

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 19, 2016
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
303 WEST CHURCH ST.
7:00 p.m.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held its regular meeting on Tuesday, January 19, 2016 in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building at 7:00 p.m. with the Honorable Thomas W. Parker III, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Mary Jo Adams, Dolores A. Hammond, Curtis B. Leak, Andrew G. Williamson, Jr. and J.D. Willis.

Also present were Charles D. Nichols III, City Manager; Jennifer A. Tippet, City Clerk; and William P. Floyd, Jr., City Attorney.

Mayor Parker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Councilmember Williamson requested a moment of silence and he then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Parker welcomed Fire Chief Randy Gibson back after being out due to surgery.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Councilmember Willis, seconded by Councilmember Adams, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda as submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no one present to speak.

RECOGNITION OF RETIREE

Mayor Parker presented a plaque to Mrs. Linda Blackmon Terry as follows:

*In Sincere Appreciation to
Linda Blackmon Terry
March 23, 1981-December 31, 2015*

*Congratulations on your well-deserved retirement
after 34 years of outstanding service!
In sincere gratitude for the outstanding customer service and assistance
provided to the citizens of Laurinburg throughout your career,
and for your assistance and example you set for your co-workers. Your
dedication and hard work are to be commended.*

Best wishes for success and happiness in your future endeavors.

Presented this the 19th day of January, 2016.

*Thomas W. Parker III
Mayor*

*Mary Jo Adams
Mayor Pro Tem*

*Dolores A. Hammond
Councilmember*

*Curtis B. Leak
Councilmember*

*Andrew G. Williamson, Jr.
Councilmember*

*J. D. Willis
Councilmember*

Mrs. Terry stated that she had enjoyed her job with the City, she loved the customers as well as employees, past and current.

CONSENT AGENDA

The City Manager presented the Consent Agenda as follows:

- a) Consider minutes of November 17, 2015 regular meeting and December 15, 2015 special meeting/work session
- b) Consider Ordinance No. O-2016-01 amending the FY 2015-2016 Budget Appropriations Ordinance (Ordinance No. O-2015-09) Get Alarm Grant – Fire Dept.
- c) Consider Authorizing the City Manager to execute contract with East Coast Pyrotechnics, Inc. for July 4th Fireworks Display
- d) Semi-Annual Report on Surplus Sales

Councilmember Williamson moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Willis seconded the motion and it was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Williamson, Willis, Adams, Leak, Hammond

Nays: None

DELEGATION

CREECH & ASSOCIATES – DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED NEW CITY HALL AND PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION

Mr. Brent Green of Creech & Associates explained that he, Michael Supino, Project Architect, and Natalie Stinger, architect intern, would be presenting a PowerPoint on possible designs for the proposed new city hall and police department. Highlights of the presentation are as follows:

- Creech & Associates verified the space needs analysis conducted by another firm by consulting with current staff and by touring facilities.

- In order to accommodate some growth in the future and for the normal 50-year lifespan of public buildings, the proposed size of the city hall and police department would be between 20,000 square feet to 25,000 square feet.
- Site location of the proposed building based on context of Church Street, existing trees on the property, and traffic circulation.
- Secure driveway and entrance for police department.
- Existing municipal building would remain operational throughout construction, and only personnel in the Barrett Building would need to be relocated.

Upon question by Councilmember Willis, Mr. Green explained that the distance between the Police Department entrance and the residence located adjacent to the proposed building was approximately 80-100 feet, with 40-50 feet on each property. He added that there would also be a buffer between the properties.

Discussion ensued concerning the following:

- vehicular stacking and overflow for the Consumer Billing drive-thru
- parking areas
- location of the dumpster

Discussion ensued concerning the functional layout of the interior. Mr. Green explained that in designing the proposed layout of the interior was determined primarily by function. He explained that because of security and the need for quick ingress & egress for the police, the police department would be located on the first floor and would be secure from the rest of the building. He added that Customer Service would also be located on the first floor to provide easy access for the public. He discussed the entrance for the public, the lobby space and the Customer Service lobby that would alleviate citizens from standing out in the weather on cut-off day. Mr. Green reviewed the second floor layout which includes the remainder of the departments from the Barrett Building and the Municipal Building as well as a 90-seat council chambers. He added that the configuration of the floor layouts can change depending upon the City's needs.

Ms. Stenger discussed the architectural design of the proposed city hall and police department and the architectural character of nearby buildings as well as other buildings in the community, past and present. She cited consistency of characteristics of buildings: red brick and stone, classical and traditional styles, one story wings on each side, and an entry in the center of the building. She then reviewed three (3) design options, a copy of which are attached to these minutes and incorporated herein as Attachment A. She explained that elements of the three (3) different designs can be mixed and matched based upon the feedback from Council.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, Mr. Green explained that the roof is a hipped roof. He added that he is still studying how the hipped roof will intersect with the cupola.

