

**CITY OF LAURINBURG  
COUNCIL WORKSHOP  
OCTOBER 19, 2010  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
303 WEST CHURCH STREET  
LAURINBURG, NC  
7:00 P.M.**

**Minutes**

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held its regular monthly meeting October 19, 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, 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 Parker gave the invocation.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The City Manager 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.

The items on the Consent Agenda were as follows:

- a. Minutes from the meetings of March 8, 9, 16, and 18, 2010; March 18, 2010 (citizen input session); April 13 and 20, 2010; May 11, 18, 25 and 26 (joint meeting with Scotland County), 2010; and June 1, 4, 7, 9, 21, 22, and 28, 2010
- b. Award bid for engineering services for Scottish Glen Phase II
- c. Ordinance No. O-2010-22 which amends Chapter 10, Article I, In General, Section 10-1 Definitions
- d. Revision of the City of Laurinburg Schedule of Fees to include fees for a Baby Plot section for Hillside Memorial Park
- e. Contract for Fire Protection Service between the City of Laurinburg and Scotland County and authorize Mayor and City Clerk to execute

Councilmember Spencer called to Council's attention the minutes of the June 9, 2010 Council meeting and read the following paragraph for clarification:

*Mayor Block stated that he would like to discuss the request of \$7,500.00 from the Storytelling Art Center of the Southeast. He explained that traditionally the City had gotten away from funding non profit organizations. He then explained that if Council decided to fund this request it should be on solid ground since no other non profit has made a request to the City. He stated it would be arbitrary and unfair to fund this one particular non-profit organization without it being a change in direction from Council.*

Mr. Spencer questioned this portion of the minutes and stated that he desired to look into the matter further.

The City Manager stated that Halloween Treat or Tricking will be held Saturday, October 30, 2010.

Councilmember Leak moved for the approval of the Consent Agenda with the exception of the June 9, 2010 minutes. Councilmember Rainer seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Leak, Ellison, Rainer, Spencer, Parker

Nays: None

## **APPOINTMENTS**

Councilmember Spencer explained that the following students have requested to be appointed to the City of Laurinburg Youth Council:

Sommore Terry	Aubrey Crisp	Diamon McLean
Amber David	Destin Underwood	Jamisha DeBerry
Adrian Blackmon	LeVern Hamer	Destiny Blue
Jaleyah McClaren	Delanna Draper	Janay Carden
Erin Cromartie	Brianna English	Nicholas Fowler
Jacob Blount	Frank Murray	Morgan Fields
Lauran Fields	William Collins, Jr.	Ryan Haines

Councilmember Spencer stated that, in addition to the above referenced students, there are two alternates: Shaunee McLaurin and Kayla Pate.

Motion was made by Councilmember Leak, seconded by Councilmember Parker, and unanimously carried to appoint the above named students to the City of Laurinburg Youth Council and the two alternates to a one year term ending October 31, 2011.

Councilmember Spencer stated that there will be an official swearing in ceremony Thursday, November 11, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. at the Laurinburg Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall.

He also explained that according to the City of Laurinburg Resolution establishing the Youth Council, Council must appoint a Chairman of the City of Laurinburg Youth Council. This is a three-year term and will expire October 31, 2013.

The adult advisors are:

Councilmember Kenton Spencer

Johnnerlyn Johnson

Pastor B. J. Gibson

Councilmember Leak motioned, seconded by Councilmember Ellison, and unanimously carried to appoint Councilmember Kenton Spencer to preside as Chairperson for the City of Laurinburg Youth Council.

## **DELEGATION**

Dr. J. Michael Rush, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Laurinburg/Phoenix Community Development Corporation, appeared before Council to explain the purpose of the Corporation.

Dr. Rush explained that the Corporation would like to work with the Council in order to acquire grants to work on revitalization of the Newtown area. He stated that this is a long range plan for the area.

Dr. Rush then explained that the Corporation has its 501(c)(3) status and has presented Council with a copy of the document. He also explained the By-Laws of the Corporation.

