

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
RECONVENED MEETING
SEPTEMBER 20, 2012
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
305 WEST CHURCH ST.
LAURINBURG, NC
5:30 P.M.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg reconvened its September 18, 2012 meeting on September 20, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building with the Honorable Thomas W. Parker, III, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Mary Jo Adams, Curtis B. Leak, Kenton T. Spencer, Andrew G. Williamson, Jr. and J. D. Willis.

Also present were Edward F. Burchins, City Manager; and Jennifer A. Tippett, City Clerk.

Mayor Parker reconvened the September 18, 2012 meeting on September 20, 2012 at 5:30 p.m.

The Invocation was given by Councilmember Leak.

CLOSED SESSION

At 5:36 p.m. motion was made by Councilmember Spencer 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.

The motion was seconded by Councilmember Willis and carried unanimously.

At 7:10 p.m., motion was made by Councilmember Spencer, seconded by Councilmember Williamson to adjourn closed session and resume open meeting.

REQUEST FOR TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR CITY CLERK

A discussion ensued concerning the possibility of hiring a temporary part-time employee to assist the City Clerk to catch up on preparation of Council minutes and begin scanning documents into the Laserfiche system.

Motion was made by Councilmember Willis, seconded by Councilmember Spencer, and unanimously carried to allocate up to \$5,028.00 from the lapsed salary of the Human Resources Director salary to hire a temporary part-time assistant for up to 24 weeks.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A discussion ensued concerning the proposed agenda. Mayor Parker suggested that Code of Ethics and Expectations would be a good starting point of discussion.

Councilmember Leak stated that Expectations had been discussed previously, was in writing and copies should be distributed to Council.

Mayor Parker requested that the City Clerk provide copies of the Expectations to Councilmembers and stated that it would be discussed at a future retreat.

Motion was made by Councilmember Adams, seconded by Councilmember Willis, and unanimously carried to add to the agenda Policy on Procedures for Replacement of Councilmembers.

Motion was made by Councilmember Spencer, seconded by Councilmember Williamson, and unanimously carried to add to the agenda Budget for Condemnations.

Upon question by Councilmember Willis, Mayor Parker explained that item d) Customer Service – too strict on 1st time offenders involved situations where a customer had been an excellent paying customer but one time was late and received a penalty for being late. He stated he thought the City was too strict.

Motion was made by Councilmember Willis, seconded by Councilmember Adams and unanimously carried to discuss item l) Council procedures.

POLICY FOR REPLACEMENT OF COUNCILMEMBERS

Following discussion, it was consensus of Council for the City Manager to research procedures other municipalities follow when filling a vacancy on Council and provide to Council for consideration.

CONDEMNATIONS BUDGET

The City Manager explained that the funds budgeted for condemnations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2012-2013 had been expended or encumbered due to more aggressive enforcement actions. He added that funds were left over from FY 2011-2012 that should have been carried over into the FY 2012-2013 budget, but were not, instead the funds were put back into the General Fund Fund Balance.

A discussion ensued concerning several houses in the process of condemnation, the citizens' concerns expressed at the recent Council meeting and the prioritization list of building concerns.

Following discussion, Councilmember Williamson suggested that the City Manager research and provide the amount of funds that remained from FY 2011-2012 before Council made a decision to add funding for additional condemnations.

COUNCIL PROCEDURES

The City Clerk explained that the Council Procedures needed to be reviewed, updated and changed from being an ordinance to a resolution. She added that this would remove the procedures from the City Code. She further added that she would provide copies of the publication from the School of Government entitled "Suggested Rules of Procedure for a City Council".

Motion was made by Councilmember Spencer, seconded by Councilmember Williamson, and unanimously carried for the City Clerk to prepare a proposed resolution adopting Council Rules of Procedure for Council's consideration at a later date.

KEYS TO THE CITY

Motion was made by Councilmember Williamson, seconded by Councilmember Adams, and unanimously carried to add item g) Keys to the City to the Retreat agenda.

Mayor Parker explained that requests are received from entities outside the City for Keys to the City and other recognitions, resolutions and proclamations

A discussion ensued concerning Keys to the City and what a key represents, resolutions and proclamations, and who should present said Key, resolution and proclamation.

It was consensus of Council for the City Manager and City Clerk to research what other municipalities do with regard to Keys to the City, resolutions and proclamations, and report back to Council.

COMMUNITY/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A discussion ensued concerning adding Community/Economic Development to the agenda.

It was consensus of Council that this topic deserved more time than was available at this Retreat.

CUSTOMER SERVICE-TOO STRICT ON FIRST TIME OFFENDERS

Motion was made by Councilmember Williamson, seconded by Councilmember Adams, and unanimously carried to add item d) Customer Service – too strict on first time offenders, to the agenda.

At 7:58 p.m. Mayor Parker requested that Mayor Pro Tem Spencer assume control of the meeting as he wanted to enter discussion on this matter.

Mayor Parker explained that he thought the City was too strict with individuals who have excellent payment records and are late for the first time in paying their utility bills and incur a penalty.

The City Manager discussed the City's policies and procedures for dealing with delinquent accounts including the option of making installment payments through contract. He added that the Customer Service Representatives have been given more discretion in dealing with customers who have an excellent payment history who, for whatever reason, are late one (1) month. He further explained that the City's policy allows one (1) late payment per year without penalty.

FUTURE RETREAT

Discussion then ensued concerning a possible date to continue the retreat.

It was consensus of Council to continue Retreat topic discussion at 6:00 p.m. on October 9, 2012 prior to the workshop agenda.

AGENDA WORKSHOP

Mayor Parker explained that the Council agenda should be discussed first at the agenda workshops.

RECESS

Motion was made by Councilmember Spencer, seconded by Councilmember Williamson, and unanimously carried to recess the meeting until 6:00 p.m. on October 9, 2012 in the conference room of the W. Charles Barrett Building.

The meeting recessed at 8:15 p.m.

Thomas W. Parker, III, Mayor

Jennifer A. Tippett, City Clerk