

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 16, 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, August 16, 2016 in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building at 7:00 p.m. with the Honorable Matthew Block, MD, 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 Block called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

Mayor Block reviewed the agenda.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mayor Block reviewed the Procedures for the Public Comment Period and general decorum for the meeting.

Mr. Charles Parker expressed concern about Council having a moment of silence instead of a prayer.

Following a brief discussion, Mayor Block suggested that this matter be revisited and added to the agenda in September.

Mrs. Barbara Sarah Schmidt, 444 South Main Street, explained that someone had asked her to request that the Barrett Building be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Block presented the Consent Agenda as follows:

- a) Consider minutes of May 9, 2016 special meeting/budget workshop; May 17, 2016 regular meeting; June 9, 2016 special meeting/budget workshop
- b) Consider Ordinance No. O-2016-06 Amending Ordinance No. O-2016-05 Budget Appropriations Ordinance by allocating \$7,500.00 from the General Fund for the Arts Council in line item 660-502200
- c) Consider setting public hearing to be held on September 20, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. to consider a request to rezone from General Business to Office/Institutional property located at 1327 Atkinson Street
- d) Consider setting public hearing to be held on September 20, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. to consider a request to rezone from Residential-6 to General Business property located at 323 N. Gill Street
- e) Consider Authorizing Mayor to Execute Order to Collect Taxes
- f) Consider Authorizing the Mayor to Execute Drainage Easements to the North Carolina Department of Transportation on Old Pump Station Property on Lee's Mill Road for \$120.00
- g) Consider Authorizing the City Manager to execute the Interlocal Contract for Cooperative Purchasing with H-GAC Buy

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

Ayes: Williamson, Hammond, Willis, Leak, Adams

Nays: None

PUBLIC HEARING

CONSIDER REQUEST FOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO OPERATE A GROUND MOUNTED SOLAR ARRAY

The City Attorney explained that he had a conflict of interest with this matter; therefore, Attorney Jerry Bruner would advise Council and act as the City Attorney for the purposes of this public hearing.

Mayor Block opened the public hearing.

Mr. Mac McInnis, City Planner and Code Enforcement Officer, being first duly sworn, explained that Mr. Bill Purcell, on behalf of Strata Solar, submitted an application for a ground-mounted solar array to be located on a parcel of land on US 15-501/401 North owned by Ms. Ann Halpin. He added that Planning Board heard the request at its June 6, 2016 meeting and due to the tie vote of 2-2, there was no recommendation from Planning Board. He further added that the application was complete and that the site plan meets all conditions required in the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). He recommended that the request be approved.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, Mr. McInnis explained that the decommissioning plan required that the solar array be decommissioned 12 months after no power has been produced at the solar array, and that the equipment must be removed 12 months after decommissioning.

Upon questions by Councilmember Hammond, Mr. McInnis explained that the solar array will be approximately 600 feet from Sneads Grove Road, and approximately 1,500 feet from the first residence on Sneads Grove Road. He added that the solar farm would be set back 100 feet from the property line facing US 15-501/401, and that the existing chain link fence is approximately the property line.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, Mr. McInnis explained that the solar panels will face south.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mr. McInnis explained that this request must be reviewed under existing regulations. He also explained that typically Planning Board has been unanimously opposed to requests for solar farms, and that he cannot explain the reasoning for Planning Board's split vote on this request.

Mr. Bill Purcell, attorney for Strata Solar and for Ms. Ann Halpin, property owner, requested that Mr. Jim Halley of Strata Solar, LLC testify.

Mr. Jim Halley, being first duly sworn, explained that he is a Registered Professional Engineer and has worked in the solar energy field for approximately 22 years, with two and a half (2.5) of those years with Strata Solar. He added that this is approximately the 110th solar farm that he has worked on since he has been with Strata Solar. He provided the following information:

- Approximately 30 acres of Ms. Halpin's property would be used for the solar farm.
- A buffer will be planted to meet the City's UDO requirements.
- Permanent access will be off Sneads Grove Road and a driveway permit would be obtained from NC Department of Transportation.
- Construction duration is approximately three (3) months.
- After construction is completed, the farm usually receives approximately 24 visits per year for routine maintenance.
- Some minor clearing of trees would occur.
- Wetlands exist on the north side of the property and would remain undisturbed.
- Areas have been reserved for potential sediment basins which may or may not be required by NC Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).
- This site would look similar to the existing solar farm located behind the high school, although said solar farm is not a Strata Solar farm.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, Mr. Halley explained that the solar arrays would be located in the existing open area of the property. He added that along the northeastern portion of the property, some tree clearing may be needed if DEQ requires sediment basins.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, Mr. Halley explained that if a cemetery is located on the subject property it would be discovered during the Phase I Environmental Review.

Upon question by Councilmember Williamson, Mr. Halley explained that the proposed solar farm would be roughly the same size as the one located behind the high school.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mr. Halley explained that the location of solar farms are driven by interconnections with major power companies. He added that Strata Solar does not seek to put solar farms on main thoroughfares.

Upon question by Mr. Purcell, Mr. Halley explained that the solar farm would not require any City services after it is constructed. He further explained that it is a passive use and that there would be virtually no traffic created and would be quiet as the inverters make an almost inaudible hum during the day and no sound at night. He added that a chain link fence would be required around the solar farm so that it would be secure.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, Mr. Halley explained that the solar modules are warranted up to 25 years at an 85% efficiency, and the inverter equipment has a 12-year lifecycle and will need to be replaced.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mr. Halley explained that the decommissioning plan protects the City when the solar farm no longer operates or if Strata Solar, LLC ceases to exist. He added that the salvage value of the equipment is an incentive for the equipment to be removed and revert the property back to its original use.

Mr. Tom Hester, 228 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, being first duly sworn, explained that he is a real estate appraiser with MAI designation and that he holds a North Carolina Broker's License. He further explained that he has been appraising property for 35 years in North Carolina, and visited this site as well as 40 other existing solar farms. He discussed the methodology he uses for appraising solar farm sites. He stated that a solar farm does not have an effect on nearby and adjacent property. He added that the property in question is flat with natural vegetation on north and west sides. He further added that the solar farm would be set back 100 feet from the property line with a 20 foot opaque buffer. He further added that there would be no noise, no traffic, no dust, no pesticides or any other things that could affect property values. He further explained that the solar farm would not affect other vacant land on the corridor and would have no effect on development patterns, use or value of existing development.

Upon questions by Mr. Purcell, Mr. Hester explained that he did prepare a report of his appraisal, a copy of which is attached to and incorporated into these minutes as Attachment A. He also stated that in his opinion as a licensed appraiser, the solar farm would not negatively impact surrounding property.

Ms. Ann Leach Halpin, being first duly affirmed, explained that the subject property was farmland owned by her family for over 200 years, and that she had just recently inherited the property. She added that she hoped to pass it on to her son, and that she has no intention of selling the property. She further added that her intentions are to maintain the property and do what is best for Laurinburg and her family with the property. She explained that she believed the solar farm was the best thing to happen to the farm in 50 years and it was a good way to move to the future. She discussed the 30-year plan for timber on the property. She added that she will continue to farm the timber.

Mr. Purcell stated that this completed the testimony and evidence in support of the Conditional Use Permit request for the solar farm. He added that it was demonstrated that the solar farm met the requirements of the UDO and that the Conditional Use Permit should be issued.

Ms. Molly Flowers, being first duly affirmed, explained that she lives at 16501 Sneads Grove Road which is in the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). She expressed concern that the solar farm would be located across from the City's cemetery and also would be facing her neighbor's patio side of their house. She stated that Mr. Purcell had reported to the newspaper that there were no residential homes involved; however, the property is only one-half (1/2) mile from the first residential home, her neighbors, the Dennisons. She added that she believed in a property owner being able to make use of their property but when it affects neighbors and property values, someone should step forward.

Mr. Purcell objected to Ms. Flowers' statements concerning property values.

Mr. Bruner explained that under the rules concerning quasi-judicial hearings, it was improper for anyone to testify who is not an expert about property values. He added that lay witnesses are specifically prohibited not only with the State statutes, but also the City's UDO, from testifying about property values, traffic patterns or any other thing that an expert would have to testify about. He further added that Council cannot consider any testimony that is not factually based and not presented by an expert.

Mrs. Flowers expressed concern that solar farms should have been more tightly regulated as soon as the first solar farm was approved. She discussed Council's vote to not allow an indoor shooting range that would have provided jobs at the former Abbott facility, and the current condition of the property including broken glass, overgrown grass, and broken trees. She expressed concern that the solar farm property will look like the former Abbott facility in a few years.

Mr. Purcell objected to Mrs. Flowers' testimony.

Mrs. Flowers discussed the buffer requirement for solar farms and that she has yet to see any trees planted around solar farms and has only seen a chain link fence. She stated that she was told when the solar farm closes, fees to clean it up are outrageously expensive because it could include mercury and other poisonous items. She expressed concern about well water. She requested that Council consider the facts and the research on health and environmental issues that have not been proven when taking a vote.

Mr. Charles Parker approached the podium to speak, and Mr. Purcell objected to Mr. Parker's testimony as he does not live near the site of the proposed solar farm.

Mr. Bruner explained that persons not substantially affected by the Conditional Use Permit do not have a statutory or Constitutional right to speak and can only testify as to what will affect him, and the solar farm would not affect him directly.

At the request of Councilmember Williamson, Mr. Bruner explained that there are limitations on what can be testified to at a quasi-judicial hearing unlike the public comment period or at

administrative public hearings. He further explained that Council has to act as judge in a quasi-judicial hearing, and make its determination based on findings of fact. The facts provided must be relevant, material and substantial evidence and not opinion. Additionally, the evidence must meet the standards set by the North Carolina General Statutes and the City's UDO. He further added that Council shall issue a Conditional Use Permit if it has evaluated an application through the quasi-judicial process and consider the testimony of the applicant, the City's Zoning Officer, and any experts for the findings of fact that are relevant, material and substantial evidence. He added that opinions are specifically not permitted under the General Statutes and the City's UDO. He added that expert opinion about appraisals can be considered; however, testimony by lay people is specifically not permitted under the General Statutes and the City's UDO. Council can only consider those facts saying if the burden of proof has been met by the applicant to show that all requirements under the City's UDO have been met to place the solar arrays at the location and the applicant has met with all requirements. The General Statutes state that if the applicant has done that, and Council makes that finding, then Council shall issue the Conditional Use Permit. Mr. Bruner explained that Council can allow individuals to speak; however, Council should consider only the testimony as defined in the General Statutes. He added that Mr. Purcell's objections are duly noted. Mr. Bruner explained that Council has latitude about how much testimony it hears, but can only consider facts presented by experts.

Mr. Charles Parker, being first duly affirmed, explained that he was not opposed to solar farms, but opposes them being located in the City limits and the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction.

Mr. Mike Dennison, 16681 Sneads Grove Road, being first duly sworn, explained that his property abuts the subject property and his home is the first residence on Sneads Grove Road when turning off Highway 401. He expressed concern that he will be able to see the solar farm from his home, and suggested an alternate piece of property for locating the solar farm. He explained that he is not opposed to technology, but would like for solar farms to be located where they can be completely surrounded by trees and not on major highways or near residences.

Ms. Maxine Douglas, 807 West Blvd, being first duly sworn, inquired as to what solar farms do for the City's electric system. She stated that her electric bill keeps going higher and higher.

Mr. Purcell objected to Ms. Douglas' testimony as she does not live nearby and is not affected.

Mrs. Kim Dennison, 16681 Sneads Grove Road, being first duly sworn, explained that there was a cemetery on the subject property between her residence and the proposed solar farm site. She expressed concern about the affect the solar farm will have on the ability to watch farming activity and view wildlife on the subject property.

There being no one else to speak, Mayor Block closed the public hearing.

Upon questions by Councilmember Adams, Mr. Halley explained that typically ground water flows to wetlands, and one is on the north side of the subject property. He added that most wells are at least 300 feet, and no contamination would make it that far. He further added that is not aware of any well contamination from a solar farm. He stated that the buffer would be extended across and over to the wetland area which would completely encapsulate the solar farm with a solid buffer.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, Mr. Halley explained that there is a gap of about 50 feet whereby the Dennisons can see across the subject property and the City's cemetery. He added that by extending the buffer, the solar farm should not be visible.

