

**CITY OF LAURINBURG  
 CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION  
 APRIL 15, 2014  
 BARRETT BUILDING  
 305 WEST CHURCH ST.  
 6:00 p.m.**

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held a special meeting/work session on April 15, 2014 in the Barrett Building at 6:00 p.m. with the Honorable Thomas W. Parker, III, 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. Tippett, City Clerk; and William P. Floyd, Jr., City Attorney.

Mayor Parker called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Councilmember Leak gave the invocation.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion was made by Councilmember Hammond, seconded by Councilmember Williamson, and unanimously carried to approve the agenda as presented.

**BUDGET DIRECTION**

*Citizen Input Session Results*

The City Manager presented the Citizen Input results as follows:

| <b>ITEM</b>                                | <b>VOTES</b> |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Proactive drug enforcement/intervention    | 7            |
| Animal Control plan (initiative)           | 2            |
| Litter Education Plan (initiative)         | 4            |
| Utility services – marking improvements    | 4            |
| Hospitality-Welcome Wagon type/block party | 3            |
| Stop lights fixed                          | 1            |
| Street clean up – South Main/N. Main-trash | 1            |
| “Don’t litter” education                   | 1            |
| Car wash on N. Main St. – demolish         | 1            |

He then explained that there were some of the above items that could be combined, and staff wanted Council’s direction on items to consider for the budget. He added that litter was one of the main topics, and staff has begun researching the possibility of using a crew comprised of a staff member to supervise with inmates picking up litter most of the year or possibly all year long.

Councilmember Adams explained that she did not want the budget to include an increase in taxes. She added that she would like to see items from the Citizen Input Session addressed without increasing taxes.

The City Manager explained that there had been discussion in the Beautification Committee about edging streets and sidewalks. He added that there had been discussion about possibly having a crew to focus on litter and edging year round.

Councilmember Leak explained that the litter program used to come under Beautification. He added that the City got away from emphasizing Beautification programs such as the Adopt-A-Spot and Adopt-A-Street programs. He added that the Laurinburg/Scotland County Area Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) has its Green Committee and Mrs. Deese is active in that committee.

A discussion ensued concerning the Beautification/Grounds Maintenance Department. The City Manager explained that the Beautification Supervisor is in charge of the Grounds Maintenance Department. He added that staff sees it as Beautification with the Beautification Supervisor doing the same things as past Beautification Directors.

A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the Inmate Program, the requirements for supervising inmates and whether the litter/edging crew should be placed in Beautification or Streets.

A discussion ensued concerning a litter education program. Councilmember Hammond suggested that the City could partner with the Chamber since it has an education program in the elementary schools.

Following further discussion, it was consensus of Council for staff to continue researching litter, utilizing inmates and edging and present a proposal for an employee to supervise inmates for litter control and edging.

Upon question by Mayor Parker, Mrs. Deese explained that the car wash on North Main Street did not meet the requirements for condemnation and demolition.

Mayor Parker explained that the concern with stop lights should be forwarded to North Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT).

A discussion ensued concerning the idea of Welcome Wagon or block party to greet new residents. Councilmember Hammond explained that the Chamber is usually the first point of contact for new residents or for individuals considering relocating to Laurinburg. She suggested that the City could provide the Chamber with copies of rate schedules and encourage realtors to contact the Chamber when dealing with a newcomer or potential newcomer to the community.

A discussion ensued concerning the comment about utility services marking. Mr. McQuage explained that the citizen was referring to markings by the gas company and not the City.

Mayor Parker suggested that the City encourage the gas company to use water-soluble paint for marking utilities.

Councilmember Williamson explained that the animal control issue was about feral cats in the Scotsdale/Westwood area.

A discussion ensued concerning the need for additional trapping equipment for the Animal Control Officer (ACO). It was consensus of Council to provide funding for additional equipment if needed by the ACO.

Chief Williams discussed proactive drug enforcement efforts including having a narcotics officer on the Gang Unit. He added that his department is targeting areas where complaints are being lodged about drug activity.

The City Manager explained that the Police Department is not fully staffed at this time.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, Chief Williams explained that two (2) officers are going to be utilized to go into schools to discuss drugs and gangs. He also discussed the summer program he has planned for at-risk youth and the School Resource Officer program in the elementary schools.

Upon question by Mayor Parker, the City Manager explained that he did not anticipate any of the items discussed thus far affecting the City's tax rate.

### ***Health Insurance***

The City Manager explained that staff will receive the estimate for providing employee health insurance later in the week. He added that he was informed that Scotland County's premiums increased 10%; however the County's workforce is very different from the City's and hopefully the City will not see that much of an increase in health insurance premiums.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, Mrs. Carpenter explained that Mrs. Galloway had worked on three (3) quotes for health insurance. She added that an audit of City property was being conducted to ensure that the City's liability insurance coverage was accurate in an effort to lower expenses.

### ***Other***

Councilmember Hammond explained that she would like Council to consider some type of compensation for employees.

The City Manager explained that staff plans to look at compensation once the health insurance premium information is known.

Councilmember Williamson explained that he hoped that Beautification would continue to be funded and new projects developed. He added that citizens are responding positively to the projects completed thus far.

Councilmember Willis explained that he would like a plan presented for providing at least a 2% increase for employees. He added that he would like projections for 2%, 2.5% and a 3% pay increases.

Upon questions by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager explained that Mrs. Galloway had been tasked with researching/developing an employee evaluation system. He added that the employees are evaluated every year. He further added that staff is researching to see what other

savings have been recognized by departments such as the savings in the Police Department so that could be presented to Council for consideration for pay raises.

Councilmember Leak cautioned that with the large projects the City is undertaking at the current time, the FY 2014-2015 Budget could be the tightest budget the City has ever had.

Mrs. Carpenter explained that when the Industrial Project was discussed, staff stressed that the 2014-2015 year would be the toughest one for the Water/Sewer Fund.

Councilmember Leak explained that when the current audit is submitted to the Local Government Commission (LGC), he did not want to see a write-up.

### **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH SCOTLAND COUNTY CONCERNING THE CONSOLIDATED 911 CENTER/EOC**

Mayor Parker explained that Ms. Lisa Howell, Administrative Assistant in the Police Department, was present and is the only staff member that worked in a Consolidated 911 Center, and, therefore she had valuable knowledge.

Upon request from Councilmember Hammond, the City Manager provided a history of the discussions between City staff and County staff about the Consolidated 911 Call Center/EOC and the Memorandum of Understanding. He explained that Ms. Howell was not present at the first meeting between City and County staff, but was included in future meetings due to her experience.

A discussion ensued concerning the part-time employees proposed by the county. The City Manager explained that City staff is aware that if a part-time employee works 1,000 hours in a year, the employee would have to be enrolled in the retirement system and the County also contributes to 401K. He added that the Director would monitor the hours worked by part-time employees.

Councilmember Willis expressed concern that there could be additional positions that were not included in the proposed budget such as an IT person. He added that at the April 1, 2014 meeting, he made it clear that the Advisory Board was powerless and the ultimate decisions rest with the County Commissioners.

The City Manager explained that possibly an Assistant Director and an IT person would be needed.

Councilmember Hammond explained that EMS's IT needs are not handled by the County IT Department but by an EMS employee.

Mrs. Carpenter explained that with the research she conducted, there are very few that require contributions from municipalities located within the County. She added that Robeson County requires each municipality to pay \$15.00 per citizen for the Consolidated 911/EOC.

Further discussion ensued concerning the following:

- Plan to have Richmond County as the backup for Scotland County and for Scotland County to be Richmond County's backup.

- Financial participation of municipalities in other counties having Consolidated 911/EOC.
- Composition of the Advisory Board and that the Board was a powerless board.
- Training, guidelines and protocol for dispatchers.
- Number of dispatchers necessary per shift.
- Timeframe of initial MOU being three (3) years, renegotiate and the City not being financially responsible after 10 years.
- Limiting the City's financial participation to 33 1/3 % of personnel costs with a cap of \$250,000.00 per year with the percentage participation decreasing over the 10 year time period.
- Benefits to citizens for better services.
- The City's financial participation being based upon actual figures, not budgeted.
- The possibility of another joint meeting with the County Commissioners.

*At 7:58 p.m. Mayor Parker called for a short break.*

*The meeting resumed at 8:05 p.m.*

#### **AGENDA FOR APRIL 22, 2014**

The City Manager reviewed the agenda for April 22, 2014 as follows:

- 3) Consent Agenda (**Item A**)
  - a) Consider minutes of March 10, 2014 special meeting/Citizen Input Session; March 11, 2014 special meeting/work session and March 18, 2014 regular meeting

#### **PUBLIC HEARING**

- 4) Consider Ordinance No. O-2014- rescinding Ordinance No. O-2013-26 amending the UDO (military training facilities)

#### **CITY MANAGER REPORTS**

- 5) Consider Resolution No. R-2014- endorsing the negotiation of definitive agreements for the sale of certain generating assets owned by the North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency to Duke Energy Progress, Inc. and for power supply
- 6) Consider Resolution No. R-2014- authorizing the City Manager to execute documents including contract with Holland Consulting Planners for Comprehensive Unified Development Ordinance Update in the amount of \$48,300  
*Discussion ensued concerning the inclusion of military training facilities and solar farms in the update of the UDO.*
- 7) Consider Ordinance No. O-2014- amending the FY 2013-2014 Budget Appropriations Ordinance (Ordinance No. O-2013-17) in the amount of \$24,150 for cover one-half (1/2) the cost of UDO update in this fiscal year
- 8) Call for Public Hearing to be held on May 22, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. for adoption of Updated FEMA Floodplain Maps
- 9) Call for Public Hearing for Amendment to UDO for Solar Array Ordinance  
*Mrs. Deese explained that staff drafted three (3) ordinance options for Council to consider that will be included in the agenda packets.*
- 10) Call for Public Hearing to consider request from J.P. Locklear for Conditional Use Permit to operate a Solar Array on north side of X-Way Road  
*The City Manager explained that this item was removed from the agenda pursuant to Mr. Locklear's request.*

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Following a brief discussion, it was consensus of Council to place items 5, 8 and 9 on the Consent Agenda.

### **WATER TANK – LETTERING AND COLOR**

The City Manager explained that the elevated water tank being constructed at the Industrial Park site is light gray. He added that the font matches the font on the new “Welcome to Laurinburg” signs and originally was to be green; however, a councilmember requested that blue be considered.

Mayor Parker polled Councilmembers with blue being the choice of the majority of Council.

### **DISCUSSION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) POSITION**

The City Manager discussed the proposed IT position and the contracted services with NWN for IT. He explained that the contract with NWN ends June 30, 2014, and depending upon the skills and knowledge of the individual hired, the City may still need to have some contractual services for IT in the future.

### **DAVID ELLISON – LOT CUTTING ISSUE**

The City Manager explained that he left a voicemail message on Mr. Ellison’s cell phone reminding him of the meeting.

A discussion ensued concerning the history of this issue which dates back to when Mr. Huffman was the City Manager; the potential condemnation of the of the property located at 600 Duncan Street; and possible collection efforts.

Motion was made by Councilmember Leak, seconded by Councilmember Adams, and unanimously carried for City staff to pursue all avenues to collect all debt owed to the City by Mr. Ellison.

### **DISCUSSION OF LAND USE PLAN AND UDO UPDATE**

The City Manager explained that the City received a Regional 6 Transformation Grant for \$34,000.00 to update the Land Use Plan. He added that the consultant that will be updating the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) will also update the Land Use Plan.

Mrs. Deese added that staff will present Council a budget amendment in May.

### **BUDGET DISCUSSIONS**

Following discussion, it was consensus of Council to hold the first budget workshop on Monday, May 12, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

### **COMMENTS**

Councilmember Williamson explained that he would like to see staff utilize the new projection

system during budget discussions.

Mayor Parker explained that with the proliferation of internet sweepstakes in the City, the update to the UDO is timely.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

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Thomas W. Parker, III, Mayor

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Jennifer A. Tippett, City Clerk