

**CITY OF LAURINBURG  
AGENDA WORKSHOP  
JUNE 12, 2012  
W. CHARLES BARRETT ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
305 WEST CHURCH ST.  
6:00 p.m.**

**Minutes**

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg reconvened its regular meeting held on May 22, 2012, which was reconvened on May 29, 2012, which was reconvened on May 31, 2012, which was reconvened on June 5, 2012, and recessed until this date and time June 12, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. in the conference room of the W. Charles Barrett Building with the Honorable Thomas W. Parker III, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Mary Jo Adams, Curtis B. Leak, Kenton T. Spencer and Andrew G. Williamson, Jr. Herbert M. Rainer, Jr. was the only member absent.

Also present were: Edward F. Burchins, City Manager; Jennifer A. Tippet, City Clerk; and William P. Floyd, Jr., Assistant City Attorney.

Mayor Parker called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Councilmember Spencer gave the invocation.

**REVIEW OF THE PARK LIST FROM JUNE 5, 2012 MEETING**

**NEED BREAKDOWN FOR EACH DEPARTMENT FOR TRAVEL SHOWING REQUESTS FOR THIS YEAR & LAST AND SHOW POTENTIAL CUTS**

At the Council's request, the City Manager reviewed information on the cost of travel for every department's budgeted travel funds in the proposed budget. The total travel expense in the 2012 budget is \$102,324.00. The proposed 2013 budget travel expense is \$95,639.00.

The City Manager explained that his travel expense was reduced by \$1,000.00, leaving his travel expense budget for 2012 at \$10,400.00. He added that amount includes travel to monthly ElectriCities meetings and the annual ElectriCities Conference, North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) meetings, NCLM Convention, miscellaneous travel associated with the NCLM Planning and Environment Legislative Committee, and one (1) out-of-state conference.

The City Clerk explained that her travel expenses were cut by \$4,699.00. She explained that she removed the International Institute of Municipal Clerk's Association Conference which the previous City Clerk attended each year, and she also eliminated the North Carolina Association of Municipal Clerks' Annual Conference because she would be unable to attend this year.

The City Manager stated that the remaining travel expenses line item budgets remained the same.

Mrs. Carpenter stated that the Human Resources Director removed \$2,500.00 from his travel budget for an annual out-of-state conference.

The City Manager commented that with the exception of the Police Department, there are few requests for travel. He requested that \$4,000.00 be added to the Police Department budget to allow for any expenses concerning recruiting of diversified candidates and advertising employment.

Councilmember Leak reviewed the City Manager's expenses, including a car allowance of \$600.00 per month, and a travel budget that has increased from \$2,500.00 to \$11,000.00. He stated that he felt the City Manager's travel budget should be \$5,000.00.

The City Manager explained that his contract allowed for three (3) national trips a year - the National League of Cities Annual Conference, American Public Power Association Meeting and the International City Managers' Association. He further explained that since his employment began, he has not taken more than one (1) out-of-state trip a year, so that his travel expenses remain as low as possible. The rest of his travel is in-state including the North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency (NCEMPA) monthly meetings in Wilson. He added that beginning in September he will be attending monthly meetings for the NCLM Planning and Environment Legislative Committee.

Upon question by Mayor Parker, Mrs. Carpenter confirmed that she could provide history of the City Manager's expenses.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager explained that the car allowance was only used within a 30 mile limit, anything over 30 miles he was paid \$.55 per mile like all City employees.

Upon question by Councilmember Rainer, Mr. Bell explained that OMPA stands for Organization of Management Personnel Administrators. He explained that this allowed him to meet the top Human Resource Directors from all over the state and obtain legal expertise from larger cities such as Charlotte.

Upon question by Councilmember Rainer, Mr. Bell explained that IPMA stands for International Public Management Association, a nationwide human resources group that includes counties, colleges, and human resources directors from all over the nation. Mr. Bell added that there is some overlap between OMPA and IPMA, but not enough to be a member of one (1) without the other. Mr. Bell stated that he is the President of the NC IMPA this year.

A discussion ensued about the NCLM Annual Meeting.

Following the discussion, the City Manager and Mrs. Carpenter shared the history of the City Manager's travel expenses as follows:

Year	Amount
2005	\$4,700.00
2006	\$7,900.00
2007	\$9,792.00
2008	\$7,921.00
2009	\$10,474.00
2010	\$10,777.00
2011	\$10,000.00
2012	(est.) \$10,400

Upon question by Mayor Parker, the City Manger stated that there are 12 to 15 ElectriCities meetings per year, at a cost of \$200.00 per meeting, for an annual cost of approximately \$3,000.00.

Further discussion ensued concerning the overall travel expense budget for the City. Mrs. Carpenter stated that some of the increase in the Police Department is due to new requirements for dispatch with the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD). She added that training can be done in Laurinburg, but the instructor who travels to Laurinburg must be paid.

A discussion ensued concerning ways to reduce travel expenses. The City Manager stated that he would go through the travel expenses again to find ways to cut back.

Councilmember Williamson announced that he received a \$200.00 scholarship to attend an Economic Development Seminar.

Councilmember Leak expressed dissatisfaction with the travel expense amounts. He also expressed concern about Scotland County matching budgeted items such as Rescue and Fire.

Councilmember Spencer commented that because there were many ongoing and proposed projects, employees needed to be on the job rather than traveling.

Discussion ensued regarding appropriate time for employees to travel, utilizing performance reviews to determine if an individual is authorized to travel, and each department providing justification for travel expenses.

Upon question by Councilmember Spencer, the City Manager explained that a vote could be avoided if he developed an administrative policy that stated if an employee is under review, they would not be eligible to travel. He added that he would develop an administrative policy.

## **PROVIDE COUNCIL SCREENS FOR NEOGOV SYSTEM**

Mr. Bell explained the different screens of the NEOGOV System and how the system would work with the supervisor and employees developing goals, competencies and weighting for these items. Mr. Bell added that NEOGOV is the only performance review company that works with government agencies as well as manufacturing.

Upon question by Councilmember Spencer, the City Manager explained that each department would set their own goals, with Human Resources involvement.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, Mr. Bell stated that many local governments including Apex, Lake Lure, Garner, and Wilson use NEOGOV and are happy with their experience.

Upon question by Councilmember Rainer, Mrs. Carpenter stated that NEOGOV System costs \$3,900.00 per year as an annual fee, with no additional cost for training.

Upon question by Mayor Parker, Mrs. Carpenter and Mr. Bell both explained that there is a contractual commitment annually.

The City Manager explained that employees would need computer access in a secure and private location in order to input their information into the system. He added that if an employee was unable to use a computer, someone would be available to assist them.

Upon question by Councilmember Spencer, the City Manager explained that there is no additional money for computer hardware and current computers could be relocated and used in other areas of the City.

Mrs. Carpenter stated that the money was already included in Personnel's budget.

It was consensus of Council to include \$3,900.00 to purchase the NEOGOV System.

## **RECRUITMENT PLAN FOR MANAGEMENT TRAINEES, JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND PLAN ON UTILIZATION**

The City Manager explained that information such as training specifications and pay scale were requested from other cities. He added that information from information from Greensboro, Charlotte and Statesville revealed that the pay for a management trainee is \$32,000.00. He further explained that he would put together more information for a trainee program before the proposed budget was finalized.

Upon question by Councilmember Williamson, the City Manager explained that most cities recruit online through the City or County Managers Association, International City Managers Association, professional publications and various colleges.

Councilmember Leak stated that beginning teachers started with a salary range of \$26,000.00 through \$28,000.00, and that a Management Trainee should have the same pay scale.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager explained that Springsted Pay and Classification Study did not include a pay scale for a management trainee.

Further discussion ensued about salary. The City Manager stated that he would continue to look into the salary issue.

Councilmember Adams expressed her concern for hiring three (3) management trainees at one time when the City did not have a plan in place. She suggested hiring one (1) trainee and evaluate the program before hiring two (2) more management trainees.

Discussion ensued about management trainees regarding their responsibilities, length of Management Trainee Program and benefit information.

### **RADIO SYSTEM – NEED MORE INFORMATION – CAN WE USE CELL PHONES?**

The City Manager explained that he had spoken with other local governments on the issue of radio systems and most cities do not recommended using cell phones because cell service is not reliable after a major storm. He added that the Nextel walkie-talkies have been found not to be sturdy enough for field use. He recommended that the City stay with the two-way radios because they are the best system in case of an emergency and are easily hooked up to a generator.

### **CITY MANAGER TO ASK GREG WOOD IF THE HOSPITAL'S LANDSCAPER CAN LANDSCAPE THE ROUNDABOUT**

The City Manager explained that the City would be responsible for the Lauchwood Drive roundabout soon because of North Carolina Department of Transportation (NC DOT) cutbacks of all maintained roads.

Discussion ensued about NC DOT maintenance, maintenance along Lauchwood Drive performed by Scotland Memorial Hospital and the City.

Upon question by Councilmember Leak, the City Manager explained that permission to work on NC DOT areas is required and that NC DOT has given the City permission to work on the roundabout. The City Manager suggested he contact Greg Wood to see if the Hospital's landscaping team could beautify the roundabout to coordinate with the Hospital's landscaping.

## **RECESS**

Motion was made by Councilmember Adams, seconded by Councilmember Rainer, and unanimously carried to recess the budget discussion until after the agenda meeting.

The meeting was recessed at 7:07 p.m.

## **AGENDA MEETING**

Mayor Parker called the agenda meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

The City Manager reviewed the agenda for the June 19, 2012 council meeting.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

a) Consider minutes for the April 3, 2012 special meeting, April 10, 2012 agenda meeting and April 17, 2012 regular meeting

b) Consider Resolution No. R-2012-17 which authorizes electronic advertising of bids  
*The City Manager explained that last year, the General Assembly passed a law that allows municipalities to use their websites to accept formal and informal bids, helping local vendors in the process. He suggested the City use the website as well as the Laurinburg Exchange to accept bids.*

c) Consider Resolution No. R-2012-18 which authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk to execute Lease Agreement with Laurinburg Downtown Revitalization Corporation, et al for parcels bounded on the north by West Railroad Street, on the east by South Main Street, on the south by Roper Street and on the west by Atkinson and Gill Streets (parking lot).

*The City Manager explained that the lease agreement had been worked on, and the Assistant City Attorney was ready for the Mayor's signature to complete the lease to begin maintenance and repair on the parking lot.*

*Discussion ensued about the property owners, the scope of work expected by the City and the approximate cost of the work.*

*Mrs. Carpenter explained that the money for this project was budgeted located under Streets & Highways - Other Improvements. She added that out of the total of \$193,000.00, \$100,000.00 was budgeted for street resurfacing.*

*Upon question by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager explained that the City would clean up and patch the existing parking lot and then ask Laurinburg Downtown Revitalization Committee (LDRC) to repave the parking lot. He added that if LDRC does not pave the parking lot, then the decision would come back to Council to see if Council wanted to fund repaving.*

*Further discussion ensued about the plans for the parking lot, access from Main Street, the cost associated with this project, enforcing parking in front of businesses, requiring payment for parking downtown including metered parking to help maintain the cost of repairs, the actual utilization of the parking lot, and merchants parking in the parking lot.*

*The City Manager explained that a specific cost to repairs had not been determined, but there was money in Maintenance to help fund this project.*

*Councilmember Williamson stated that LDRC appears to be willing to put money into the project and that the Council should not commit to the project until the cost has been determined.*

d) Consider awarding audit contract to Gustaf C. Lundin & Company, LLP to audit financial records from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012

*Upon question by Councilmember Rainer, Mrs. Carpenter expressed that this year figure of \$29,500.00 was comparable to last year's cost to audit the City accounts.*

e) Consider Ordinance No. O-2012-13 amending the 2011-2012 Budget Ordinance (O-2011-11) which transfers \$10,000 from Streets & Highways-Salaries (562-500200) to Storm Drainage-Salaries (563-500200); \$10,000 from Streets & Highways-Salaries (562-500200) to Administrative-Salaries (420-500200); \$7,200 from Streets & Highways-Salaries (562-500200) to Cemetery-Salaries (506-500200); and \$11,000 from Planning-Salaries (503-500200) to Cemetery-Maintenance and Repair Equipment (506-503100)

*Mrs. Carpenter explained the necessity of the Budget Amendment. She also explained that none of these departments had overspent, but it is safer to move the money around in expectation of an account going over budget.*

f) Consider Ordinance No. O-2012-14 which condemns the property located at 700 Isabelle Street and authorizes the Building Inspector to demolish and clear the property  
*Mrs. Deese explained that there are five (5) lots involved with this property. She explained upon condemnation the City would take ownership of the dwelling and the land will remain in the owner's name. She further explained that the City will attach a lien to the property and since the Streets & Highways Department has two (2) more dwellings to tear down, the cost of demolishing those will be taken out of next year's budget.*

g) Consider Ordinance No. O-2012-15 which condemns the property located at 703 Isabelle Street and authorizes the Building Inspector to demolish and clear the property

h) Consider Ordinance No. O-2012-16 which condemns the property located at 429 East Covington Street and authorizes the Building Inspector to demolish and clear the property

*Upon questions by Councilmember Adams, Mrs. Deese explained that 95% of condemnations are complaint driven and that the cost of demolishing the structure becomes a lien to against the property. She also explained that the old Community Drug building on South Main Street needed to be pursued through Unsafe Building process and not the condemnation process.*

#### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

4) Consider Ordinance No. O-2012-17 which rezones the property located at 412 Fairley St. from Industrial to Office/Institutional

*Mrs. Deese explained this rezoning would allow a church to be operated on the property.*

5) Consider Ordinance No. O-2012-18 which amends Article X (10), Section 146, Permissible Uses, and Article XI (11), Section 180 Supplementary Use Regulations

*Mrs. Deese explained that the Planning Board did not recommend amending the Supplementary Use Regulations and at the Council meeting opposition from the community would be heard. She added that she discovered only 26% of Planet Aid profits are used for charitable purposes. Discussion ensued about how Planet Aid will affect local charities, their questionable practices and low rating with the Better Business Bureau.*

6) Consider Ordinance No. O-2012-19 which amends Chapter 6, Buildings and Building Regulations, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Laurinburg

*Mrs. Deese explained that Lis Pendens will help speed up the process of condemnations.*

7) Consider Ordinance No. O-2012-20 (Budget Appropriation Ordinance) which appropriates funds for the operation of City of Laurinburg government Proposed Budget

*The City Clerk explained that the public hearing had to be held even if Council was not prepared to adopt the budget at this meeting.*

8) Appeal of Code Enforcement Officer's Decision Concerning Junk and Nuisance Vehicles-Harold Mercer

*The Assistant City Attorney explained that code enforcement action with Harold Mercer has been ongoing for many years concerning junk and nuisance vehicles; however currently the enforcement involved two (2) separate locations. He added that Mr. Mercer has submitted a written appeal which must be heard by City Council as a quasi-judicial hearing. Discussion occurred concerning Mr. Mercer and enforcing the ordinance pertaining to junk or nuisance vehicles. The Assistant City Attorney explained that the ordinance was very clear and that enforcement needed to be by the book with no room for error in order to have this situation resolved. He added that Council should review enforcement procedures before moving forward with abatement of these vehicles. The Assistant City Attorney stated that he or Mrs. Deese would notify Mr. Mercer that his hearing would not be held at the June 19, 2012 meeting.*

#### **APPOINTMENTS**

8) Laurinburg Planning Board

9) Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Commission

10) Laurinburg Housing Authority Board

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

The agenda meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

#### **BUDGET MEETING**

At 7:41 p.m. Mayor Parker reconvened its regular meeting held on May 22, 2012, which was reconvened on May 29, 2012, which was reconvened on May 31, 2012, which was reconvened on June 5, 2012, which was reconvened at 6:00 p.m. on June 12, 2012 which was recessed on this date at 7:07 p.m.

#### **REVISE PERSONNEL POLICY/ADJUST PAY & CLASS PLAN SO THAT AT END OF PROBATIONARY PERIOD, EMPLOYEE DOES NOT GO FROM STEP 1 TO STEP 3**

The City Manager explained that the Pay and Classification Plan revealed that the City needed to adopt a new Pay and Classification Plan in order to bring employees' salaries up to the market salaries. He added that the cost to bring all City employees onto the proposed Pay and Classification Plan would cost \$50,840.00.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, Mrs. Carpenter explained that fringe benefits were included in the proposed budget, but the \$50,840.00 amount was salary only.

A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the City's Personnel Policy and the increase employees receive upon completion of the probationary period. Mr. Bell explained that he proposed that the policy be changed so that instead of going from Step 1 to Step 3 upon completion of the probationary period, employees would go from Step 1 to Step 2 which would be a 6% increase of salary to offset the required retirement contribution. He added that every step after Step 2 would be a 2.5% increase.

Councilmember Spencer explained that his plan was that during the probationary period, employees would be paid 6% less than Step 1 of the pay plan, and when hired permanently, the employee would advance to Step 1 and get a 6% increase to cover the required retirement contribution. He added that the employee would not see an increase in his paycheck, but the employee would be on the retirement plan from day one (1).

A lengthy discussion ensued about the differences in Mr. Bell's plan and Councilmember Spencer's plan including the proposal to be comparable to other local governments and local industries.

A discussion ensued concerning the length of probationary periods for employees and that under the current pay plan, an employee can move up a step in his paygrade only through a merit increase, and the use of evaluations.

Further discussion ensued about the options between the two (2) plans proposed by Springsted, Inc. Upon question by Councilmember Leak, the City Manager explained that the Springsted proposal did not include a third option.

The City Manager recommended adopting Option 1 of the Pay and Classification Plan prepared by Springsted which would bring all employees onto the proposed Pay and Classification Plan.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager confirmed that NEOGOV can be used with the current pay plan.

Councilmember Adams suggested more time and consideration should be spent reviewing research conducted by Councilmember Spencer and Councilmember Leak before approving the Springsted Pay and Classification Plan. She also suggested that in the meantime, Council should use the current Pay Plan and develop some type of pay increase or Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for the employees in order to finish the budget.

Mayor Parker suggested that if Council decided to use a merit-based pay system, it was at least a year off because the evaluation system and tools in place and you have to get benchmarks.

Discussion ensued about possible pay increases, possibly using merit-based pay, evaluations and benchmarks, budget limitations and nationwide trends in municipal pay scales. Councilmember Spencer discussed the need to address this sensitive issue of merit pay, non-merit or a hybrid pay system. He explained that this was an opportunity to do the right thing by giving employees the opportunity and the power to redesign a fair and balanced Pay Plan.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager explained that the eight (8) employees that the Springsted Plan recommended increases because of additional duties and changes in job descriptions could not receive the recommended increases unless the Springsted Plan was approved.

Mayor Parker suggested that the pay scale adjustments be discussed in a separate meeting to be held on June 18, 2012 at 5:45 p.m. in the conference room of the W. Charles Barrett Administration Building.

**RECESS**

Motion was made by Councilmember Adams, seconded by Councilmember Spencer, and unanimously carried to recess the meeting until Monday June 18, 2012 at 5:45 p.m. at the W. Charles Barrett Administrative Building.

The meeting recessed at 8:10 p.m.

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Thomas W. Parker, III, Mayor

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Jennifer A. Tippett, City Clerk