Upon question by Mayor Block, Mr. Halley explained that the buffer would be Type A screening buffer of about 20 feet wide and would be comprised of evergreens with some deciduous trees mixed in. Mr. Halley requested that the application be amended to include the extended buffer.

Upon question by Councilmember Willis, Mr. Halley explained that the plants needed to be a minimum of five (5) feet tall at time of planting and would take approximately 5-10 years to reach maturity.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, Ms. Halpin explained that there is a family cemetery on the large tract of land she owns, but not on the portion where the solar farm will be located. She added that she had the cemetery cleaned and a fence erected around it. She discussed the timber on the property and the 30-year plan for making it a better eco-system.

Councilmember Hammond explained that she understands citizens' concerns about solar farms; however Council can only act on factual information presented at the public hearing. She then moved to approve the request for a Conditional Use Permit to operate a ground mounted solar array on an 89.17 acre tract of land located on US 15-401/501 because the applicant has proven by competent, material and substantial evidence that it has met the requirements of Section 4.5.4.5 of the City's Unified Development Ordinance to include the application amendment to extend the buffer by 50 feet to the wood line as requested by Mr. Halley. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Leak, and the vote was 4-1 with Councilmember Willis casting the dissenting vote.

At 8:15 p.m. Mayor Block called for short break.

The meeting resumed at 8:23 p.m.

DELEGATION

James Garby, Jr. – Opposition to Proposed New City Hall

Mr. James Garby, Jr. discussed opposition to the proposed new City Hall, with highlights as follows:

- There are less City employees than three (3) years prior, so why is more space needed if the City is not growing?
- The City could partner with the School Board to use the A.B. Gibson Center for Council meetings. The current council chambers could be remodeled and used for more office space.
- Why are four (4) conference rooms needed in the proposed new building?
- Instead of building a fitness area, ask the local fitness center to offer discounted rates or complimentary use of its facility to law enforcement.

- Most of the additional space in the proposed new City Hall is conference rooms, large lobbies, reception office and other unnecessary rooms.
- Scotland County Law Enforcement has top of the line equipment for Breathalyzer and finger printing, so why is a separate station for that needed at the City?
- There is a need for the public paying utility bills. Adding a restroom would cost a fraction of the cost of a new building.
- Davenport & Company only looked at tax supported debt, yet assumed that the utility funds would pay 33% of the building costs.
- The only true historical numbers that were given to Davenport & Company were from the 2015 General Fund. Why not given years prior or wait until the 2016 figures were final?
- What happens if there is a natural disaster or other catastrophic event?
- Davenport & Company representative stated that just because there is borrowing capacity does not mean that the City should do so.
- The Davenport & Company representative stated that instead of borrowing money, Council could lower taxes.
- The condition of the municipal building has nothing to do with economic development.
- Recommend spending some money on a shell building, create a City Industrial Park.
- Revitalize downtown.
- Fund a recreation center.
- Oakley Collier is an architect firm, so of course they would recommend a new facility. Request that Council have an efficiency study completed.
- Public opinion and the petition with over 3,000 signatures should weigh more than anything.
- Why was money spent without first discussing it with taxpayers?
- Many City employees are opposed to the project but will not speak out for fear of being fired.
- It is misleading to state that a renovation would cost more than a new building due to masonry walls having to be moved. The option of fixing security and safety issues and giving the current facility a cosmetic facelift inside and out would only be a fraction of what a new facility would cost.
- Does not believe rumors that Council is receiving kickbacks but is trying to do its best to decide what is best for the citizens.
- Citizens including himself do not understand why they have not been giving answers to the questions asked of Council. He requested answers to the questions he raised.

Mr. Frank Evans discussed the following:

- City of Benton, Illinois voted to repurpose the former Benton grade school into a City Hall at a cost of \$1.22 million.
- The City Council of Fayetteville recently researched building a new ballpark and held a public input session. Citizens did not want the ballpark downtown, so it backfired on Fayetteville City Council. He encouraged Council to find out what citizens have to say.
- Concern for where money for employee pay raises will come from for the next 15-20 years if it is tied up on paying off a loan for constructing a new City Hall.
- On July 19, 2016 Ted Cole, the City's financial consultant presented professional opinion on numbers that he was provided, and stated that the debt cap is not the problem but that does

not mean the City should take on the debt. When asked by Mayor Block, Mr. Cole explained that should the proposed City Hall and Police Station not go forward, it was conceivable for taxes and utility rates to be lowered. Lowering of taxes and utility rates would be a positive impact for everyone.

- Expressed frustration with lack of response to requests for explanation of why a new City Hall and Police Station are needed.

Mr. Michael Schmidt, 444 South Main Street, discussed aspects and consequences of debt, particularly with the low income and high unemployment in the community. He explained that he felt the financing of a new City Hall and Police Station would place a significant financial burden on a small number of residents in Laurinburg. He discussed bad financial decisions by several governmental locations, including bankruptcy by Stockton, California and Detroit, Michigan. He explained that he had drafted proposed legislation to be submitted to the local State representatives designed to give additional protection to citizens of economically disadvantaged cities and counties so that enormous economic burdens cannot be imposed for discretionary spending decisions by a governing board but leave that decision to the citizens.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, Mr. Schmidt explained that he had already sent the proposed legislation to Senator McInnis, and that if the local representatives would not sponsor the legislation, he would look for other representatives who would sponsor it.

Mayor Block explained that he thought the purpose of Mr. Garby, Mr. Evans and Mr. Schmidt being on the agenda as a delegation as opposed to public comment was to have Council respond to questions.

Councilmember Leak discussed the City's involvement in acquiring the former Scotland Memorial Hospital property and construction of the Richmond Community College's Dianne F. Honeycutt Center on the site. He added that the City Council has been working on many great things for the community. Councilmember Leak asked of the members of the delegation what did they want the City to build if they did not want the City Hall.

Mr. Schmidt discussed that when he first came to Laurinburg, it was a thriving community with a thriving downtown filled with businesses and factories everywhere. He added that since that time, Laurinburg has become a ghost town. He added that Laurinburg does not need a new City Hall as it would not bring anyone to Laurinburg. He stated that the former Scotland Memorial Hospital building was a wreck and needed to be demolished but the Municipal Building is a great building.

Mr. Garby explained that construction of a shell building, development of an industrial park and revitalization of downtown are more appropriate uses of money.

Mr. Evans explained that he did not believe anything needed to be built as the City is operational.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, the City Manager explained that the City is in the process of developing a 300 acre site for a City Industrial Park and received a \$708,000.00 Industrial Development Fund (IDF) Grant to get sewer to the property.

Upon question by Mr. Garby, the City Manager explained that ElectriCities with its Smart Site Program is looking at 120 acres that is currently farmed to develop into the Industrial Park. He added that the sewer service will be to provide sewer service to an approximately 70-80 acres that butts up to the rail spur and US 74. He further added that that this area does not have sewer, but does have electric and fiber, and the 120 acres has all utilities.

Councilmember Leak discussed economic development efforts of the City including infrastructure of the incubator site at the Small Business Innovation Center (SBIC) to help develop the industrial park, which led to FCC North Carolina building its new facility beside the SBIC. He invited everyone to attend the monthly Scotland County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) meetings to hear what is going on about economic development.

Mayor Block explained that the EDC meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 3:00 p.m.

Mayor Block stated that what was alluded to most in the presentation was the idea of what is the need, absolute necessity of this building, and that also was mentioned that by conservative estimate 95% if not 99% of the citizens are against the building. He added that this was the opportunity for Council to explain to the citizens why the building is a necessity.

Councilmember Hammond explained that after the project was introduced concerning a new City Hall and Police Station, nine (9) meetings were held before one (1) person came to a meeting and expressed concern about the project. She added that the meetings included PowerPoint presentations and talked about what was needed before Council decided to hire an architect. In an effort to clear up some of the questions about the project, she proposed that Council direct the City Manager to ask the architect to scale back on the proposed drawing to a more simple design without furniture and fixtures, and for Council and staff to decide if the floor plan is what is needed and not what is wanted. She added to the proposal for the County Building Inspector to determine if the Municipal Building is in violation of the State Building Code, and to schedule a public input meeting for the first of October with the architect, contractor and financial consultant present to review the project and then to hear citizens' comments.

Councilmember Williamson explained that a space needs study was conducted before some members of Council were on the board, and that he believed that perhaps Council has not done a good job of demonstrating to citizens why Council feels a new City Hall and Police Station are needed. He added that he believed the Police Department in particular is less than adequate, and that he would like to ask the City Manager or Police Chief to explain what the issues are. He further added that Council is listening to citizens, but that Council needs to determine what is really needed, and then explain to citizens why it is needed, and hear from citizens.

Mayor Block reiterated Mr. Garby's statement that there had not been an unbiased look at the space needs as the only study that had been conducted was by an architect. He added that most organizations of similar size to the City and who are financially challenged hire a lean management firm an efficiency firm that has no vested interest in building a new building to determine the space needs. He added that he wanted Council to explain why an efficiency study could not be conducted

by an independent firm. He further added that the efficiency study could be completed in a couple of months to determine the least expensive manner of providing what is needed.

Councilmember Williamson explained that he is not an expert, but the City did have two (2) architectural firms look at the space needs. He added that the second firm validated the results of the first study.

Councilmember Willis stated that he was not in favor of building an \$11 million facility. He added that he agreed with Councilmember Hammond about setting a special meeting the first week of October to have a public input session and dialog in an orderly fashion from Council and citizens.

Mayor Block expressed concern that Council would not agree to an unbiased option of how to solve the perceived needs in a less expensive fashion. He added that an efficiency study could be done probably in early October. He questioned how options could be presented to citizens when Council had not considered Mr. Garby's suggestions of adding a new bathroom, having a facelift of the Municipal Building inside and out, and to have real experts give their opinions.

Councilmember Williamson explained that Council has heard from two (2) different groups that say that renovating the Municipal Building is significantly more expensive to renovate the building versus building a new one. He added that Council specifically asked about renovation options and were told that the wall structures and the ceiling heights on the second floor would be 7-foot because it would have to be refitted.

Councilmember Hammond stated that she would like for the County Building Inspector to come look at the Municipal Building.

Upon question by Mr. Evans, Mr. Leak explained that approximately 15 years ago, Council saw the need to build a new police station and blueprints were developed; however, due to the economy, Council kept putting the construction off. He added that because the debt of the City has decreased over years, Council wanted to look at the facility needs again and make a decision as to what was needed.

Councilmember Adams explained that Council has not had an opportunity to discuss the layout and rooms depicted in the most recent plans for the proposed new City Hall and Police Station. She added that she questioned the need for some of the space and why there would be two (2) receptionists on the same floor. She further added that Council is trying to do what is best and right for the citizens and employees. She explained that she loved the Barrett Building, but there did not appear to be any historical significance. She further explained that Council has not yet discussed the financial information presented last month and staff has not even looked at the current floor plans for the building.

Councilmember Hammond expressed concern about the lack of a sprinkler system in the Municipal Building and the Barrett Building. She added that the Police Department in particular, had received temporary fixes for years. She further added that safety and working conditions needed to be investigated.

Further discussion ensued renovation of the Municipal Building.

Councilmember Hammond made a motion as follows:

- For the City Manager to ask the architect to revisit the design for a more simple design; and
- For Council and staff to revisit the floor plan to determine what is needed versus what is wanted, and for Council and staff to report to the City Manager by the end of the month any changes that are needed so that the City Manager can contact the architect and contractor; and
- For the City Manager to have the County Building Inspector inspect the Municipal Building to determine if there are any State Building Code violations; and
- Schedule a public input meeting to include the inspector, architect, construction firm and financial consultant providing all information for the citizens to review the new plan and hear all of the information; and
- Council could then determine what space was needed and if an efficiency study was needed.

The motion was seconded by Councilmember Leak, and the vote was as follows:

Ayes: Hammond, Leak, Adams, Willis, Williamson

Nays: None

Following discussion, it was consensus of Council to schedule a public input session on October 11, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. with the location at either the Scotland County Emergency Operations Center or the A. B. Gibson Center depending on which was available.

The City Clerk requested Council's guidance on advertising. She discussed advertising with the local radio stations and the newspaper. She explained that the newspaper advertising costs are the highest, and then suggested that the same amount of money spent with the newspaper be divided and spent between the two (2) local radio stations.

Motion was made by Councilmember Leak, seconded by Councilmember Williamson, and unanimously carried for the City Clerk to purchase advertising in *The Laurinburg Exchange* and with the two (2) local radio stations.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

CONSIDER AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE MASTER SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH POWER GENERATION SERVICES, INC.

Mr. Charles Grubbs of Power Generation Services presented a PowerPoint presentation on a service to manage the City's existing generators and apply monitors that will allow the City to use peak shaving of electricity, thereby reducing energy costs for the City. He explained that a control module would be added to the City's generators which would send information to a network control center.

Upon question by Councilmember Williamson, the City Manager explained that the City would purchase the control module and the City would recoup those costs within the first year of

operation. He added that there would be some revenue beginning between years two (2) and four (4) of operation.

Following further discussion, motion was made by Councilmember Willis, seconded by Councilmember Adams, and unanimously carried to authorize the City Manager to execute Master Services Agreement with Power Generations Services, Inc.

CONSIDER AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AGREEMENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN THIRD SERIES OF “ON THE ROAD”

The City Manager explained that the Laurinburg/Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce had asked if the City wanted to participate in the Third Series of “On the Road” on WPDE Channel 15. He added that there was no specific program promoting the City.

Following a brief discussion, motion was made by Councilmember Hammond, seconded by Councilmember Leak, and unanimously carried to authorize participation in the Third Series of “On the Road”.

CONSIDER AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDING \$5,000.00 TO SCOTLAND COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The City Manager explained that the Scotland County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) had voted to help Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission purchase property from St. Andrews University that would protect part of the Airport’s drop zone. He added that the EDC requested the City and County jointly fund \$10,000.00 of the purchase price, \$5,000.00 each.

Motion was made by Councilmember Williamson, seconded by Councilmember Adams, and unanimously carried to approve funding of \$5,000.00 to the Scotland County Economic Development Corporation to assist Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission purchase property from St. Andrews University.

DISCUSSION ON SOLAR FARM REGULATIONS

The City Manager explained that as directed by Council, staff has been researching solar farm location in the main corridors and entranceways to the City. He added staff has made a recommendation but will need direction from Council.

Mr. Mac McInnis, City Planner and Code Enforcement Officer, explained that overlay districts are typically used to enhance permitted uses that already exist in a zoning district; therefore, overlay districts are not relevant for solar farms because they are not a permitted use in any zoning district, but are allowed by Conditional Use Permit approved by Council. He then read his recommendation on regulating solar farms as follows:

Amend Supplemental Regulations that apply to Ground Mounted Solar Arrays to state: No new solar arrays will be allowed within the Corporate Limits of the City of Laurinburg or within one mile of an existing solar array on parcels that abut main highway entrance

corridors into the City of Laurinburg in the ETJ, being Highway 15-401/McColl Road, US 15-401/Wagram Road, US 15-501/Aberdeen Road, US 15-501/Johns Road, and Highway 74 Business or Bypass East and West.

Following discussion, motion was made by Councilmember Adams, seconded by Councilmember Hammond, and unanimously carried for this amendment be presented to Planning Board for consideration.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION GRANT UPDATE

The City Manager informed Council that the City had received a \$94,000.00 grant for downtown revitalization. He added that the pre-application with a project or projects identified must be submitted to NC Commerce by September 1, 2016. He explained that staff is looking at several projects including the pass-through at 115 Main Street, downtown lighting, a stage for the Art Garden and directional signs to downtown.

MAYOR'S REPORTS

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mayor Block explained that the committee did not meet in July and the Recreation Center was not on the agenda for August. He added that it would be on the Committee agenda in September.

REQUEST FOR STAFF TO RESEARCH RECREATION CENTERS

Mayor Block stated that he withdrew this request.

DISCUSSION ON SPACE NEEDS

Mayor Block stated that this topic had already been covered.

COMMENTS FROM MAYOR AND/OR COUNCILMEMBERS

Councilmember Leak reminded everyone that school is starting soon.

Councilmember Adams requested that if the Mayor has been asked to represent the City at Chamber events and cannot attend, to notify Council with enough notice so that the event could be covered.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:54 p.m., Councilmember Adams moved to go into closed session pursuant to NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Leak, and unanimously carried.

At 10:34 p.m., Councilmember Hammond moved to adjourn the closed session and resume the open meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Leak, and carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

Matthew Block, MD, Mayor

Jennifer A. Tippett, City Clerk