemer stated that the estimates were calculated in-house with input from DOT and several contractors.

The City Manager stated that staff was looking at asking for money from the Small Urban Fund to help with the improvements if this project were to be undertaken. He explained that the maximum amount of money from the Small Urban Fund would be around \$200,000.00.

Mr. Riemer also explained that the City would have to acquire rights-of-way and would have to pay for any rights-of-way acquired.

A discussion ensued regarding improvements to North and South Main Streets.

Councilmembers Leak and DeBerry expressed concern over the lack of lighting on Aberdeen Road at the Northside Square Shopping Center.

Councilmember DeBerry suggested that staff revisit the lighting situation on Aberdeen Road and especially at the entrance to Northside Square Shopping Center. He also stated that the shoulders of the road are in terrible shape. He

then stated that DOT could help in some way by widening the road and by putting in a turning lane in the area around Northside Square Shopping Center.

Mr. Riemer stated that he would contact DOT to look at the Aberdeen Road site regarding widening the road and putting in a turning lane at the shopping center. He will also talk to DOT about repairing the curb and gutter from the railroad tracks on Main Street to Hillside Avenue.

### **McDUFFIE BUILDING**

The City Manager stated there was not any further information since the complaint and notice of hearing.

Bill Riemer stated that Mr. McDuffie has had a hearing with the housing inspector, and the next step would be to issue an order to repair or demolish the building within ninety (90) days.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

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Matthew Block, Mayor

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Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk