

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
JANUARY 11, 2010
W. CHARLES BARRETT ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
305 WEST CHURCH ST.
LAURINBURG, NC
7:00 P.M.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held an agenda work session on January 11, 2010 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room of the W. Charles Barrett Administration Building with the Honorable Matthew Block, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Amanda B. Doerffel, Curtis B. Leak, Thomas W. Parker, III, Herbert M. Rainer, Jr. and Kenton T. Spencer.

Also present were Edward F. Burchins, City Manager, Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk and Charles L. Hicks, Jr., City Attorney.

Mayor Block called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Invocation was given by Councilmember Parker.

CONSIDER SALE OF PROPERTY ADJACENT TO HWY 401 SERVICE ROAD AND CHARLOTTE STREET

Mr. Bill Peele, Zoning Officer, stated that this particular lot was included in Session Law 2005-6, Senate Bill 179 which allows the City, notwithstanding Article 12 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes, to convey by private negotiation and sale, with or without monetary consideration, and upon such terms as the City Council deems appropriate, certain property. This lot should not have been included in this bill because it is not a substandard lot, and substandard lots were the only properties that were to have been included in the bill. He informed Council that a request had been received to purchase the said lot. He stated that the value of the property is \$88,000.00 according to the Scotland County Tax records. He explained that he has inspected the property and has talked with a local appraiser. He further explained that with the market as stressed as it currently is and the property having appeal for multi-family dwellings, office space, or a church, the City may want to consider putting it on the market for sale and receiving competitive bids.

The City Manager stated that the City may want to consider what uses it may have for this particular property.

Councilmember Leak stated that this property was considered the first minority park in Scotland County and that he would like to suggest that the history of the property be explored before any decision is made.

The City Attorney suggested to Council that if this property is to be discussed for future marketing that it be discussed in closed session so that if bids are received the public will not be aware of Council's proposed price.

Councilmember Parker stated that he would be in favor of researching the history of the property.

PRIVILEGE LICENSE (BUSINESS LICENSE) - JANICE MORRISON - TAX COLLECTOR

The City Manager explained that an issue that the City has been confronted with is the proliferation of gaming rooms and internet cafés. He stated that a recent Court of Appeals decision makes it legal to operate these type facilities. However, the issue has been appealed to the North Carolina Supreme Court, but during the appeal process, the facilities can remain open and operational.

He explained that the City should consider how to handle the number of such facilities including whether to impose a privilege license fee for these establishments.

Ms. Janice Morrison, Tax Collector, stated that she had received information from other municipalities regarding business licenses for internet cafés. She explained that she had spoken with other municipalities and that, in certain places, ordinances have been adopted to collect up to \$2,600.00 per establishment for privilege license fees.

She also informed Council that there needs to be an increase in the precious metal privilege license fee which is currently only \$25.00. The Police Department currently charges \$180.00 for an application which includes a background check on the dealer. She stated that she had received one response from other municipalities regarding precious metal dealers and that the current fee for that municipality is approximately \$408.00 per year.

Cindy Carpenter, Finance Director, stated that privilege license fees are renewed each year as long as the business exists; therefore, these fees are collected yearly.

Following discussion, Council directed staff to draft a proposed ordinance including a price per machine and/or establishment for Council consideration and review at a later meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Cindy Carpenter, Finance Director, informed Council that this mid-year report will reflect what line items are in excess of 50 percent for income and expenditures. She then reviewed the mid-year report.

There was a consensus among Councilmembers that the items that are presently over 50 percent for mid-year be watched and that funds be expended conservatively.

AGENDA REVIEW

The City Manager reviewed the proposed agenda for Council's meeting to be held Tuesday, January 19, 2010.

- The Storytelling Arts Center of the Southeast, Inc.
 - Group thinking about using facility as visitor's center-will get back after discussing with other agencies in Community
- Set public hearing to be held February 16, 2010 for a request to rezone ten-acres (10) of property along Emily Drive from Residential 15/General Business to Residential-6 (*Tabled from December meeting*)
 - Need to set time limits for all public hearings - staff to research
- Set public hearing to be held February 16, 2010 for a request for a conditional use permit for the development of ten-acres (10) of property for a planned residential community of thirty (30) dwelling units along Emily Drive (*Tabled from December meeting*)
- Consider Resolution No. R-2010-01 approving the sale of land on Geneva Street
- Consider Resolution No. R-2010-02 authorizing the adoption of the program initiation manual for the FY 09 Community Development Block Grant - Scottish Glen Phase II
- Consider Ordinance No. O-2010-01 which establishes a Community Development Block Grant Account Program Grant Project Ordinance for the Community Development Block Grant for Scottish Glen Phase II

PURCHASING POLICY

The City Manager explained that during the audit suggestion was made that more emphasis be given to inventory control. He explained that each department does its own purchasing and that he would like to develop some uniformity in how purchases are handled. He also stated that he would like to make certain that items are tagged appropriately and added to the fixed assets inventory correctly. He informed Council that he would like to start working towards a centralized purchasing department and a warehouse where someone would be responsible for purchasing items for all City departments. He stated that consideration is being given to using the old recycling facility which is located on City property as the centralized warehouse. He also stated that a proposed purchasing policy will be drafted in the next few months for Council review and consideration.

MARKET FURNITURE BUILDING (DOWNTOWN AREA)

Mayor Block stated that he would like to ask if Council is interested in revisiting the issue of the City taking ownership of the old Market Furniture Building downtown.

He stated that his understanding is that the building turns 100 years old this year and is owned by a not for profit corporation (Sandhills Mediation) whose representative is Mr. Philip McRae. Mayor Block then stated that this corporation is not active at this time. He reminded Council that Sandhills Mediation previously offered this building to the City for \$1.00 and that it was not accepted by Council at that time.

He then stated that it was determined at that time that it would cost approximately \$1.5 million to restore the building. A recent engineering report indicates that walls are in good shape but that the roof continues to deteriorate. He stated that the engineer's assessment is that there are four options that could be considered:

- To design and renovate the building
- To demolish the building
- To remove existing timber members and provide temporary roof coverage
- To leaving the building as is (but this may not be an option for too long)

The Mayor stated that the not for profit does not have any funds and therefore is asking Council if they would like Mr. McRae to come before Board or to submit a letter on where the corporation stands and what plans it has for the building.

A discussion ensued about the old Market Furniture Building, and the consensus among Councilmembers is to begin the condemnation process on this building.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY ACTIVITIES

The City Clerk informed Council that the following activities are scheduled for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday:

- NAACP Youth Council – St. Andrews Presbyterian College – Friday -January 15, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.
- Unity Breakfast -The Highlands - Saturday, January 16, 2010 at 8:00 a.m.
- Unity Service - Solid Rock Baptist Church - Sunday, January 17, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.
- Unity March and Worship – Monday, January 18, 2010 beginning at 9:30 a.m.

TUSCARORA NATION OF INDIANS OF THE CAROLINAS

The City Manager explained that the Tuscarora Nation of Indians of the Carolinas is requesting a letter of support from the City. They are applying for a grant for an Americorp/VISTA program for volunteers. Americorp/VISTA works closely with developing work opportunities/work training program. The Tuscarora Nation of Indians of the Carolinas is opening an office in the City. They are requesting a letter of support from Council for a grant application to the Corporation of Nation and Community Service for the Americorp/VISTA program.

There was consensus among Councilmembers that the Mayor send a letter of support for the Tuscarora Nation of Indians of the Carolinas.

CLOSED SESSION

At 8:35 p.m. motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Doerffel, and unanimously carried to go into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with attorneys employed by and/or retained by the City in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorneys and the town regarding issues involving Schoollink, Inc.

At 9:05 p.m., upon returning to the council room, motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by

Councilmember Spencer, and unanimously carried to adjourn the closed session and resume the open meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Matthew Block, Mayor

Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk