

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
AGENDA WORKSHOP
FEBRUARY 14, 2012
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 meeting on February 14, 2012, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room of the W. Charles Barrett Administration Building with the Honorable Thomas W. Parker, III, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Mary Jo Adams, Curtis B. Leak, Kenton Spencer and Andrew G. Williamson, Jr. Councilmember Herbert M. Rainer, Jr. was absent.

Also present were Edward F. Burchins, City Manager; Jennifer A. Tippet, City Clerk; and William P. Floyd, Jr., Assistant City Attorney.

Mayor Parker called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Councilmember Williamson gave the invocation.

AGENDA

The City Manager reviewed the upcoming agenda for the February 21, 2012 regular meeting of City Council.

- 1) Approve agenda
- 2) Public Comment
- 3) Consent Agenda
 - a) Approve minutes of the December 13, 2011 agenda workshop/retreat and minutes of the December 20, 2011 regular meeting

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 4) Consider request for a Conditional Use Permit to operate a carnival at 900 US 401 Bypass from March 1, 2012 to March 11, 2012

No discussion

- 5) Consider request for a Conditional Use Permit to operate a Solar Photovoltaic Array (Solar Farm) on a 64.78 acre tract of land off US 15-401 South/McColl Rd. across from Tartan Rd.

Mrs. Deese explained that Council approved this request over two (2) years ago but the project was put on hold because of merger discussions between Progress Energy and Duke Power. Discussion ensued concerning the public hearing. The Assistant City Attorney recommended that the minutes from the two (2) public hearings held in 2009 be provided and entered into evidence so that testimony would not need to be reheard. The Assistant City Attorney also suggested that all speakers be sworn at one time to save time.

DELEGATION

6) Harold Mercer-Concerns about enforcement of junk vehicles ordinance

No discussion

7) Presentation by Brent Webb-Walking with Awareness

Mayor Parker explained that Brent Webb is participating in this walk as a testimony of being drug-free.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

8) Set public hearing on request to rezone from Residential-15 to Office/Institutional property on N. Wilkinson Dr.

Mrs. Deese explained that this request is to rezone the property to construct a church. She added that Planning Board unanimously recommended approval of the request.

9) Set public hearing on request to rezone from General Business to Industrial a 3.4 acre tract on McColl Rd. at its intersection with Barnes Bridge Rd.

Mrs. Deese explained that billboards are allowed only in the Industrial zoning district by Conditional Use Permit. Planning Board unanimously recommended denial of this rezoning request and requested that staff research allowing off-premises signs in the General Business zoning district by Conditional Use Permit. She added that Mr. Howell submitted this request as well as the next request for a Conditional Use Permit, so Council will receive Planning Board's recommendation.

10) Set public hearing on request for a Conditional Use Permit for an off-premises sign (billboard) on McColl Rd. at its intersection with Barnes Bridge Rd.

No further discussion

11) Discussion of additional multi-family residence regulations

Mrs. Deese discussed options for additional regulations for multi-family residences. Planning Board wanted additional time to review options before making a recommendation. Discussion ensued about requirements of the NC Housing Finance Agency.

Mrs. Deese informed Council that the City has been awarded certification as a Tree City, and that staff was planning an Arbor Day celebration.

Upon question by Councilmember Spencer, Mrs. Deese explained that the staff was working on the Urban Forestry grant application, and it would be submitted in March.

12) Tax Releases and Discoveries-Mary McNeill, Tax Collector

The City Manager explained that the releases totaled \$18,702 and discoveries totaled \$66,000.

13) Tax Liens-Mary McNeill, Tax Collector

The City Manager explained that the Tax Collector was requesting to advertise tax liens on March 16, 2012. The outstanding taxes to be collected are \$358,603.00. Discussion ensued regarding the Finance Director contacting individuals on the delinquent list prior to publication.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, the City Manager explained the electric overcharge that occurred at Solid Rock Baptist Church and that the item was not on the agenda because he was conducting research regarding the matter. He explained that the City's ordinance allows refunding an incorrect billing for up to three (3) years and the Church is requesting that the 12 years of incorrect billing be refunded.

Following discussion, it was consensus of Council to allow the City Manager and Assistant City Attorney to negotiate a settlement with Solid Rock Baptist Church for refunding the amount overpaid by the Church.

14) Mosquito Program

Mr. Stacey McQuage explained that because the Environmental Protection Agency transferred control of the Mosquito Spraying Program in North Carolina to the North Carolina Division of Water Quality, the permitting requirements and application requirements are extensive and would at least triple the budget for the program as it is administered now. He added that if the Program was reduced to spray for ballgames, special events and certain swampy areas, the City would not have to apply for a permit from the North Carolina Division of Water Quality.

Following discussion, it was consensus of Council to scale back the Mosquito Spraying Program so that the City would not need to apply for the permit from the North Carolina Division of Water Quality and the cost of the Program would remain the same as prior years.

15) Highway 74 Lighting Project Update

The City Manager explained that the City needs to notify Mr. David Burns by the end of December whether it will be undertaking this project. He provided an overview of the costs of the project. A discussion ensued concerning funding options and participation by the County.

16) Discussion on New Generation Workforce Training and Development Grant through the NC Rural Center

The City Manager explained that the City will be partnering with the Chamber, Richmond Community College, Employment Security Commission and Lumber River Workforce Development in applying for this grant from The Rural Center. He and Councilmember Spencer described the purpose of the grant.

17) Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Budget Preparation and Review Calendar of Events

The City Manager discussed a proposed schedule and process for the FY 2012-2013 Budget preparation.

APPOINTMENTS

18) Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (resignation of Dr. Block)

Mayor Parker explained that Dr. Block resigned from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee and an appointment needed to be made. Discussion ensued concerning this appointment.

19) Lumber River Council of Governments Transportation Advisory Committee-request for elected official

A discussion ensued concerning recommendation of an elected official. The City Clerk will provide additional information concerning this appointment.

A discussion ensued concerning Tax Collection Consolidation. The City Manager explained that the City's auditor is reviewing the information gathered. He added that an issue arose today concerning foreclosures that will need to be fully investigated.

Mayor Parker stated that the Tax Collection Consolidation will be placed on the March agenda.

Mayor Parker explained that he, Councilmember Williamson and the City Manager met with Jim Willis of Downtown Revitalization Corporation (LDRC) and Tim Brown earlier in the day concerning improvements downtown including the following:

- Partner with LDRC to remove old signage from buildings downtown on an as available timeframe.
- Fill the holes in the parking lot behind the old Habitat Store. Jim Willis has obtained a lease from the property owners.
- Obtain permission from the property owner for making a walk-through to the parking lot through the McDuffie building. Councilmember Williamson stated that he was willing to talk to the property owner.
- A parking plan for everyday as well as special events.
- Ordinance for window coverage.
- Street vendors having trash cans right beside food carts.
- Decision on what to do with the brick planters and the crape myrtles planted in them.
- Stop using the new trash cans and use the old ones.
- Condition of the Davey Poplar tree downtown.

Upon question by Councilmember Spencer, Mayor Parker explained that Mr. Brown would develop a master plan for the downtown area.

A discussion ensued concerning the Historic District designation of the downtown area and the need for a plan for the downtown area.

Mayor Parker explained that he would like for the City to renovate a building downtown after signing an agreement with the owner of the building, and this item to be considered during budget discussions. He further added that he proposed that the City get the difference in the rental amount after renovations versus before renovations, allowing the property owner to repay the City for the renovations.

A brief discussion ensued concerning the rationale for Mayor Parker's proposal and procedures for said proposal.

Councilmember Leak suggested that a listing of the property owners be compiled.

A brief discussion ensued concerning the Market Furniture Building and the Historic Designation of the downtown area.

MEMORIAL FOR CHARLES L. HICKS, JR.

Mayor Parker explained that Mrs. Deese had suggested a bench with a plaque be erected at the James Lot as a memorial to Mr. Hicks.

Following discussion, it was consensus of Council to erect a bench with a plaque at the James Lot as a memorial to Mr. Hicks.

CLOSED SESSION

At 8:46 p.m., Councilmember Leak moved to go into closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a) (3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the City.

Councilmember Williamson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

At 9:05 p.m., motion was made by Councilmember Spencer, seconded by Councilmember Williamson, and unanimously carried to adjourn the closed session and resume the open meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Thomas W. Parker, III, Mayor

Jennifer A. Tippett, City Clerk