

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 13, 2009
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 work session on October 13, 2009 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room of the W. Charles Barrett Administration Building with the Honorable Matthew Block, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Rembert DeBerry, Amanda B. Faulk, Curtis B. Leak, and Thomas W. Parker, III. *Councilmember Herbert M. Rainer, Jr. arrived at 7:10 p.m.*

Also present were Edward F. Burchins, City Manager, Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk and Charles L. Hicks, Jr., City Attorney.

Mayor Block called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Invocation was given by Councilmember Faulk.

AGENDA WORKSHOP

The City Manager reviewed the proposed agenda for Council's meeting to be held Tuesday, October 20, 2009.

The following items on the agenda were briefly discussed:

- Resolution which directs the street improvement project to begin on Peele St.
- Consider conditional use permit request for the development of a Photovoltaic Solar Array (Solar Farm) on a 31.16 acre tract of land along Stewartville Road (tabled from September meeting)
- Consider conditional use permit request for development of a Photovoltaic Solar Array (Solar Farm) on a 64.78 acre tract site along McColl Rd. (tabled from September meeting)
- Consider Ordinance to rezone from Residential-15 to General Business-Conditional Use District a 5.727 parcel of land located along Westwood Way (tabled from September meeting)

Mayor Block asked if there was any further information that Council needs regarding this request.

Councilmember Faulk stated she has been inundated with questions from citizens about the rezoning request on Westwood Way. She stated some of their concerns were:

- When was the traffic study completed?
 - Is the zoning different from the previous rezoning request or exactly the same?
 - The retention pond overflow - if it overflows, what effect will it have with the drainage system
 - Traffic concerns
 - The distance between the proposed signal light and the one already positioned
- Ordinance to amend 2009-2010 Budget Appropriations Ordinance to transfer funds from the Water/Sewer Fund Balance to Non-Departmental Contracted Services to conduct a water study
 - Ordinance to amend Section 40-117 Water and sewer billing adjustment and Section 40-374 Billing adjustment-Electric System of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Laurinburg

Mayor Block gave an update on the Recreation Center Committee. He explained that members would consist of two members of the Laurinburg City Council, two Scotland County Commissioners, Mr. Guy McCook, Chairman of the

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, the Chairman of the Scotland County School Board and one other school board member. The City Manager and the County Manager as non voting ex-officio members would also be part of the committee.

Councilmember Rainer suggested that the meeting time be changed following the initial meeting to 6:00 p.m.

Councilmember Leak stated that he feels that the Scotland County Parks and Recreation Director should be part of the committee.

Councilmember Faulk agreed with Councilmember Leak's suggestion.

Councilmember Parker stated that the City should be careful about how the committee is orchestrated because this project should be a County idea.

Mayor Block stated that this committee brings all the stakeholders together in order to discuss the need for a Recreation Center.

Mayor Block informed Council that initially he had proposed that the Scotland County Parks and Recreation Director serve on the committee as a non-voting ex officio member, but the County Manager and the Chairman of County Commissioners have decided that, at least initially, the Scotland County Parks and Recreation Director did not need to serve on the Committee.

Following the review of the proposed agenda, the discussion regarding bidding out the audit was deleted from the October regular meeting.

LAURINBURG DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATON CORPORATION (LDRC)

The City Manager stated that he and Mayor Block had a meeting with the President of LDRC and discussed the vacant position it has for an administrative assistant. He stated that he would like to suggest that, in the interim, while search is conducted to fill the position, the City provide technical assistance or manpower as needed though the planning department or any other city departments. He stated that the President of LDRC discussed whether the position should continue as a part time position or whether they should consider changing it to a full time position.

Councilmember Faulk stated that if a full time position is needed that LDRC will need more money. She also stated that with a full time position more grant opportunities will be available and that becoming a member of the Main Street Program will be more likely.

The City Manager stated he will be on the LDRC Board and will have active participation in plans for the downtown area.

Mayor Block stated that in discussions with the LDRC President that there is an opportunity that the person in that position could become a city employee. This would allow greater help for the downtown area with ordinances and other city related concerns.

A discussion ensued and it was stated that the City contributes \$42,500.00 to the corporation with a portion of that money coming from the special tax district.

WESTPOINT STEVENS WATER/WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

The City Manager explained that there have been several meetings over the last couple of weeks to discuss the Westpoint Stevens project.

He stated that he would like to hire an engineer to work with the City to evaluate alternatives that are available for this project including ground water and surface water possibilities. He then explained that the City should take a look at

combining its water system and Scotland County's system and look also to working with the Laurinburg/Maxton Airport in order to consider combining all of the systems in Scotland County to provide water to the region. He explained that he would like to look at designing a strategic approach and what would it take to make this idea work on a much larger scale than just being a part of the Westpoint Stevens project. He stated that there are opportunities to work with Scotland County and the two county region to provide water and possibly sewer services as well.

He then explained that the City has a surplus of ground water at this time, and there is the possibility of the City selling Pinehurst well water in the interim with Pinehurst building water lines in order to transport the water from Laurinburg to Pinehurst.

The City Manager discussed several options for Council to consider in the water system project.

Councilmember Parker stated that he felt that before an engineer is hired that discussions should be had with interested water participants.

Councilmember Leak reminded everyone that the City Manager had been directed to conduct a water study within 90 days and to share with the Scotland County Board of Commissioners the best way to handle the West Point Stevens Water/Wastewater Treatment Plants project.

The City Manager was directed by Council to ask Scotland County if they would participant in providing funds to complete the water study.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

The City Manager stated that there have been situations that have come up where the City has made mistakes in billing water and/or electric customers. He stated he would like to formulate and present to Council an amended ordinance that would allow the City to reimburse or collect from a customer up to three years for a major billing error by the City.

DATAMATIC, BROADBAND STUDY, SCHOOLLINK

The City Manager stated that the City needs to reevaluate its broadband system - what is it is doing now, what is it capable of in future, and whether the City wants to make new investments in the system. He explained that someone would be coming in to make an assessment of the City's broadband system and will also look at the entire system and how it interacts with the School system, Scotland County, and other customers that the City currently has. This company will also review an automated meter reading system as our current provider has failed to implement its system appropriately.

He stated that he would report on Schoollink at the next meeting. He stated that Schoollink had been contacted regarding its payment to the City. He then stated that another internet provider is being contacted in order to ascertain its amenities and costs.

REORGANIZATION

The City Manager stated that the reorganization of the Street, Beautification, and Cemetery departments has now been completed under Stacey McQuage, Utilities Director at Public Works. The Beautification Department will move to Public Works, and the Cemetery will move to the office at the cemetery.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember DeBerry, seconded by Councilmember Rainer, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Matthew Block, Mayor

Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk