

MINUTES

A Public Hearing and Regular Meeting of Walterboro City Council was held at City Hall on Tuesday, September 10, 2013 at 6:15 P.M., with Mayor Bill Young presiding.

PRESENT WERE: Mayor Bill Young, Council Members: Jimmy Syfrett, Paul Siegel, Tom Lohr, Bobby Bonds and James Broderick. (NOTE: Vacant seat remains due to passing of Councilman Randy Peters). City Manager Jeff Lord, City Clerk Betty Hudson and City Attorney George Cone were also present. There were approximately 22 persons present in the audience.

There being a quorum present, Mayor Young called the meeting to order and gave the invocation. Council Member Syfrett led the pledge of allegiance to our flag.

Mayor Young expressed sympathy to the family of Mrs. Carol Hinson, who passed away. Mrs. Hinson served as a member of the City Appearance Board.

PUBLIC INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

No public comments were received.

PUBLIC HEARING:

The Mayor then opened a public hearing, duly advertised, to receive public comments on two items. A copy of the sign-in sheet for the public hearing is attached as part of these minutes. The Mayor then introduced Ms. Michelle Knight of Lowcountry Council of Governments, who was present to conduct the public hearing:

- 1) Public Hearing to Review Program Accomplishment and Performance - CDBG Grant # 4-A-10-009 Closeout, Doodle Hill Public Safety Project

Ms. Knight stated this is a closeout public hearing for the Community Development Block Grant Project, known as the Doodle Hill Public Safety Initiative. She reported that this project was awarded in December 2010. Ms. Knight stated that the City received \$500,000 originally to make improvements in a targeted area referred to as the Doodle Hill neighborhood. The original project was to demolish several structures, purchase materials to perform exterior rehab on several owner-occupied homes, extend sidewalks and install cameras at strategic locations in the neighborhood to help the police department with our public safety interests. The City received an additional \$181,000 in additional grant funds through an amendment to perform additional demolition work. The work proposed came in under budget and a second amendment was approved to allow the City to do water line improvements along Harper and Mincey Streets. A total of 579 people benefitted from the improvements and 397 (or 68%) were identified as having low-to-moderate income. The following activities were conducted:

- 1) Materials purchased for three owner-occupied homes with the assistance of World Changers.
- 2) Installation of eight (8) cameras in strategic locations to assist the Police Department with the surveillance of known crime areas in the neighborhood.
- 3) Demolition of twelve (12) structures over fourteen parcels of land within the neighborhood.
- 4) Sidewalk improvements along Moore, Henderson, Blanchard, Black, Simmons, Gerideau, Harper, McKenzie and Carn Streets.
- 5) Waterline improvements on Mincey and Harper Streets.

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Ms. Knight reported that the total grant funds expended was \$644,316. The City provided \$58,188 in match funds for the grant. Ms. Knight explained that the project still ran under budget, but there was nothing else that we could come up with that we could do quickly to finish the balance.

The Mayor then opened the floor to receive comments or questions from the public. Ms. Marsha Johnson, a city resident, asked if any park improvements were included? Ms. Knight responded that this was done through a separate project, which was through the Parks, Recreation and Tourism plan. Ms. Knight noted that there was also some work that was done through the Home Consortium that included interior and exterior rehab of some other homes.

City Manager Lord commented that this grant was extremely challenging. Ms. Knight added that the City of Walterboro was only one of two communities in the State of SC to actually receive these monies. Mayor Young added that this was part of the pilot project that we were awarded by the Governor.

Mr. Horace Simmons, a city resident, questioned if the work had been finished on Henderson Street. This is the area where he lives. It was his opinion that the sidewalk work was not complete, and there was more work to be done. Ms. Knight responded that the sidewalk work had been completed as per what was designed. She added that she would be happy to personally discuss this matter further with Mr. Simmons.

City Manager Lord pointed out that he had previously spoken to Mr. Simmons about his interest in expanding the sidewalks further into his neighborhood. He said, that would definitely be a good part of a future revitalization project, but the City was doing two revitalization projects at once - the Doodle Hill and the North Lemacks Project. As long as North Lemacks St. Project is going, we can't go back to Doodle Hill, because we were given a temporary ability to have two projects open at the same time. So, once the North Lemacks St. Project is completed, then the City can go back and put more sidewalks in there. Mayor Young pointed out that the City has spent all the money we had doing what we have already done. Basically, that's what happened. Ms. Knight then said, we have basically done everything we set out to do. Mayor Young then said, unless we get another grant or have another project going forward, I mean that project is completed.

A lady in the audience then said, the Mayor is saying that we have spent all the money and you were saying that we have completed tasks, so did you spend the money or did you complete the tasks? Ms. Knight responded, we completed the tasks. The tasks ran under budget. There was approximately \$36,000 that the City will return to the State, but there was nothing else left that we could do that would cover just \$36,000. Anything else that we would do would potentially have been a bigger ticket item. I am assuming, based on what we know, it would take more than \$36,000 for sidewalk work to be done on Henderson Street.

City Manager Lord then said, because of the project area and because of the tasks that were completed, the City would have to go back and change the scope of the project and that would extend the project for several more months. This would then put us out of the possibility to apply for this next round of grant monies. So, for the sake of \$36,000, we opted to apply for the \$500,000 grant.

No further comments or questions were received, and this public hearing item was closed.

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The next public hearing item was:

2) Application Public Hearing for the South Jefferies Streetscape Project

Ms. Knight explained that the second public hearing tonight concerns an application that the City would like to submit on Monday, September 16, to the Department of Commerce for the South Jefferies Streetscape Project. Basically, the City is requesting \$500,000 to make streetscape improvements along South Jefferies Boulevard, Sanders Street and Detreville Street. The idea behind this is to tie in that commercial corridor into the downtown business center. This would have a look and appeal similar to what we have for the downtown streetscape project now. This is basically representing the 3rd and 4th stage of the Wood+Partners Streetscape or business corridor plan that was done in December 2010. We are qualifying this under slum and blight, which is why there is an ordinance reading on the agenda tonight. Some of the improvements to be made include lighting, sidewalks, storm water drainage enhancements, paving and landscaping improvements of that area, including signage.

Ms. Knight stated that the total project amount would be \$737,000. The remaining funds will be provided by the City. This project will basically benefit the City as a whole.

Ms. Marsha Johnson, a city resident, asked if the number of traffic lanes on Jefferies Boulevard would increase? Mayor Young answered that this has not been decided as yet. We still have the engineering work to do on this project. Ms. Johnson then asked if the public would have an opportunity to speak on this issue? It was Mayor Young's opinion that the public would have the opportunity to address this. He reminded that the City went through a long period where we had the designs up and we invited the public in, but we will give people an opportunity to comment again. Also, Council has not made a decision on that or approved or disapproved of the design on that area.

As a business owner off Jefferies Boulevard, Ms. Nicole Holmes asked about the time period for the project. Ms. Knight responded that the City would probably find out if it has received this funding late in November or early December. Then, we will have 24 months to get this work done. Because the City understands that 24 months is not a long time for the project and to try to get ahead, the City has basically contracted with an architect to start the design work, and that is something that is allowable under this grant. We got the approval to allow those costs to go forth on that. On further questioning by Ms. Holmes for a more realistic date that the dirt would turn for this project, Ms. Knight said, my guess is probably next summer or late fall. So, it could be anywhere from as early as July or August.

When asked about the cost of the design, Ms. Knight responded, this is \$237,000.

Mr. Lord then stated that the City has already funded the design for this project. That portion of the design will act as the City's match for this project. A great part of that match is already covered by design costs. Mr. Lord further stated, we have learned to bid these projects with an alternate. So, the City will have the option of expanding or shrinking the project.

No further comments or questions were received and the public hearing was closed.

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The Mayor then commented that Ms. Knight is responsible for the City receiving a number of grants over the years. We really appreciate all that she does. A lot of the work that you see going on in Walterboro is a result of her helping us to find funding.

REQUESTS FOR APPEARANCE:

Mr. Horace Simmons of Community Action Line Against Violence, appeared before Council with a request that Council provide a "State of the City" address to the community. He told Council that he is concerned about Walterboro as a whole and everybody as a whole. He asked Council and the Mayor, if they could, to provide a State of the City address to the community. I think that would be of benefit for Walterboro as a whole. Mr. Simmons also asked that the State of the City address be provided at your earliest convenience.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

The Minutes of the August 27, 2013 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting were approved as submitted on the motion of Council Member Broderick, seconded by Council Member Lohr with all members voting in favor.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Ordinance # 2013-09** was given Second Reading and Adoption on the motion of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Mayor Young and passed unanimously, being: AN ORDINANCE DEFINING SLUM AND BLIGHTED AREAS IN THE CITY OF WALTERBORO.

In briefing Council on this ordinance, City Manager Lord told Council that the City will be applying for grant monies through a provision that addresses slum and blight areas. To do this, we will need a definition and this is what the ordinance is for.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Resolution # 2013-R-07**, Designating a Slum and Blighted Area in the City of Walterboro, was before Council.

A motion was made by Council Member Lohr, seconded by Council Member Broderick to approve Resolution # 2013-R-07 as submitted. The motion passed with all members voting in favor. A copy of said Resolution is attached as part of these minutes.

2. **Resolution # 2013-R-08**, A Resolution Authorizing Submission of a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Community Enrichment Application for the South Jefferies Streetscape Project in the Amount of \$500,000 and Committing a 10% (\$50,000) Match in Program Income Funds, and Authorization for the City Manager to Commit Additional Funding in the Amount of \$187,000, was before Council.

Mayor Young pointed out that this was the project that we were just talking about in the public hearing, which is the application for the S. Jefferies Streetscape Project. He then entertained a motion to adopt Resolution # 2013-R-08.

A motion was made by Council Member Siegel to adopt Resolution # 2013-R-08 as submitted. Council Member Syfrett seconded the motion that passed with all

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members voting in favor. A copy of said Resolution is attached as part of these minutes.

3. Consideration of Contract for Sale of Gasoline and Diesel between Rhodes Oil Company, Inc. and the City of Walterboro (to be effective August 21, 2013)

City Manager Lord told Council that the City currently gets its fuel from Rhodes Oil Company. Under the current circumstances, the City pays 2 cents off the pump price, minus the federal excise taxes. Rhodes Oil Company approached the City and brought this proposal to you which is a 5-year plan. The plan will start with 3 ½ cents per gallon less than price up to 6 cents per gallon less than price at the end of 5 years.

Mr. Lord told Council that he conducted an analysis of the rates versus what the State charges and these prices are extremely close, but the lead goes to Rhodes Oil, as far as the pricing for the month of June. Rhodes Oil has three locations, and that is a concern we have with their ability to service our fleet, should a location go down.

Mr. Lawton Smith, representing Rhodes Oil, told Council that his company has been doing business in the City since 1945 and built its first store in 1981. In 1983, they built their second Shell Station by Paul Walker's Office. The City has been a customer of Rhodes Oil for about 30 years and we have enjoyed the gentlemen's agreement over that period of time. This will put something in writing between the two of us, and allow the City to enjoy some cost savings, in addition to what you have already been receiving. Obviously, there are other needs in the City and that money can be applied to those needs. Mr. Smith asked that the City continue its partnership with Rhodes Oil, and we appreciate the relationship that we have with the City.

A motion was made by Council Member Siegel to approve the contract for gasoline and diesel fuel with Rhodes Oil Company as submitted. Council Member Lohr seconded the motion. In discussing the motion, Council Member Bonds pointed out that this was a four-page contract. He then asked if the City Attorney has had an opportunity to look at the contract with Rhodes Oil, which is before us? City Attorney Cone responded that he had reviewed and revised the contract to protect the City's interest.

The motion then passed unanimously.

4. Request to Use the Downtown Waterfall Plaza for Salkehatchie Stew's Fifth Annual Mystery Stroll on Friday, October 25, 2013, 5:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.

A motion was made by Council Member Bonds to approve the request as submitted. Council Member Broderick seconded the motion that passed with all members voting in favor.

5. Request for Street Closings at 4:00 P.M. for Annual Christmas Parade at 6:00 P.M. on Dec. 8, 2013 by the Colleton County Rice Festival Board

On the motion of Council Member Broderick, seconded by Council Member Siegel, Council unanimously approved a street closing request for 4:00 p.m. submitted by the Rice Festival Board for its Annual Christmas Parade at 6:00 p.m. on December 8, 2013. The Board was granted permission to close parts of Hampton Street, Jefferies Highway, Washington Street, Neyle Street and N. Miller Street for the parade. The Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held at City Hall at 5:00 P.M. and the Christmas Parade will begin at 6:00 P.M.

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Mayor Young thanked Mr. Bubba Trippe and the Rice Festival Board for everything they do. You do a great job and we appreciate the effort you put into it, the time and the hard work.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Youth Committee Report - Council Member Lohr

Council Member Lohr again thanked the media for covering the events and activities in the community. He reported that during the summer, the library drew about 3,000 young folks, who had a lot to do as far as activities. This was not just checking out books, but a lot of other things. The library has something for about everybody and it's really convenient for our kids in the city. Mr. Lohr noted that this was in today's paper, but there were 70 young stage actors involved in a recent children's theater event.

Mr. Lohr then introduced Ms. Dee Medlock, Executive Director of The Colleton County Arts Council. Ms. Medlock then gave a brief highlight of the activities, events and children's programs sponsored by the Colleton County Arts Council. She reported that the children's program focused on the activity and growing of self esteem. We focus on having fun and doing things for our community. Our three mission statement includes education, art and community growth. We offer classes in art, painted art, music and dance. We recently started a special arts program which will address 144 topics on etiquette. We try to focus on topics that help our children in any special situation. We have taken our program to the public and private school systems. We are focusing on helping the children feel comfortable and offering little receptions so that they do learn. We have also established a junior art's council and they will be focusing on art contests within the schools. She also told Council that the GAP Program is very important and the Arts Council will be working on reestablishing that program. Ms. Medlock asked that Council continue to support the programs, efforts and events of the Arts Council.

Before entering Executive Session, Mayor Young recognized that two City Council candidates for the November 5 Special Election were present at the meeting tonight - Ms. Nicole Holmes and Mr. Tony Hamilton.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Mayor then entertained a motion to enter an Executive Session, and Council Member Lohr So Moved. Council Member Siegel seconded the motion that passed unanimously. The Mayor announced that the meeting will convene into an executive session for a personnel matter - discussion of appointments to Boards and Commissions and to discuss the hiring of a new City Manager. The meeting then convened into Executive Session.

The meeting returned to Open Session and the following appointments to the City's Boards and Commissions were made:

A motion was made by Council Member Broderick to newly appoint Mr. Bud Linder to the Board of Zoning Appeals for an unexpired term ending 1/2014. Council Member Lohr seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Upon motion by Council Member Broderick with a second by Council Member Lohr, Mr. Sherman Jenkins Ford was reappointed and Mr. Greg Pryor was newly

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appointed to the Municipal Planning Commission for an unexpired term ending 1/2015. The vote on the motion was unanimous.

Council Member Lohr noted that there are two openings instead of one opening on the Youth Advisory Commission.

Incumbent Judge Ray B. Woodard was reappointed as Municipal Judge and Incumbent R. Morrison M. Payne was reappointed as Assistant Municipal Judge for another term on the motion of Council Member Lohr, seconded by Council Member Broderick and passed with a vote of 4/0, with Mayor Young, Council Members Syfrett, Lohr and Broderick voting in favor. Council Members Siegel and Bonds abstained from voting due to a potential conflict of interest, in that their law firms may practice before city court from time to time.

A motion was made by Council Member Lohr, seconded by Council Member Broderick to reappoint R. Clenten Campbell as City Prosecutor for another term. The motion passed with a vote of 4/0 with Mayor Young and Council Members Syfrett, Lohr and Broderick voting in favor. Council Members Siegel and Bonds abstained from voting due to a potential conflict of interest, in that their law firms may practice before city court from time to time.

There being no further business to consider a motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Syfrett, seconded by Council Member Lohr and passed unanimously. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8:01 P.M. Notice of this meeting was distributed to all local media and posted on the City Hall bulletin board at least twenty-four hours prior to meeting time.

Respectfully,

Betty J. Hudson
City Clerk

APPROVED: September 24, 2013