

**CITY OF LAURINBURG
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION
DECEMBER 9, 2014
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
303 WEST CHURCH ST.
7:00 p.m.**

Minutes

The City Council of the City of Laurinburg held a special meeting/work session on December 9, 2014 in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building at 7:00 p.m. with the Honorable Thomas W. Parker III, Mayor, presiding. The following Councilmembers were present: Mary Jo Adams, Dolores A. Hammond, Andrew G. Williamson, Jr. and J. D. Willis. Councilmember Curtis B. Leak arrived at 7:04 p.m.

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 7:00 p.m.

Councilmember Adams gave the invocation.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

AGENDA FOR DECEMBER 16, 2014

The City Manager reviewed the agenda for December 16, 2014 as follows:

- 3) Consent Agenda
 - a) Approve minutes of November 6, 2014 special meeting, November 11, 2014 special meeting/work session and November 18, 2014 regular meeting

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- 4) Consider a request to rezone from General Business to Residential-20 a 44.21 acre tract of land on Scotland High School Dr.

DELEGATION

- 5) Ms. Peggy Smith, 1204 Lytch Street (poor customer service)
A discussion ensued concerning Ms. Smith's issue in Consumer Billing last month.

CITY MANAGER REPORTS

- 6) Consider Resolution No. R-2014- amending Resolution No. R-2013-02, the City of Laurinburg Personnel Policy
The City Manager explained that the amendment includes clarification of comp time for exempt employees, adds bereavement leave for employees and updates information concerning the Local Law Enforcement Separation Allowance.
- 7) Set public hearing to be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 20, 2015 to consider amendment to Unified Development Ordinance

The City Manager explained that this item has been pulled as Planning Board is meeting with Mr. Holland to discuss issues with the draft UDO. He added that Mr. Holland will be at the January work session to address any concerns Council has with the draft UDO.

- 8) Set public hearing to be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 20, 2015 to consider a request for a Conditional Use Permit to operate a ground-mounted solar array on the north side of X-Way Road

The City Manager explained that Planning Board recommended denial of this request at its meeting earlier today.

- 9) Set public hearing to be held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 20, 2015 to consider amending the Electric Rate Schedule

APPOINTMENTS

- 10) Consider reappointments/appointments to Board of Adjustment (David Ellison and Iris Hamilton both wish to continue serving)

ITEMS FOR CONSENT AGENDA

It was consensus of Council for approval of the draft minutes to be on the Consent Agenda.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The City Manager explained that with the newly adopted Rules of Procedure, Council needed to determine who will lead the Pledge of Allegiance at the regular Council meetings.

It was consensus of Council for the individual giving the Invocation to lead in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

UPDATE ON ELECTRIC RATES

The City Manager explained that he had talked with the City's Electric Engineer for suggestions concerning the City's electric rates and the Electric Fund. He added that the Engineer suggested that because the City will need to conduct a rate study once the Duke purchase of NCEMPA's assets is finalized and due to the cost of a rate study (\$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00) to work on a percentage in the rate schedule.

Upon question by Councilmember Adams, the City Manager explained that the Engineer looked at the City's audit and understands the concerns regarding the Electric Fund.

Councilmember Leak requested that staff publicize the rate increase in such a way that the general public can understand the increase and how it will directly affect them.

The City Manager reviewed the information below concerning the Electric Fund and possible rate increases:

ELECTRIC FUND			
Year	Operating Income	Depreciation	Operating Income (before depreciation)
2014	(902,255)	401,260	(500,995)
2013	(1,445,703)	420,836	(1,024,867)
2012	(689,661)	409,724	(279,937)

RATE INCREASE									
1%	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%	10%
\$ 160,713	\$ 321,427	\$ 482,140	\$ 642,853	\$ 803,567	\$ 964,280	\$ 1,124,993	\$ 1,285,706	\$ 1,446,420	\$ 1,607,133

Discussion ensued concerning potential rate increases, the balance in the General Fund, the use of Water/Sewer Fund to balance the Electric Fund, and previous transfers from the Electric Fund to the General Fund.

Upon question by Councilmember Hammond, the City Manager explained that a 3.5% increase would yield \$562,497.00.

Following further discussion, it was consensus of Council for the City Manager to proceed working with the Electric Engineer on a 3.5% increase in electric rates for consideration at a public hearing to be held January 20, 2015.

CONSISTENCY STATEMENTS REQUIRED FOR LEGISLATIVE ZONING DECISIONS

The City Attorney discussed the requirement for consistency statements for legislative zoning decisions. He explained that he and staff would work to develop potential consistency statements for Planning Board which could be adopted by Council as well.

COMMENT

Councilmember Willis expressed concern regarding a letter received by the Mayor from the Scotland County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) which expressed discontentment with law enforcement.

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:49 p.m. Councilmember Adams motioned to go into closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a) (3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the City. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Leak, and unanimously carried.

At 8:09 p.m. motion was made by Councilmember Adams, seconded by Councilmember Willis, and unanimously carried to adjourn the closed session and resume the open meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Thomas W. Parker, III, Mayor

Jennifer A. Tippett, City Clerk