

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 7, 2011
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
303 WEST CHURCH ST.
LAURINBURG, NC
6:30 P.M.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held a special meeting for the purpose adopting a resolution to the North Carolina Department of Transportation to reduce the speed limit from the US 74 Overpass Bridge to Turnpike Road (SR 1105) and to discuss the proposed 2011-2012 budget at 6:30 p.m. in the council room of the Municipal Building with the Honorable Matthew Block, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Curtis B. Leak, Thomas W. Parker III, Kenton Spencer, and Joy Ellison. Councilmember Herbert M. Rainer, Jr. was absent.

Also present were: Edward F. Burchins, City Manager; Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk; Cindy Carpenter, Finance Director; Stacey McQuage, Public Utilities Director; Bob Bell, Human Resources/Risk Management Director; Police Chief John Evans; and Brandi Deese, Planning and Zoning Officer.

Mayor Block called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Block gave the invocation.

Mayor Block stated that the first item of business is to consider Resolution No. R-2011-04 which requests the North Carolina Department of Transportation to reduce the speed limit on West Boulevard from the US Highway 74 overpass bridge to Turnpike Road from 45 mph to 35 mph and authorizes the City Clerk to sign the Certification of Municipal Declaration.

Councilmember Leak moved to adopt Resolution No. R-2011-04 requesting the North Carolina Department of Transportation to reduce the speed limit on West Boulevard from the US Highway 74 overpass bridge to Turnpike Road from 45 mph to 35 mph and authorizes the City Clerk to sign the Certification of Municipal Declaration. Councilmember Parker seconded the motion and it was adopted by the following vote:

Ayes: Leak, Ellison, Spencer, Parker

Nays: None

SCOTLAND COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY

Mayor Block recognized members from the Scotland County Humane Society.

Mrs. Karla Milholland, Humane Society Shelter Director, and Philippe Laurent, a member of the Humane Society Board of Directors, appeared before Council to give an overview of the Scotland County Humane Society and to request that the City continue funding the Humane Society.

Mrs. Milholland gave an overview of the Humane Society (Animal Society) which included the number of dogs and cats it can house, the days it is open, number of employees, and other essential information regarding the operation of the Animal Shelter.

She explained that in today's tough economic times, the Humane Society is a bargain for what it provides the City and the County. She concluded by thanking Council for its monetary support over the years and requested that Council consider continuing its funding to the Scotland County Humane Society.

A discussion ensued regarding the increase in the Humane Society's proposed budget.

Mr. Laurent explained that there has been a large increase in the number of dogs and cats that are being brought to the shelter. He explained that other costs such as vaccines have also increased.

Upon further discussion regarding the Animal Shelter proposed budget, Mrs. Milholland stated that there is a new position included in the budget to hire an adoptions coordinator.

Mrs. Kathy Murphy, Board Member, also spoke requesting that the City continue its funding of the Animal Shelter.

Mrs. Trisha Dooling also spoke requesting that the City continue its funding of the Animal Shelter.

Upon question by Councilmember Spencer, Mrs. Milholland stated that volunteers already give significant time to the animal shelter and further stated that a trained adoption coordinator would help the shelter and the adoption of the animals.

Following further discussion, Mrs. Cindy Carpenter, Finance Officer for the City of Laurinburg, stated that she would provide a copy of the Humane Society's detailed budget to Council for review.

REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED 2011-2012 BUDGET

The City Manager stated he was pleased to present the 2011-2012 Proposed Budget to City Council. The proposed budget for 2011-2012 is \$33,360,995.00 which is a decrease of \$171,889.00 (or 0.15%) from the 2010-2011 Budget. He explained that the budget was developed keeping in mind items that Council discussed at its retreat, items from the Citizen Input Session, items that the department heads felt were necessary to keep the City's infrastructure and equipment running properly, and items that staff believed would enhance the services of the City of Laurinburg.

The City Manager and the Finance Director reviewed the projected revenues for the proposed 2011-2012 budget.

The City Manager stated that one of the challenges in the proposed budget is how the County's revaluation of property will directly affect our tax collection. The proposed tax rate is set at its current tax rate of \$0.42 per \$100.00 valuation. He explained that there are funds to enhance employee pay if Council so chooses. He noted that the department heads have tried to keep spending as level and flat as possible.

The City Manager also explained that, during the budget process, there has been discussion on the reorganization of the departments primarily in the area of public works and water/sewer utilities.

The City Manager next stated that there will be presentations on each department in the General Fund. He added that if there are any issues that Council feels need more discussion than can be given at a particular meeting, Council can either add them into the budget as contingency or make a “parking list” for items to be considered later in the budget process.

Governing Body

The City Manager reviewed the Governing Body portion of the proposed budget. The City Manager stated that petition fees for street resurfacing, annexation, storm drainage, etc. will increase in order to recoup part of the advertising fees required by the General Statutes.

Following discussing of the Governing Body portion of the proposed budget, there were no changes requested at this time.

Administrative

Mrs. Cindy Carpenter stated that this portion of the budget includes the City Manager and City Clerk operating expenses.

Following discussion, there were no changes requested at this time.

Personnel and Safety

Mr. Bob Bell, Human Services Officer, reviewed his portion of the proposed 2011-2012 budget.

There were no changes requested at this time.

Finance Department

Mrs. Cindy Carpenter reviewed the finance department portion of the proposed 2011-2012 budget.

There were no changes requested at this time.

Accounting

Mrs. Cindy Carpenter reviewed the accounting department portion of the proposed 2011-2012 budget.

There were no changes requested at this time

Taxation

Mrs. Cindy Carpenter reviewed the taxation portion of the proposed 2011-2012 budget.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, Mrs. Carpenter stated that the tax collection percentage for last year was approximately 95%.

There were no changes requested at this time.

Building and Maintenance

Mr. Stacey McQuage, Public Utilities Director, reviewed the General Fund portion of Building and Maintenance for the proposed 2011-2012 budget.

Mr. McQuage stated that this budget covers the Barrett Building and City Hall.

Mr. McQuage explained that \$15,000.00 is being requested in the Maintenance & Repair Building line item in order to complete the repair of the ceilings of the Barrett Building where damage occurred from leakage of the roof. The roof has now been repaired. This amount also includes service and repair to eight air conditioning units at the Barrett Building and City Hall.

Councilmember Rainer requested that staff provide to Council at the next meeting a summary of budget amendments in the General Fund for the current budget year.

There were no changes requested at this time.

Administration/Development

Mrs. Brandi Deese, Zoning Officer, reviewed the Administration/Development (Community Development Department) proposed 2011-2012 budget.

She explained that there is no longer a director's position. She then explained that the salary line item reflects the administrative office assistant for the Barrett Building (Planning and GIS Departments).

Upon question by Councilmember Rainer regarding the health insurance line item, Mrs. Carpenter explained that that may still include the Director of Administration which is vacant. She advised that she will research and make appropriate changes before the next meeting.

The City Manager explained that the City received monies for technical assistance from the State's Energy Office to evaluate the City's building to help determine how to reduce power usage. He stated that a draft has been received and is in the process of review.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak regarding the automotive maintenance & supply line item, Mrs. Deese explained that the City's garage recommended that the car previously used by the Community Development Administrator be driven in order to maintain its usability.

There were no other changes requested at this time.

Planning and Development

Mrs. Deese presented an overview of the Planning and Development Department proposed budget for fiscal year 2011-2012.

She explained that a part-time code enforcement officer is included in the proposed 2011-2012 budget. She also stated that the Community Development Administrator's position has not been filled and that responsibility is being absorbed by other staff members. Mrs. Deese then stated that the position of part-time code enforcement officer would entail someone enforcing housing nuisances, signage, junk vehicles and other code issues.

Mrs. Deese then explained that a capital item expense is putting the Unified Development Ordinance on the webpage at a cost of \$10,000.00.

Councilmember Parker suggested that the Lumber River Council of Governments (COG) be contacted to help with the City's code enforcement.

Mrs. Deese stated that from her understanding is that a City of Laurinburg's size is expected to enforce its code itself and to have a position for this service.

The City Manager stated that he would discuss with the COG its code enforcement program.

Following further discussion, it was consensus among Councilmembers to put on the parking lot list the \$10,000.00 for the implementation of the Unified Development Ordinance on the webpage as well as the part-time code enforcement position.

Councilmember Rainer suggested that staff consider management trainee positions within the City so that, if a managerial position becomes vacant, there will be someone to fill that position within the organization.

The City Manager stated that there is a list of employees that can be provided to Council.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Matthew Block, Mayor

Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk