

**CITY OF LAURINBURG  
COUNCIL MEETING  
JUNE 22, 2010  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
303 WEST CHURCH ST.  
LAURINBURG, NC  
7:00 P.M.**

**Minutes**

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held its regular monthly meeting June 22, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the council room of the Municipal Building with the Honorable Matthew Block, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Curtis B. Leak, Thomas W. Parker, III, Herbert M. Rainer, Jr., Kenton T. Spencer (arrived at 7:05 p.m.) and Joy Ellison.

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

Mayor Block called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilmember Rainer gave the invocation.

Mayor Block welcomed Boy Scout Jamie Tippett to the Council meeting and presented him with a City pin.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

City Manager Edward F. Burchins presented the Consent Agenda indicating all items were considered to be routine and could be enacted simultaneously with one motion and a roll call vote. If a Councilmember so requested, any item(s) could be removed from the Consent Agenda and discussed and considered separately. In that event, the remaining item(s) on the Consent Agenda would be acted on with one motion and a roll call vote.

The items on the Consent Agenda were as follows:

- a. Ordinance No. O-2010-10 which amends the 2009-2010 Budget Appropriation Ordinance which transfers \$2,000.00 from the Non-Departmental (660-504500) to Animal Control (590-500200) - Salaries (due to retirement) and transfers \$20,000 from the Sewage Collection-Construction (820-707501) to Water Collection - (814-507500) - Construction (Lauchwood, Prison water meter)
- b. 2010-2011 City of Laurinburg Fee Schedule

Councilmember Leak moved for the approval of the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Parker seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Leak, Ellison, Rainer, Parker  
Nays: None

## **REQUEST TO REZONE FROM RESIDENTIAL-6 TO OFFICE INSTITUTIONAL AN 0.845 ACRE TRACT OF LAND ALONG MCGIRT'S BRIDGE ROAD**

Mayor Block informed Council that this is a public hearing on a request by Mrs. Mary Adams and Mr. John H. Bennett, on behalf of the members and officers of Westminster Presbyterian Church, to rezone from Residential-6 to Office/Institutional a 0.845 acre tract of land adjacent to the Church located at 234 McGirt's Bridge Road. The zoning change would allow development of the property for church and community recreation improvements.

The Laurinburg Planning Board at its regular meeting held on May 11, 2010 unanimously recommends approval of this request.

Mayor Block then declared the public hearing open:

Mrs. Brandi Deese explained that the application for the rezoning request was reviewed by staff where it was determined that:

- The subject property is located within the planning jurisdiction of the City of Laurinburg.
- The application is complete
- The proposed development is in substantial compliance with the regulatory provisions of the Unified Development Ordinance.

Mayor Block asked if they have presented plans for this request.

Mrs. Deese explained that they did not present any plans. She stated that the rezoning request is the first step in the process. She also explained that once the rezoning is decided and if approved, they would submit plans to the planning staff for a permit.

There was no one to speak for or against this request.

Mayor Block then closed the public hearing.

Councilmember Leak moved for the adoption of Ordinance No. O-2010-11 which rezones a 0.845 acre tract of land along McGirt's Bridge Road as such rezoning is:

- Consistent with other development in the area;
- Advances the public health safety or welfare; and
- Provides a positive impact to the public at large.

Councilmember Ellison seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote:

Ayes Leak, Ellison, Rainer, Spencer, Parker

Nays: None

(Ordinance No. O-2010-11 on file in the City Clerk's Office)

## **PUBLIC INPUT ON PROPOSED 2010-2011 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET**

Mayor Block explained that the public hearing has been advertised for input on the City's

proposed 2010-2011 Fiscal Year Budget. This ordinance will allocate revenues and expenditures for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 for the operation of City of Laurinburg government.

Mayor Block then declared the public hearing open.

The City Manager stated that during month of June, Council and staff met on numerous occasions and the recommended budget at time of submittal was originally \$33,532,884.00. The General Fund was \$8,257,843.00 at the time of submittal. The total appropriation in the proposed ordinance is \$8,338,532.00. The Electric Fund which is the largest fund was presented at \$17,738,000.00 and with several changes made by Council the Electric Fund is now \$17,821,971.00. The Water and Sewer fund was originally allocated at \$5,447,664.00 and with changes by Council the present appropriation is \$5,301,000.00. He stated that the Solid Waste Fund was unchanged at the initial recommended appropriation of \$2,088,800.00.

The tax rate remains unchanged at \$0.42 per \$100.00 per valuation.

Copies of the budget were and are available in the City Clerk's office for citizen review.

Councilmember Leak suggested that a copy of the 2010-2011 budget be available at the Scotland County Memorial Library.

There was no one present to speak in favor of the request.

Mr. Harold Smith, Volunteer Fire Chief, for the Laurinburg Fire Department stated he was deeply concerned about the future of the fire department. He expressed concerns with the safety of the citizens and fire department personnel as well as the condition of present equipment.

Mr. Smith informed Councilmembers of the budgets of fire departments of surrounding areas along with statistics from the State.

Upon question by Councilmember Parker, Mr. Smith stated that the City has paid firefighters as well as volunteer firefighters.

Mr. Smith then explained the makeup of the Laurinburg Fire Department. He stated that the Laurinburg Fire Department's budget has always been kept at a minimum due to the number of volunteers and that the fire department could not run as efficiently as it does without the volunteers. The volunteers are paid \$13.00 per call.

He then explained that the Fire Department is in need of a new engine and needs it in this budget year.

He explained that the department is in need of a full time fire inspector but that this was not included in the budget. There are over 900 buildings in Laurinburg's fire district that need inspections. There are some inspections required quarterly, some required annually and others that are done by request.

The department needs more paid firemen because most times the volunteers are at work and cannot leave their job.

A discussion ensued on the current status of the fire department and the future needs of the department.

The City Manager explained that the purchase of a new fire engine could be financed and that the issue is being researched. He also explained that he has had a meeting with Scotland County representatives in order to discuss the current fire department contracts between the City of Laurinburg and Scotland County. There has been no decision on the contracts as of this date.

The City Manager also stated that there has also been discussion concerning working out some way to spec out two trucks in next year's budget (2011-2012) in mid year and to purchase them in mid year of the 2012-2013 budget.

There was no one else to speak against the proposed budget appropriations ordinance.

Mayor Block then declared the public hearing closed.

Councilmember Parker motioned to approve Ordinance No. O-2010-12 which allocates revenues and expenditures for the Fiscal Year 2010-2011 for the operation of City of Laurinburg government. Councilmember Rainer seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Parker, Spencer, Rainer, Ellison, Leak

Nays: None

(Ordinance No. O-2010-12 is on file in the City Clerk's Office)

### **RECOGNITION CITY OF LAURINBURG ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER ELAINE MODLIN**

Mayor Block recognized Elaine Modlin, who retired as the City's Animal Control Officer on April 30, 2010, for her 30 years of service to the citizens of the City of Laurinburg.

Ms. Modlin thanked everyone for the opportunity to work with such a great group of employees. She stated that the City Management and Council have been very supportive of her. She further stated that she is working with a group of citizens to form an Animal Advocacy Group for the good of animals.

### **LAURINBURG DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION CORPORATION (LDRC)**

Mrs. Mary Robinson, Executive Director, reported on the activities of LDRC. She also thanked Mayor Block for attending the Children's Festival held downtown in May.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mrs. Robinson stated that the facade grant program assists business owners in replacing awning at their businesses. She also explained that LDRC is reviewing and making changes to the guidelines and applications. She stated that there are hopes to extend the grant to help business owners paint the exterior of their buildings.

She also stated that they have several requests for assistance. She then stated that there is only \$5,000.00 in the budget for assistance.

The City Manager stated that in the City's budget that there is \$10,000.00 set aside to assist in the development of a micro-enterprise loan program.

Upon question by Councilmember Spencer, the City Manager stated that the City, Scotland County, and the Laurinburg/Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce are partners putting funds together for this venture. He also stated that Greg Icard, Scotland County Economic Development Director, will administer the program. It is not in any final stages at this point.

Mrs. Robinson stated that in May 2010, LDRC received verbal agreement with property owners for parking lot improvements on the parking lot which is adjacent to Railroad Street and Atkinson Street. This verbal agreement is being reduced to writing.

### **AWARD OF CONTRACT**

The City Manager stated that at Council's meeting last night where interviews for potential auditing firms were conducted, Council voted to award the auditing contract to Gustaf C. Lundin & Company.

Motion was made by Councilmember Leak, seconded by Councilmember Spencer, and unanimously carried to authorize the Mayor to execute the contract between the City of Laurinburg and Gustaf C. Lundin & Company, LLP to audit the 2009-2010 fiscal year financial statements for the City of Laurinburg.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

Mayor Block informed Council that the City has three appointments to the Laurinburg Downtown Revitalization Corporation. The City Manager holds one of the appointments with his term to expire June 30, 2011. He stated that LDRC is recommending that Mr. David Blalock, owner of Main Street Brews (formerly The Daily Grind), be appointed to fill a two-year term that will expire June 30, 2012. The third appointment is up for consideration at a later date.

Motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Ellison, and unanimously carried to appoint Mr. David Blalock to a two-year term ending June 30, 2012 as a member to the Laurinburg Downtown Revitalization Corporation.

Mayor Block then stated that there are two appointments to the Laurinburg Planning Board that need to be filled. He stated that the terms of Mr. James Graham and Mrs. Kathy Williamson's expire June 30, 2010. These are three-year appointments. They have both expressed interest in serving on this board once again. If reappointed both terms will expire June 30, 2013.

Motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Leak, and unanimously carried to reappoint Mr. James Graham and Mrs. Kathy Williamson to the Laurinburg Planning Board with terms expiring June 30, 2013.

Mayor Block stated that Ms. Ella Morris' term on the Laurinburg Maxton Airport Commission will expire June 30, 2010. Ms. Morris has expressed interest in being reappointed to this commission. This is a three-year term which will expire June 30, 2013.

Motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Leak, and unanimously carried to reappoint Ms. Ella Morris to the Laurinburg Maxton Airport Commission with a term to expire June 30, 2013.

Mayor Block then informed Council that Mr. Crowell Holcomb's term on the Laurinburg Housing Authority will expire June 30, 2010. Mrs. Nancy Walker, Laurinburg Housing Authority Executive Director, is recommending that Mr. Holcomb be reappointed to this Board. This is a five-year term and will expire June 30, 2015. This is a Mayoral appointment.

Mayor Block then reappointed Mr. Crowell Holcomb to the Laurinburg Housing Authority with his term to expire June 30, 2015

Mayor Block stated that there is an alternate position vacant on the BRAC Regional Task Force Committee. Scotland County Commissioners make appointments to this Committee. Miss Joy Ellison has been asked if she would like to fill this vacancy and has expressed interest in filling the vacancy.

Councilmember Parker motioned to recommend to the Scotland County Commissioners that Miss Joy Ellison be appointed as the alternate municipal position on the BRAC Task Force Committee. Councilmember Spencer seconded the motion and it unanimously passed.

The City Manager stated that some municipalities do not have regular meetings in the month of July because of the numerous meeting held in June concerning the budget. He stated that Council could have its regular agenda workshop.

It was consensus among Council that the agenda workshop and the regular meeting be held in July.

The City Manager stated that he received a contract from the North Carolina Rural Center for a project involving the City and Scotland Healthcare System. He explained that this project is to renovate existing facilities on hospital grounds and to expand several medical departments. The Company that will be doing the work will be creating 12 new jobs. The grant was for \$144,000.00 that will be matched by the Scotland Healthcare System.

There is no cost to the City.

Motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Spencer and unanimously carried to authorize the Mayor to execute the Rural Center contract.

#### **COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND/OR COUNCILMEMBERS**

Councilmember Leak reminded everyone that the City's July 4 fireworks display will be held on Saturday, July 3, 2010 at Scotland High School.

Councilmember Rainer stated that the City should have a camera available at all Council meetings for photographic opportunities.

Councilmember Leak stated that he had spoken with the Scotland County School Superintendent and the schools are working on opening their gyms for weekend activity.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one to speak at the public comment session.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

At 8:28 p.m. motion was made to go into closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a) (6) for the purpose of considering the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee and pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3), to consult with the attorney employed or retained by the City of Laurinburg in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the City Council relating to Schoollink, Inc. and Ordinance O-2010-02 which amends the privilege license taxation schedule.

Councilmember Leak seconded the motion and it unanimously carried.

At 9:04 p.m. Councilmember Parker made motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Spencer, and unanimously carried to resume the open meeting.

## **ORDINANCE NO. O-2010-13 AMENDING THE PRIVILEGE LICENSE TAXATION SCHEDULE OF THE CITY OF LAURINBURG**

Councilmember Parker motioned to approve Ordinance No. O-2010-13 which amends the Privilege License Taxation Schedule of the City of Laurinburg. Councilmember Rainer seconded the motion and it passed by the following vote:

Ayes: Parker, Spencer, Rainer, Ellis, Leak

Nays: None

(Ordinance No. O-2010-13 on file in the City Clerk's Office)

The Assistant City Attorney informed Council that he has been contacted by T-Mobile and AT&T representatives regarding renegotiation of their existing leases. He explained that they both would like to reduce the lease amount and then guarantee an additional period of time. He stated that the City would be getting less money.

It was consensus among Councilmembers that the City not renegotiate the lease agreements.

## **RECESS**

Motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Spencer, and unanimously carried to recess the meeting until 7:00 p.m., June 28, 2010 in the upstairs council room of the Municipal Building located at 303 West Church St., Laurinburg, NC.

The meeting recessed at 9:10 p.m.

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Matthew Block, Mayor

Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk