

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
AGENDA WORKSHOP
MARCH 15, 2011
W. CHARLES BARRETT ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
305 WEST CHURCH ST.
7:00 P.M.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held an agenda meeting March 15, 2011 at 7:00 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, Kenton Spencer, and Joy Ellison. Councilmember Parker arrived at 7:04 p.m. Hebert M. Rainer, Jr. was the only Councilmember absent.

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

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

Mayor Block stated that the upcoming agenda for the March 22, 2011 regular meeting will begin with the:

- 1) Approval of Agenda
- 2) Consent Agenda
The City Manager stated that included in the consent agenda is the approval of the proposed minutes from the Citizen Input Session held February 3, 2011; agenda workshop held February 15, 2011; City/County Joint Meeting held February 16, 2011

There was no discussion regarding the consent agenda.

- 3) Conditional use permit by Michael's Amusements, Inc. for a carnival at the location of 900 US 15-401 By-Pass-March 31, 2011-April 10, 2011
Mr. Bill Peele explained that this request is the same as last year. Council needs to consider the request because of the length of time of the carnival. Mayor Block asked if the fees for conditional use permits or other fees in the Zoning Department have been reviewed recently. Mr. Peele explained that they have not and do need to be reviewed. It was consensus among Councilmembers that the Zoning Department research fees and bring them before Council for review during the budget process.
- 4) Consider Ordinance No. O-2011-06 which extends the corporate limits of the City of Laurinburg as requested by petition to annex property on Hasty Road
The City Clerk explained that this request came before Council as a petition for voluntary annexation and Council had approved the Resolution of Intent. This is the next step for voluntary annexation inside the city limits
- 5) Laurinburg/Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce-Quarterly Report- Theresa Lamson, President
No discussion
- 6) Laurinburg Downtown Revitalization Corporation (LDRC) – Revolving Loan Fund, Theresa Lamson, Vice Chair
The City Manager explained that the LDRC, the Chamber, and the City have been discussing different alternatives to establish a revolving loan fund that will be administered by the City. The

process will be explained at the regular meeting. This is for Council to consider if the City would participate in this fund. He explained that Scotland County is willing to participate. He explained that each entity would contribute \$5,000.00 a year for three years.

At this point of the meeting, Mayor Block spoke highly of the re-designed website. He also asked Council if they are interested in having the Council meetings broadcast on the webpage.

The City Manager stated that the Community Access Channel may be able to handle the streaming of the meeting. He indicated that he will regroup the Community Access Channel Committee and have them begin regular meetings once again.

7) Discussion of Citizen Input Session – Initial discussion of Main Items

Mayor Block stated that he would like to review the top items from the citizen input session.

a. He stated that free Wi-Fi was top on the list. There was discussion among Council and the consensus was for the City Manager to research what the cost would be to implement Wi-Fi.

b. Recreation Center - Mayor Block stated he would like to revive the Recreation Center Committee to continue its research on establishing a Recreation Center. There was a consensus among Councilmembers that the Mayor revives the Committee as long as the proposed Center continues to be a Scotland County function. Mayor Block stated that the Scotland County Recreation Advisory Committee would be a part of the committee.

c. Install more street lights - The City Manager explained that he and the Electrical Superintendent had discussed the cost of increasing the illumination of street lighting by 25-30%. \$120,000.00 a year is now being spent per year for street lighting. He stated that the cost analysis would be presented at the budget workshop.

d. Develop more incentives to encourage more restaurant/entertainment growth- Mayor Block explained that shortly after becoming Mayor a retail committee had been formed but is not active at this time. He stated that the Economic Development Committee is now handling some of the recruitment. He also stated that the City Manager, once his list of activities has been completed, should research how similar sized cities are recruiting more retail and entertainment facilities or turn it completely over to the Economic Development Committee. A discussion ensued. There was no decision at this time. The City Manager then stated that the upcoming Highland Games would be conducting an event in the downtown area this year.

d. Improvement appearance of vacant lots - There is method in place to address this issue. The City Manager stated that LDRC is working with an attorney in order to secure an agreement to allow the City to clean the parking lot behind the old Market Furniture Building and make improvements if Council so chooses.

8) Business improvement zone financial information

Mayor Block stated that during Council's retreat that this item was mentioned. He discussed the handout he presented which gives a background on the legal framework for business improvement districts in North Carolina. He stated that it discusses how to create an improvement zone and that there are statutes where City Council can create an improvement zone. He also discussed common services which include enhanced maintenance of streets, putting in sidewalks, other public facilities, extra security, and other amenities as long as the funds go back into district. Council also has the authority to draw the district as long as it incorporates a reasonable downtown area and a contiguous area. He further explained the criteria in creating an improvement zone. He stated that Council could create a zone to include the area from Subs N Cream on South Main Street, down to St. Andrews Presbyterian College, turn right at the stop light at US Highway 401 South, and down to Wal-Mart area. He stated that this proposed district has a net taxable value of the property of \$80,000,000.00. He then stated a ten cent tax would generate \$80,000.00. He further stated that if the rate was established at the present rate of the downtown area, it would generate \$169,000.00.

Councilmember Spencer stated that he was not in favor an implementing an improvement zone at this time because of the economy and that to add a tax burden on small businesses or struggling businesses does not seem appropriate.

Mayor Block then stated that this is an item to explore if Council so desires.

Councilmember Parker stated that his feeling is the same as Councilmember Spencer.

- There was a consensus among Councilmembers that this proposal not be considered at this time.*
- 9) Update on Industrial Park
The City Manager stated that there have been discussions concerning the property located at US 15-401 By-pass. The property owner is not ready to sell. He explained that staff has been working with Mr. Jim Mason because he takes care of the property for the owner. The City Manager stated numerous letters have been sent to the property owner to ask if the owner would discuss the purchase of the property. He then stated that he is asking that Council approve the Mayor composing a letter on behalf of Council asking the property owner to consider selling. Upon question by Councilmember Spencer, the City Manager stated that another option is to partner with the Scotland County Economic Development Committee (EDC) and consider three other sites that were proposed for an Industrial Park. He explained that the City could go three miles outside the City Limits and make a satellite annexation, but the idea was to find a property that was close to the City's electrical service so that the City could serve the park. He then explained that if this property continues to not be available, the idea is to team up with the EDC Director and come up with some type of resolution. A discussion ensued on the property and there was consensus that the City Manager draft a letter as a last attempt to procure the property and if not, then work with EDC Director on another site.
- 10) Set date for downtown summit with property owners
Mayor Block stated that at the retreat it was agreed that a larger downtown summit would be beneficial. The City Manager stated that the Laurinburg Downtown Revitalization Corporation Director is researching the out-of-town property owners in order to find out just how many do not live in Scotland County. A discussion ensued regarding the downtown summit. There was no date decided at this time.
- 11) Actions taken at Council retreat
Mayor Block summarized the actions taken at the retreat. He stated that, for him, the take home message was that City Council desires more formality in conducting the meetings. He then stated that he will be enforcing several simple rules and not the complete Robert's Rules of Order. This would include not interrupting when someone is speaking. Councilmember Spencer stated that Robert's Rules of Order is a working point of conducting a meeting. It is not only enforcing rules but also abiding by the rules. He suggested that Robert's Rules of Order should be utilized as the platform for conducting meetings. The City Manager stated that from the retreat he was instructed to talk with the Employment Security Commission about an employee survey. He explained that there is a meeting scheduled for Friday. He informed Council that suggestions boxes have been located in all departments. He stated that Chief Evans is contacting the person at the Department of Transportation who is in charge of signalization in order to discuss times that they could be set to caution. He stated that the loan to the airport commission is moving forward. Staff has received a copy of the sweepstakes ordinance from the City of Lumberton. He continued with updating Council on other items discussed at the retreat.
- 12) Discussion of letter from Scotland County Tourism Development Authority regarding lighting US Highway 74
Mayor Block stated that there was discussion some time ago about lighting the interchanges on US Highway 74 (the South Main interchange, the US Highway 401 interchange, and the area by Scotland Memorial Hospital (Caledonia Rd.). He explained that the NC Department of Transportation (DOT) has informed the City that all interchanges would have to be considered because of the proximity of each to the other. He stated that DOT has estimated that to light the three interchanges the cost would be approximately \$500,000.00. He then stated the cost of the electricity would be in the range of \$10,000.00-\$12,000.00 per year. He explained that the Scotland County Tourism Development Authority feel this project is important for economic development purposes. He stated that they have offered to contribute \$100,000.00 to the project. A discussion ensued on the proposed project. There was a consensus among Councilmembers that the City Manager contact other entities to find out if they want to participate in this project and to also look at other funding options.
- 13) Consider Ordinance No. O-2011-07 which amends the Budget Appropriation Ordinance to

transfer funds (\$15,000.00) from Contingency (990-509900) to Building and Maintenance (500-707300) Building Improvements for the repair of the roof at the Barrett Building

Mr. Bill Peele stated that Council had asked him to look into the cost of a metal roof versus a shingle roof. He explained that the original estimate from Britt and Britt roofing out of Lumberton was \$4,400.00 to replace membrane which is the rubber roof above the elevator shaft and the estimate to replace the main roof was \$8,033.00. He informed Council that to replace the current roof with a metal roof would cost \$25,000.00-\$30,000.00.

A discussion ensued and there was consensus among Councilmembers that the contract should be awarded Britt and Britt Construction, Lumberton, NC to install an asphalt shingle roof.

- 14) Consider low bidder for the purchase of a Custom Pumper for the Laurinburg Fire Department (contingent upon Council approving financing of truck)

The City Manager stated that upon investigation of the bids submitted for a pumper truck for the Laurinburg Fire Department the salesmen have offices in North Carolina but the truck manufactures are all of state. There was consensus that the original bid be considered at the upcoming meeting.

- 15) Set public hearing for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to be held April 19, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the upstairs council room of the Municipal Building located at 303 West Church St.

The City Manager stated that this grant deals with a project to be considered on Scotland Crossing Drive. The developer would like the City to partner in applying for \$250,000.00 in CDBG funding. He then stated that a public hearing would need to be set in order to consider whether the City would partner with the developer in this project. He explained that a second public hearing needs to be held once a year to be eligible for the City to apply for CDBG funds. Mrs. Brandi Deese explained that the North Carolina Department of Commerce requires two public hearings to apply for CDBG funds. She stated that at this time staff does not know what opportunities will come up for CDBG funds and that if the public hearings are not held, the City cannot apply to receive funding. She explained that the State has allowed the City to hold both public hearings in April. She then explained that if the public hearings are not held, the City will not be able to apply for any CDBG funds.

- 16) Set public hearing for Community Development Block Grant to be held April 19, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the upstairs council room of the Municipal Building located at 303 West Church St.

The City Manager explained that this is the second of two public hearings that need to be held regarding CDBG funds.

- 17) Set public hearing to be held April 19, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the upstairs council room of the Municipal Building located at 303 West Church St. for request for a conditional use permit to develop 56 multifamily residential units at Scotland Crossing Drive

Mr. Bill Peele explained that this request is being heard by the Laurinburg Planning Board. Mrs. Brandi Deese informed Council that the recommendation of the Laurinburg Planning Board (5 to 2 vote) is to recommend that Council approve the request.

- 18) Set public hearing to be held April 19, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the upstairs council room of the Municipal Building located at 303 West Church St. for request for a conditional use permit for the operation of a Sports Bar/Private Membership Club located at 228 North Main St.

Mrs. Deese explained that the Laurinburg Planning Board recommends (by a 6 to 1 vote) to Council to approve this request. Information on this request will be provided in Council's agenda packet.

- 19) Laurinburg/Maxton Airport Runway Advance

The City Manager explained that at Council's previous meeting, it was discussed that the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport has to have a local match of \$500,000.00 in order to receive a grant to surface the airport runway. He then explained that in discussions with the Local Government Commission about the possibility of the City of Laurinburg advancing the funds, it was learned that instead of the City borrowing the money, the utility funds could be used to advance them the money. An interlocal agreement between the City of Laurinburg, the Town of Maxton and the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission will be developed stating a 10 year payback at a particular interest rate. He informed Council that he needed to write a letter to the Director of Aviation indicating that the match was secure for the grant. The City Manager is requesting that

the City's attorney and the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission attorney develop an agreement for a \$500,000.00 advance to the airport repayable over 10 years at an interest rate of 4%.

A discussion ensued regarding the possibility of collateral to ensure the repayment of the advance.

There was consensus that the attorneys develop an agreement and then bring it to Council for review and consideration.

20) Presentation of Succession Plan

The City Manager stated that the succession plan would be presented to Council at its next regular meeting.

The City Manager explained that Councilmember Spencer had requested that the following items be included in the agenda.

1. Youth Council Fundraising

Councilmember Spencer explained that the City of Laurinburg Youth Council will be raising funds and that there is a line item in the budget for revenues and expenditures for the Youth Council so that this can be tracked. No discussion.

2. Farmers Market

Councilmember Spencer requested that Council consider the City starting a Farmers Market in the portion of the parking lot that the City has at the A. B. Gibson School Administrative Building located in the downtown area. This would promote the downtown area and have local farmers and vendors operate certain weekends to sell produce, etc. He explained that fees would be set to offset advertising. This would also be in partnership with the Laurinburg/Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce and the Laurinburg Downtown Revitalization Corporation. He explained that he would draft an application as well as rules and regulations for vendors. Council was in favor of this suggestion. Councilmember Spencer will give a more full presentation and outline of the proposed implementation at the next meeting.

3. Microfinance

Councilmember Spencer stated that some time back, Council gave him permission to work on this project. He explained a couple of options. He explained that Micro-financing is basically providing the opportunity for entrepreneurs or small businesses to look at capital improvements or other financing of \$5,000.00 or less. These are small loans that banks would not normally make. He stated that there is the traditional option which is similar to a revolving fund where an amount is set up. The suggestion by the bank is basically is to set up a City of Laurinburg Development Trust. By creating the trust, you allow buy-in from private individuals. He stated that this way it is not just City funds. The City would provide the seed money. He explained three formats in which the trust is managed.

A discussion ensued and it was decided this issue would be brought back to Council at a later date.

Councilmember Leak requested that the City Manager keep an eye on what the State is considering for its budget proposal.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Matthew Block, Mayor

Dolores A. Hammond, City Clerk