Mr. Green explained that the design options are variations on a theme, and the options are similar with subtle differences. He added that based upon Council's feedback, the possibility of a fourth option could be presented.

Upon request by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager explained that color copies would be provided to Council.

Discussion ensued concerning methods of reducing costs of construction and maintenance based upon the construction style.

Discussion ensued concerning the design elements of the three (3) options presented. Mr. Green explained that his firm's goal was to get feedback from Council on the proposed elevations, and come back to Council with a consolidated option. He added that this step would wrap up the design submittal of the project.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, Mr. Green explained that the roofs of the first floor wings could be constructed so that they would be usable space.

Councilmember Williamson explained that Creech & Associates had given Council intriguing possibilities and impressive building to consider.

Mayor Parker explained that Council would like to review the designs prior to providing feedback. He thanked the architectural team.

The City Manager explained that if the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process for construction will take approximately two (2) to three (3) months. He added that Carrie Neal, Interim Finance Director; Harold Haywood, General Services Officer; and he would be having a preliminary meeting with the Local Government Commission (LGC) and the Davenport & Company, LLC, financing counsel, on January 25, 2016. He further added that this meeting would be to discuss financing for the new city hall and police department without a property tax increase or utility rate increase. He added that staff and the architect needed input from Council on the designs presented by the architect in order to proceed with the construction RFQ. The City Manager requested that Council provide him input on design elements so that he could submit to Creech & Associates.

Councilmember Willis moved to authorize the City Manager and staff to move forward with the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process for construction of the proposed city hall and police department which has nothing to do with the design phase of the proposed city hall and police station.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, the City Manager explained that he and staff would be having a preliminary meeting with the LGC in order to have an idea of how the LGC would view any financing if the city hall and police station are constructed.

Councilmember Adams explained that she felt Council should wait on the RFQ process until after the LGC preliminary meeting and also have the public input session.

Councilmember Willis explained that until the RFQ for Construction was completed, the amount necessary to borrow to construct a new city hall and police station is unknown. He added that anytime during the RFQ process, the project can be halted.

The City Attorney explained that as a procedural matter, there was a motion on the floor and a second was needed in order to discuss.

Councilmember Williamson seconded Councilmember Willis' motion.

Upon questions by Councilmember Williamson, the City Manager explained that there was no harm in initiating the RFQ for Construction. He added that until the contract is signed with the

construction company, there is no obligation to the construction company and would be liable to the architectural firm for the work rendered thus far. He added that the RFQ process for construction will take time just as the RFQ process for Architectural Design. He further added that a selection committee would review RFQs, conduct interviews, and then choose the construction firm.

Further discussion ensued concerning the RFQ for Construction, the Construction Manager at Risk Program, having a public input session and meeting with the LGC.

Mayor Parker explained that the motion on the floor by Councilmember Willis was to proceed with the RFQ for Construction, with a second by Councilmember Williamson. The vote was 4-1 in favor of the motion with Councilmember Adams casting the dissenting vote.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Mr. Teddy Warner, Community Development Director, presented a PowerPoint on the following items:

- **Undeveloped/Unused City Property:** Meeting with the new Habitat for Humanity Director and also reach out to other non-profit groups for potential uses.
- **Code Enforcement Issues:**
 - Abandoned homes and boarded up homes
 - Federal grant money for redevelopment
 - Rental management expectations
 - As time allows, these ideas will be presented to Council for discussion at different times throughout the year
 - Explore what other cities are doing besides Fayetteville
- **Green Space Project:** 35+ acres of City land located in flood zone areas
 - Local timber companies estimated the value of the timber
 - Feasibility study being conducted by local engineering company for the costs to clear all stumps and debris
 - Final project will be two (2) large green spaces potentially including the area behind Laurinburg Institute
- **Downtown Associates Program Update:** Downtown Associate Community Program 2nd meeting on 1/12/16 (next meeting April 12 here in the Council Chambers at 8:30 a.m.)
- **Downtown Improvements:** New pole flags, benches and trash cans will be in soon.
- **Art Garden Update:** Received ElectriCities Public Power Promotional Program \$2,000 grant
- **Art Festival Update:**
 - ECHODE is an interactive art project in Scotland County that blends multimedia storytelling, historical and cultural documentation, and community engagement to foster connection between people and the places they share.
<http://www.echode.org/>
 - The Arts Council is proposing a temporary mural project using some of these photos to the Scotland County School Board for a mural.

- Through this partnership, these photos would be displayed as part of the Art Garden dedication in the late spring of this year.
- **“Laurinburg on the Road with Cecil”**: First show will air February 17 at 12:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. on WPDE Channel 15.
- **Art Festival**: Forming a committee to work on an Art Festival at the Art Garden when it is completed.
- **Exploring uses of City-owned tract behind Public Works**: Will be discussing with Department of Commerce for possible grant funding.
- **Smart Sites Program**: Selected as one of up to 5 municipalities for the Smart Sites Program
 - Highly competitive application process
 - \$25,000 grant to help prepare our site for economic development qualifications
 - Once completed, our site will be marketed nationally and internationally by ElectriCities at numerous trade shows and industry events
 - Three (3) municipal sites currently in the program: Statesville, Tarboro, and Wilson
- **Economic Development**:
 - Meeting with leadership in the Department of Commerce for industrial development grant opportunities
 - Goal is to increase the infrastructure of our land and get it “shovel ready”

Mayor Parker discussed a visit to Rockingham to look at the museum and to discuss possible partnership with Richmond County on a similar venture in Laurinburg.

UPDATE ON STORM DRAINAGE ISSUES

Mr. Stacey McQuage, Public Utilities Director, presented a PowerPoint on storm drainage issues throughout the City, with highlights as follows:

- Pending Projects include repair a portion of the ditch that flows from Dickson Street to Leith Creek and the other is to replace almost replacing almost (200) two hundred feet of (24) twenty-four inch pipe that flows from Hillside Drive to a ditch parallel with King Street.
- Completed Projects include new road at Hillside Memorial Park which does not have any ponding issues.
- Routine Maintenance Areas include:
 - College Drive
 - Cypress Drive – Willis Engineering has been consulted to look at several properties that are built below the streets.
 - Ditch Crew works seasonally to clear ditches to keep water flowing.
- The Street Department uses a contractor to help with beaver problems. Before hiring a contractor we were breaking beaver dams daily to keep property from flooding. He has removed one large dam and trapped several beavers. We have used heavy equipment to destroy others dams.
- The City continues to have Inflow and Infiltration issues in sewer system. Smoke testing will be conducted to identify problem areas and stop storm water getting into the sewer system.
- Citizens can help the City with flooding problems by not placing leaves and other debris in the streets which cause the grates at the curb stop up and create flooding of streets and property.

UPDATE ON TOWN & COUNTRY MOBILE HOME PARK SEWER EXTENSION

The City Manager explained that he and staff reviewed revenues and expenditures in the Water/Sewer Fund to determine if the sewer extension to Town & Country Mobile Home Park could be completed in this fiscal year. He added that because of the financial position in the Water/Sewer Fund, he and staff recommend that the Public Utilities Department begin clearing through the wooded section, and if near the end of the current fiscal year if there are funds remaining, proceed with the sewer extension. He further added that if the extension could not be completed this year, to consider it for Fiscal Year 2016-2017 budget.

CONSIDER ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FY 2015-2016 BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE

The City Manager explained that this budget amendment is necessary in order to receive grant funding of \$2,000.00 from ElectriCities for downtown street signs.

Councilmember Leak expressed concern that no street signs were replaced north of Railroad Street and the need to look at all street signs.

Councilmember Adams moved to approve Ordinance No. O-2016-02 amending the FY 2015-2016 Budget Appropriations Ordinance (Ordinance No. O-2015-09) accepting \$2,000.00 grant funding from ElectriCities for downtown improvements. Councilmember Hammond seconded the motion, and it was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Adams, Hammond, Willis, Williamson

Nays: Leak

(Ordinance No. O-2016-02 on file in City Clerk's office)

CONSIDER FIRE COMMISSION REQUEST

The City Manager explained that in December the Scotland County Fire Commission requested Council to consider two (2) options concerning the proposed fire substation; however, he wanted to allow Fire Chief Gibson to get return to work following surgery to have input on the requests. He added that the requests were: accept \$110,000.00 from the County to build a fire substation on the south end of town or if that was not acceptable, request that the City sell to the County the property located behind the City's water tank on McColl Road so that the County could build the substation.

Chief Gibson explained that there are many positives to have a substation on the south side of the City. He added that there had been more annexations to in the southern part of the county and there were many volunteer firefighters in the southern part of the county. He further added that the State Fire Marshal's Office recommends that the optimal location of a fire substation is three (3) miles from the current fire station, and the location behind the water tank on McColl Road is 2.9 miles from the south fire station, and that by having the substation with fire apparatus strategically placed, the City as well as citizens outside the City limits would benefit. Chief Gibson explained that the proposal to give the City \$110,000.00 would not be adequate to construct a substation. He expressed concern that items such as thickness of the concrete floor and a bay door failure with only a back-in bay were not adequately considered. He added that he believed an engineer or architect needed to be consulted for construction of this type facility.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, Chief Gibson explained that Council had previously agreed to allow the substation to be built on the property behind the McColl Road water tank, clear the land, install sewer to the substation, maintain the substation after construction and allow City employees to maintain the equipment at the substation.

Upon questions by Councilmember Leak, Chief Gibson explained that because of the location of the City's water tank, he did not recommend selling the back portion of the property to the County. He also discussed the membership of the Scotland County Fire Commission.

Discussion ensued concerning having an architect and/or an engineer involved in construction of the building to ensure that it meets proper standards.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, Chief Gibson explained that he consulted an engineer who presented a figure of around \$200,000.00 to construct a substation.

Following further discussion about the proposal from the Scotland County Fire Commission to give the City \$110,000.00 to construct a fire substation, motion was made by Councilmember Willis, seconded by Councilmember Adams, and unanimously carried to deny the proposal until Council receives information from an architect and/or engineer that this funding amount would construct a proper substation.

Upon question by Councilmember Willis, Chief Gibson explained that the progress was being made on constructing the fire training tower. He added that engineered plans were approved that meet the State Building Code. He further added that the footings were being dug.

DISCUSSION OF OATH OF OFFICE FOR MAYOR-ELECT BLOCK

The City Manager explained that the oath of office for Mayor-Elect Block would be conducted on Tuesday, January 26, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers. He added that District Court Judge Christopher Rhue would administer the oath of office.

DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION CONCERNING CITIZEN INPUT SESSION

The City Manager explained that the Citizen Input Session was scheduled for February 11, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. He added that based upon request by Council, staff contacted the School System and the A.B. Gibson board room is not available that evening.

Discussion ensued concerning advertising options and costs of advertising. Councilmember Willis explained that he felt that if money is spent on advertising, the same amount should be spent with newspaper and the two (2) local radio stations.

Councilmember Williamson expressed concern about the format, location, advertising costs and poor attendance at the last few Citizen Input Sessions.

The City Manager explained that staff has discussed a different format for the Citizen Input, but it is dependent upon citizens attending.

Mayor Parker explained that Mr. Wade Hatcher who regularly has attended Citizen Input Sessions was in the audience and he wanted Mr. Hatcher's input on how to increase attendance and how to make the format more workable for the public.

Mr. Hatcher explained that he had no input on how to increase attendance. He added that he liked the small group discussion format.

Following discussion, it was consensus of Council for the Citizen Input Session to be held on February 11, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Councilmember Adams explained that Council had received an anonymous complaint letter and she requested that the citizen come to the Citizen Input Session to discuss ideas for improving the litter situation in the City.

DISCUSSION OF AMENDING THE DATES OF THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETINGS IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER, 2016

The City Manager explained that because of holidays in November and December, he was requesting that Council consider changing the dates of the regular Council meetings in those months. He added that as requested by Council, staff determined that there was no conflict with the North Carolina League of Municipalities Conference in October.

Councilmember Adams suggested that the November special meeting/work session be held on Wednesday, November 9, 2016 since November 8, 2016 was Election Day.

Motion was made by Councilmember Adams, seconded by Councilmember Willis, and unanimously carried to adopt the revised 2016 Schedule of Meetings with the amendment to schedule the November special meeting/work session on Wednesday, November 9, 2016.

APPOINTMENTS

CRIME AND DRUG COMMITTEE

Motion was made by Councilmember Adams, seconded by Councilmember Williamson, and unanimously carried to appoint Ms. Jamie Synan to the Crime and Drug Committee representing the Scotland County School System.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND/OR COUNCILMEMBERS

Councilmember Willis explained that he would like for Council to consider rechanneling some of the \$32,000.00 budgeted for the Scotland County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to the Community Development Department. He requested that this item be on the February agenda for discussion and consideration.

Councilmember Willis requested that for budgeting purposes, staff look at the Solid Waste Fund to consider options for services because the City cannot continue to keep the Fund solvent without passing on increases to the customers. He added that he would like for staff to look at tipping fees in surrounding counties.

Councilmember Hammond commended Mr. Harold Haywood, General Services Director, on being elected President of the state chapter of the American Public Works Association.

Discussion ensued concerning the County's Solid Waste Fee and the differing amounts charged to City residents and County residents.

Mayor Parker stated that this should be his last meeting as Mayor. He thanked the citizens, Council and staff for the support he has received during his tenure.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:00 p.m., Councilmember Adams moved to go into closed session pursuant to NC 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. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hammond, and carried unanimously.

At 9:16 p.m., Councilmember Williamson moved to adjourn the closed session and resume the open meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Willis, and carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilmember Willis, seconded by Councilmember Williamson, and unanimously carried to authorize the City Manager and City Attorney to expend up to \$5,000.00 to settle the property ownership issue with Mr. Alan Clark.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Willis, seconded by Councilmember Williamson, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Matthew Block, MD, Mayor

Jennifer A. Tippet, City Clerk