He stated that the Corporation has organized as a Community Housing Development Organization as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

He listed the Board of Directors for the Corporation which includes the following:

Dr. Michael Rush - Founding Board of Director & Chairman

Mrs. Beverly H. Simmons - Founding Board of Director & Treasurer  
Mrs. Brenda H. Springs - Founding Board of Director & Secretary  
Dr. Clarence Brown  
Ms. Rosalee Underwood  
Mr. James Rush  
Mr. Charles McEachin  
Reverend Garland Pierce  
Ms. Carrie Hill  
Ms. Annie Cureton  
Ms. Cynthia King  
Mr. Bishop McDuffie  
Mr. Larkin King  
Ms. Shirley Graham  
Ms. Louise Williams

Dr. Rush explained that Mr. Larkin King is interested in working with the Corporation because he owns Hollowell Kindergarten which could be an historical site because it was the first black kindergarten in North Carolina. The Corporation will work towards having it established as an historic site.

Dr. Rush presented photos of the Newtown area during his Powerpoint presentation of concerns in the area. He stated that the Corporation would like with the Council to secure grants to help in the community.

He stated that he would like to know who is responsible for some of the conditions in the Newtown area.

He then stated that there are grants and stimulus monies that can help rehab some of the housing and give people a better place to live.

Dr. Rush concluded his PowerPoint presentation and stated the goal of the people in the Newtown community is to work with Council to revitalize the neighborhood.

He continued by stating that although he does not currently reside in Laurinburg, this area is still his home and is also the home of some of the others who live outside the area.

Mayor Block stated that on behalf of Council that it is great that Dr. Rush and everyone else on the board are interested in this project. He also stated that personally he feels that the older neighborhoods need to be brought back and can come back. He said that he would like to see everyone work together to see what can be done in bringing those neighborhoods back to life.

Mayor Block asked if there is a reason that the neighborhood has deteriorated so.

Dr. Rush stated that there are several reasons: lack of money, lack of resources, and that the industries in the area have left or are leaving.

Upon question by Councilmember Rainer, Dr. Rush stated that in order to acquire federal grants there needs to be collaboration with the Corporation and the City Council and the Mayor. He explained that if the Corporation writes a grant and the City is not involved, that may hinder the positive consideration of the grant. He then explained that there needs to be support letters from Council and the Mayor as well as other organizations in the Community.

Councilmember clarified the role of the City by stating that the Corporation is asking that the City of Laurinburg be a partner in this endeavor in some capacity.

Dr. Rush stated that would like to start as soon as possible by implementing a clean up project in Newtown. The Corporation would like to know what properties the City owns and how everyone can work together to get properties cleaned. He then stated what can the City do to help get rehabilitation money to repair other properties and to build in the area?

Mrs. Beverly Hogue Simmons appeared before Council and stated that she supports the Corporation and its goal to revitalize Newtown.

Mr. Bishop McDuffie also stated that the Laurinburg Institute and McDuffie Village supports the Corporation and its movement in Newtown as well as the City of Laurinburg.

Dr. Rush stated that they plan to work with the school system to research monies and possible programs for young people in the community.

Mayor Block stated that he hopes the Corporation thinks big and looks at the sustainability of this project to make it a thriving neighborhood.

Dr. Rush stated that the next meeting of the Corporation will be held the first or third Tuesday after Christmas. He would like the meeting to be a working meeting and would like to invite a representative from Council as well as a representative from the community to discuss the educational aspect of what is trying to be accomplished.

The focus will be on education, jobs, and putting people back to work by building the infrastructure, homes, and communities which will provide jobs and be home to the people.

Councilmember Leak stated that he welcomes the input and that the suggestion is that Council discuss this project at Council's next meeting in November.

Councilmember Spencer stated that he feels that Council should take a look at the whole project, meet, talk, and find ways to collaborate.

Dr. Rush reiterated that Councilmembers are invited to attend their meetings.

Councilmember Rainer asked that the City Manager be informed of the date of the next meeting. Mayor Block called for a recess at 7:44 p.m.

The meeting resume at 8:01 p.m.

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

Mrs. Mary Robinson represented a quarterly report to Council on the activities of the LDRC.

She stated that LDRC conducted a strategic planning retreat in June 2010; completed and approved revision to the Façade Grant Program Guidelines and Application; awarded two facade grants; completed a new downtown business brochure; and completed an online grant-writing class. She then stated that the items stated are just a few of the items accomplished or being proposed by LDRC.

She listed the new members appointed and installed at LDRC's Annual Dinner and Business meeting which were as follows:

Crawford Fitch, President  
Theresa Lamson, Vice President  
Terry Gallman, Immediate Past President  
Jim Willis, Board Member  
David Blalock, Board Member

She explained that at next month's Scotland County Board of Commissioners meeting there will be an appointment from the County.

She stated that LDRC has been busy with promotions such as National Night Out, United Way Day of Caring, Chamber Clean Sweep, Chamber Job Fair and Kuumba Festival and is currently working on other promotions for

December 2010 such as Christmas on Main and the Christmas Tree Lighting.

She stated that during the second quarter there will be emphasis on completing the revolving loan fund guidelines. She explained that the LDRC Board of Directors have approved the guidelines. The next step is to present them to Greg Icard, Scotland County Economic Development Director, the Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Laurinburg to begin collaborating with local lending sources to assist the business owners' downtown.

LDRC has committed to contribute \$5,000.00 per year for three years to the revolving loan fund.

Mrs. Robinson stated new banners have been ordered for downtown.

Mrs. Robinson thanked Council and Chief John Evans for the officer that has been designated for safety and security of the downtown area.

Mrs. Robinson explained that she has had several inquiries about the current Christmas tree located at the James Lot which is owned by the City. She stated that there have been conversations about changing the tree out for a larger tree and to relocate the current holly tree. LDRC is requesting that the City help finance the cost of a new tree.

A discussion was held regarding the current downtown Christmas tree and the possibility of a new tree.

Following a discussion, Mr. Burchins stated that he would contact Cooley's Nursery about a live tree for the James Lot.

Councilmember Parker and Councilmember Spencer will confirm the cost of a Christmas tree from the Optimist Club.

It was a consensus among Councilmember's that City staff will help in the preparation and the cost of the Christmas tree at the James lot.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mrs. Robinson stated that the planters downtown need to be distributed equally along the area. She explained that this would make the downtown area look better.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mrs. Robinson stated that the "Tuesday Cruisers" will make an appearance at Christmas on Main. LDRC plans to contact them to discuss participating in future events.

Also, upon question by Mayor Block, Mrs. Robinson reported that the parking lot improvement project is still being discussed and that attorney Charles L. Hicks, Jr. is working with them to draft an agreement.

Mayor Block stated that at Council's retreat in September there was discussion regarding a meeting with LDRC, property owners and renters in the downtown area. He suggested that the City Manager talk with LDRC and find dates that could be discussed.

## **LAURINBURG/SCOTLAND COUNTY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

Drew Williamson, Chairman, Laurinburg Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce (the Chamber), gave a quarterly report regarding the Chamber events and new initiatives that the Chamber is conducting.

He explained that Laurinburg After Five, the New Teacher Breakfast, Litter Sweep, Junior Leadership, Leadership Scotland, the Candidates Forum and the Washington Fly-In are some of the programs that are most familiar to people.

He then explained some of new initiatives which were the Literacy Summit, Small Business Day, the Benefit Bank, and the Resources and Business Expo. He stated that the Chamber is trying to help lead the charge in some of the new initiatives. He then stated that the focus has transcended from an economic development focus by the Chamber to a Community Development focus. He also stated that the Chamber works will with Scotland County's Economic Development Director in order to promote Laurinburg and Scotland County.

Mr. Williamson reported that the Rural Center asked the Chamber to help lead the charge for the Benefit Bank which

are sites where an individual can receive counseling on completing a job application, having tax returns completed, applying for student loans, and many more opportunities for counseling.

He then stated that the Resources and Business Expo was a success and that the Rural Center was very complementary of the event. The Chamber received a grant from the Rural Center to plan and conduct the event. He explained that other Chambers are contacting the Chamber President for information and how this event was carried out.

Councilmember Ellison commented on the excellent job the Chamber did regarding the Resources and Business Expo.

Mr. Williamson thanked City Council for its commitment to The Chamber for funding its Community Development efforts. He concluded by stating that if the City and/or Councilmembers have any ideas or suggestions on any initiatives where the Chamber can partner to call the Chamber.

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

There were no comments from the Mayor or Councilmembers.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one present to speak before Council.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

At 8:45 p.m., motion was made by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Leak, and unanimously carried that, pursuant to North Carolina General Statute § 143-318.11(a)(3) Council go into closed session for the purpose of consulting with the attorney in order to preserve attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the City regarding Carolina Transformer.

At 9:00 p.m., upon motion by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Leak, and unanimously carried, Council returned to open session.

Upon motion by Councilmember Parker, seconded by Councilmember Spencer, and unanimously carried, the City Attorney is to notify the Carolina Transformer ligation attorney that the City of Laurinburg will continue at this time to participate in the contribution action group.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

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Matthew Block, Mayor Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk