

**CITY OF LAURINBURG  
COUNCIL MEETING  
JANUARY 29, 2009  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
303 WEST CHURCH ST.  
LAURINBURG, NC  
6:00 P.M.**

**Minutes**

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg reconvened its meeting from Tuesday, January 27, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 29, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in the council room 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 Herbert M. Rainer, Jr. arrived at 6:40 p.m.

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

Mayor Block reconvened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

**GRYPHON GROUP SECURITY SOLUTIONS, LLC**

Mayor Block explained that Mr. Hicks, the Assistant City Attorney, will discuss finalization of the lease agreement between the Gryphon Group Security Solutions, the Town of Maxton and the City of Laurinburg,.

Mr. Hicks explained that since the meeting held on Tuesday, January 27, 2009, Mr. Terry Garner, Mr. Nick Sojka, and he have worked on the proposed lease agreement and are very close to having it in final form. He then explained that there are a couple of issues about the wording regarding East Coast Timing Association. He stated that East Coast Timing Association has, in the past, used part of the property that Gryphon Group would be leasing. He then stated that the language is being finalized so that East Coast Timing Association can continue to use the property. He then explained that there are also a few typographical errors but that the major terms of the lease, which are the land that it covers, the period of time, the rent to be paid, and the uses to be made of the premises, have all been agreed upon. He stated that, if Council is in agreement, it could approve the proposed lease as is with final wording changes not modifying the material terms of the lease to be approved by the attorneys.

Mr. Paul Davis, Laurinburg/Maxton Airport Executive Director, explained that Gryphon Group has contacted East Coast Timing Association and that they are both in agreement to work together. He explained that the wording in the proposed lease agreement actually gives East Coast Timing Association the right to have control over a portion of the property that Gryphon Group proposes to lease, that this is objectionable to Gryphon and that this is what the attorneys are working on to correct.

Mr. John Hoover, Gryphon Group Director of Special Projects, reiterated that he had contacted East Coast Timing Association and that they are excited about working with the East Coast Timing Association. He also stated that have talked about how the Gryphon Group can help them in their exercises.

Mr. Hicks stated that the proposed Resolution No. R-2009-02 should be revised in subparagraph D to read as follows:

“That the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission has recommended that the property be leased to Gryphon Group Security Solutions, LLC under the terms and conditions set forth in the lease subject to such minor wording modifications not affecting the material terms of the lease as shall be approved by the attorneys for the parties.”

Mr. Hicks also stated that under the second paragraph that the proposed resolution should be revised to read as follows:

“That the proposed lease has been submitted to and examined by this governing body; the municipal attorney has certified that the lease in is proper form; and the lease is hereby approved subject to such minor wording modifications not affecting the material terms of the lease as shall be approved by the attorneys for the parties.”

Councilmember Parker moved for the adoption of Resolution No. R-2009-02 subject to the changes suggested by the City Attorney. Councilmember Faulk seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Parker, Leak, Faulk, DeBerry

Nays: None

(Resolution No. R-2009-02 is on file in Clerk's Office).

## **CONSIDER LIFTING HIRING FREEZE FOR THREE DEPARMENTS OF THE CITY OF LAURINBURG**

Mayor Block explained that at the Council meeting held January 27, 2009 Council requested more information regarding each department's request for vacant positions.

### ***Public Works-Equipment Mechanic II***

Mr. Harold Haywood explained that the purpose of this request is because he has had an employee retire in the garage. He then explained the overtime and potential overtime costs that have been accumulating over the last six months. He stated that the department is behind in its work load and that they would like to get caught up and stay caught up.

Following discussion, motion was made by Councilmember DeBerry and seconded by Councilmember Leak to lift the hiring freeze in order to fill a vacant position in the Public Works Department-Garage section. Councilmember Parker did not vote and according to law, failure to vote is considered an affirmative vote on the issue; therefore, the vote was 3-0. (Councilmember Rainer had not arrived at this time).

### ***Public Works - Street Department***

Stacey McQuage explained that he is really eight employees short because the ditch crew was eliminated during the budget process. He then explained that he has two permanent positions that are vacant and that he is only requesting that one position be filled. He stated that the street department has gotten behind in repairing potholes due to the wet weather and snow. He then stated that it will be lot cutting time before long, and he feels that this position needs to be filled before the spring.

Motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by CouncilmemberDeBerry, and unanimously carried to lift the hiring freeze to employ one person in the street department.

### ***Public Works – Electric Department***

Ronald Pierce explained that he has a position to fill for a Ground Technician because the employee has decided to go back to college. He then explained that it takes about five years to fully train a person to work in the City's electrical department. This is due to the intricacies and dangers of the job. He stated that the being on call is 24-7 from Tuesday to Tuesday. Filling this position would help the overload on the existing employees of being on call and would also help train someone to move up into a higher level position in the City's Electric Department.

### ***Councilmember Rainer arrived at 6:40 p.m.***

Motion was made by Councilmember DeBerry, seconded by Councilmember Faulk, and unanimously carried to lift the

hiring freeze in the Electric Department to fill a vacancy.

The Assistant City Attorney asked that he be excused from the meeting because of a prior commitment.

There was a consensus among Councilmembers that the attorney be allowed to leave the meeting.

### **CITY OF LAURINBURG ELECTRIC RATE INCREASE**

The City Manager explained that in working with the City's Electrical Consultants the proposed increase from ElectriCities is a direct pass through at an across the board increase of 3.9 percent. He stated that originally the proposed increase of 4.683 percent was calculated based upon customer use. He then explained that the City's use is low and that is why the percentage was more than 4 percent. He concluded by stating that in working with the consultants and trying to be as diligent as possible with the City's use the figure dropped to 3.9 percent.

Councilmember DeBerry expressed concern about the recent rate increase by ElectriCities given the increase that took place just eight months ago.

Councilmember Faulk stated that there should be more information provided to citizens about the WARM program (Winter Assistance for Residential eMergency fund).

Following a brief discussion, motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Faulk to increase the electric rates 3.9 percent effective February 1, 2009. The motion passed by a 4-1 vote. Councilmember DeBerry was the only dissenting vote.

### **FIREWORKS**

The City Manager stated that Scotland County will contribute one-half (\$5,000.00) the cost to provide a fireworks display on July 4, 2009. He explained that, given that Council's earlier action (at the January 27, 2009 meeting) to authorize execution of the contract was contingent upon on Scotland County paying one-half, he will now execute the contract.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

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Matthew Block, Mayor

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Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk