

MINUTES

A Public Hearing and Regular Meeting of Walterboro City Council was held at City Hall on Tuesday, February 22, 2011 at 6:15 P.M. with Mayor Bill Young presiding.

PRESENT WERE: Mayor Bill Young, Council Members: Randy Peters, Charles Lucas, Ted Parker, Franklin Smalls and Tom Lohr. City Manager Jeff Lord, City Clerk Betty Hudson, and City Attorney George Cone were also present. Council Member Dwayne Buckner was absent. There were approximately 17 persons present in the audience at the meeting.

Mayor Young called the meeting to order. The invocation was lead by Council Member Smalls, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Lohr.

The Mayor announced that Council Member Buckner was out of town on personal business and unable to attend the meeting.

PUBLIC INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

The Mayor then asked for public comments on agenda items. Former Mayor Charlie Sweat commented on the Review of the Comprehensive Park Master Plan and the I-95 Business Loop Streetscape Conceptual Plan by Wood+Partners. He stated that he had the opportunity to attend some of the presentations by Wood+Partners. He stated that they did a very good job. They are very thoughtful about some of the things and some of the problems we have here in Walterboro, and I think they will do a good job. This is a positive for the community, he said.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. **CDBG Needs Assessment - Michelle Knight, Lowcountry Council of Governments**

Ms. Michelle Knight opened the hearing and stated, this is our annual public hearing that we hold for the City to get prepared to receive CDBG funding for 2011. Using a slide projector and power point presentation, Ms. Knight briefly outlined the high points of the program changes. She told Council that at some point, either at the end of the public hearing or at its next meeting, Council would need to rank its "priorities."

Ms. Knight noted that the purpose behind the CDBG program is to address priority needs. This program was established and has been in existence since 1982, and is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended (Title I).

1) The State of South Carolina's allocation for this year totals \$23.9 million. This is the same level of funding as last year. This allocation has been divided among the SC's programs as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Community Development (CD) Programs: | <u>\$19,610,339</u> |
| Community Infrastructure | \$7,610,339 |
| Community Enrichment | \$3,000,000 |
| Village Renaissance | \$7,000,000 |
| "Ready to Go" | \$2,000,000 |
| Business Development Program | <u>\$3,000,000</u> |
| Regional Planning Assistance | \$500,000 |
| State Technical Assistance | \$239,282 |
| State Administration | \$578,564 |

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All projects have to meet a national objective meaning:

- 1) Benefit low-to-moderate income persons.
- 2) Aid in the prevention of or elimination of slum or blight areas.
- 3) Meet other urgent community needs posing a serious health threat to the health or welfare of the community, where other financial resources are not available to meet such needs.

The LMI (Low-to-Moderate Income) qualified for Colleton County: 80% Limit for a family of 4 is \$39,300.

With regard to Fair Housing, Mr. Knight stated that as part of the program, each locality is expected to undertake activities that promote Fair Housing. She said, if you meet someone or if someone tells you they think they have been discriminated against in fair housing, either in the sale or rental of housing, in residential real estate transactions and in the provision of brokerage services, just have them call LCOG at 843-726-5536.

Ms. Knight then gave the highlights on the Community Development Programs:

In general these programs or projects have to produce outcomes that improve citizens' quality of life and create a competitive environment for jobs in the neighborhood by addressing our community needs. There are three competitive categories and one noncompetitive category:

- 1) Community Infrastructure (Competitive): Must contribute to the creation of healthy and sustainable communities by alleviating documented threats to the public welfare of the community or providing improved access to critical public facilities needs including water, sewer, drainage and roads.

State priorities in order are: significant improvements to exiting infrastructures that address health concerns, new service where it is cost effective and upgrades.

- 2) Community Enrichment (Competitive): These programs are designed to fund facilities, services and other activities that strengthen existing communities and support a high quality of life within the following state priority areas: workforce development, safe and health communities and obstacles to economic competitiveness. Workforce examples are libraries and quick job training centers, and publicly owned facilities that offer extended education programs for at-risk LMI children. When they said public owned, they are not talking about school facilities. Safe and Healthy Communities examples are public safety facilities in LMI neighborhoods, demolition or clearance, health clinics or equipment; firefighting facilities or equipment. Obstacles examples are: Increasing energy efficiencies for CDBG public facilities, Brownfield projects, building reuse/conversion, Downtown streetscape, planning for regional infrastructure, and transportation.

- 3) Village Renaissance (Competitive): This program is designed to address multiple activity projects where you go into a neighborhood as a result of having a development plan and address everything that neighborhood needs. The projects need to incorporate comprehensive strategies to link commercial revitalization success with improvements to adjacent neighborhoods. There should be phased programs in those projects, where you would have a planning phase and then two phases of actual construction work. Phase I should involve your neighborhood, having interaction with the neighborhood in terms of what the plan would include, review things or suggest things that would provide a sense of safety and neighborhood pride. It would address infrastructure needs and public facilities' needs as part of your planning

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process. Look at in-fill opportunities and make recommendations that improve the overall physical appearance of property values in the neighborhood and promote sustainability.

The Phase II and III activities would include: 1) Infrastructure - water, sewer, roads, drainage; 2) Public Facilities - sidewalks, security lighting and cameras, police substations, technology, homework centers, walking trails, green space, landscaping; 3) Housing - Construction of rental or single family affordable and workforce housing that has significant leveraging; 4) Demolition/Clearance of vacant and dilapidated properties; and 5) Public Services - crime watches, drug or gang education.

- 4) "Ready to Go" Public Facilities Program (Non-Competitive): These projects are designed to stimulate the local economy by encouraging the timely implementation of CDBG eligible public facilities. The project must be eligible under the Community Infrastructure or Community Enrichment program. All required project activities leading up to bidding must be complete prior to submission of application including but not limited to:
Project design, environmental review, acquisition and permits.

Ms. Knight stated that the Business Development Program is also noncompetitive. The idea there is that you are providing a public infrastructure to serve a business that is either locating and creating jobs in the neighborhood or an area, or expanding and creating jobs.

The application deadlines are:

"Ready to Go" - On going.

Business Development - On going.

Community Infrastructure - March 18, 2011.

Community Enrichment & Village Renaissance - August 19, 2011.

Applications are Due by:

"Ready to Go" and Business Development Projects are due 30 days after request is made.

Community Infrastructure - April 18, 2011.

Community Enrichment & Village Renaissance - September 19, 2011.

| Maximum and Minimum Amounts: | <u>Minimum</u> | <u>Maximum</u> |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| -Community Infrastructure | \$50,000 | \$500,000 |
| - Community Enrichment | | |
| - Facilities | \$50,000 | \$500,000 |
| -Services Other Activities | \$50,000 | \$300,000 |
| Village Renaissance | \$50,000 | \$500,000 |
| "Ready to Go" | \$50,000 | \$500,000 |
| Economic Development | \$50,000 | \$500,000 |

Ms. Knight stated that the match fund requirements for all projects are now 10% of the grant request. However, additional leveraging for Community Development projects will make your project more competitive.

Ms. Knight then said, the only other thing that I would mention is that there are some changes that were not in the presentation, related to threshold. Just so you'll know, I know you have a village renaissance study that you are doing right now for construction projects for Lemacks Street. You can only have one of those projects at a time. So, you couldn't decide that you have a priority for another Village Renaissance Project in another area until you have finished with the North Lemacks Street Project. The other thing is you can only have one "Ready to Go" Project at a time. You have one right now, but it will close probably in the next

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couple of months. Other than that, you are allowed to have three open projects at one time. So, right now as soon as we close Francis Street, you would be able to do something else. Last year, the ranking of the City's priority projects was:

1. Public Safety.
2. Water and Sewer in adjacent areas where there is a health threat documented.
3. Housing and Village Renaissance projects.
4. Downtown Revitalization.
5. Public Facilities.

Mayor then opened the floor to receive any public comments or questions.

Ms. Janet Sawyer, a city resident, then asked, does the City have matching grant monies available? City Manager Jeff Lord responded that the City has program income funds from previous projects, and that program income monies can be used as match. So, yes, we do have matching funds. Ms. Knight added, the other thing is, it doesn't necessarily have to be local money if there are other grant projects that are going on that we leverage together. It's just a 10% match and it could be in-kind too. Ms. Sawyer then stated, I hope the City gets appropriate funding for low cost housing, because of the need for it. Walterboro has the 2nd lowest wage in the entire Lowcountry. She stated, perhaps the city could urge landlords to lower their rents. Mayor Young then stated, I don't really know how that relates to CDBG.

Ms. Knight then stated, the LCOG has a regional home consortium and one of the set asides is to provide rental assistance for people who rent. One county in the four-county region has utilized that program through their housing authority to help income qualifying people get vouchers to help with rent. My understanding is that we would have to contact the regional housing authority that serves this area to see if they would have an interest in doing this in other counties, and so far we haven't gotten an answer. This program (CDBG) will not provide rental assistance. Mayor Young added, in the past the city has worked with developers to provide some rental housing for 55 and older persons.

City Manager Jeff Lord pointed out that on the list of priority needs, the city had listed as No. 2 - Infrastructure. He asked if the one that was "community infrastructure and community enrichment," would fall under that or if that would need to be a separate item? Ms. Knight responded that "infrastructure" would practically be more of a community infrastructure because it would be water, sewer, drainage - those sorts of public infrastructures. The community enrichment set aside is more for public facilities, like workforce training centers or if you were going to expand your library to have a technology lab, a computer lab or something like that, but you'd still have to be able to define a service area.

Mr. Lord then stated, but you mentioned under the community enrichment, that was where you would have demolition for "Ready to Go." So, would that need to be listed separately or under Infrastructure? Ms. Knight responded, I would think that you would want to identify clearance of dilapidated or nuisance property as a priority, and it needs to be in the top three if you are really serious about pursuing something.

The Public Hearing was then closed and the regular meeting began.

PRESENTATION:

1. **Annual City Retreat Report by City Manager, Jeff Lord**

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Mr. Lord opened by stating that every year about the second meeting after the retreat, he usually gives a report on the items discussed and some of goals going forward.

He reported that at this year's retreat, there was a review of the prior year's projects and a discussion and identification of new projects that are within the goals. The goals are outlined in Vision Statement and Goals, which are in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Lord also reported that Council identified three priorities, which are:

- 1) Crime prevention.
- 2) Promoting a positive image for Walterboro.
- 3) Promoting Economic Development.

Other items discussed by Council at the retreat included:

- 1) Annexation.
- 2) Recycling.
- 3) Cooperative services with Colleton County.
- 4) Improving ISO and fire insurance rating.
- 5) Curfew and truancy.
- 6) Crime prevention.
- 7) Both the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) for upgrading the Wastewater Treatment Plant and planning for the upgrade of water and sewer at the airport are complete.
- 8) Healthy Community Initiative.
- 9) City Marketing Campaign.
- 10) Youth Activities.

Regarding youth activities and the Youth Advisory Commission, Mr. Lord reported that the city sent out a survey in the water bills to determine interest/barriers for youth activities in Walterboro. The response has been extremely modest, 79 to date. Less than 5% said their children did (do) not participate due to lack of access or activities are too expensive. 82% said they either participate or have no interest. 13% said they did not participate due to not having the information. Mr. Lord also reported that Council had determined a need to gather and disseminate information on youth activities at their workshop to review the recommendations of the Youth Advisory Committee.

Concluding the presentation, Mr. Lord reported on the grants the city has received. Last year, we received about \$1.3 million in grants. In the first two months of 2011, we are approaching \$700,000 in grants.

Council Member Lohr then commented on the activities of the Youth Advisory Committee. He stated that one of the things we came up with from the survey were not just athletic activities, but also fine arts activities. We continue to know we have an obligation to help get that information out. In the survey, we put in questions on mentoring. There seems to be a fairly significant interest there. Councilman Lohr also commented that Mr. Horace Simmons and his group gave a good presentation. What I heard as a result of their presentation was that they needed somebody that was really interested on a day-by-day consistent basis to help show an interest and guide them. Mr. Lohr also noted that Mr. Wayne Bennett of D.J.J. was trying to get about 50 people trained as mentors about 5 or 6 months ago. I don't know if he met his goal. He (Mr. Bennett) also has a lunch buddy program. Mr. Lohr encouraged all persons present to participate in these type programs and to speak with their friends. He stated, I don't think you have to invest a lot of time. I think that really makes a difference in the lives of youth. He also stated, there are really a lot of activities for our youth, but we still have kids that do not have any guidance.

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APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

The Minutes of the January 25, 2011 Regular Meeting and the Minutes of the February 8, 2011 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting were approved as submitted on the motion of Council Member Lucas, seconded by Council Member Smalls, and passed with all members present voting in favor. Council Member Buckner was absent and did not vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no Old Business before Council.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Ordinance # 2011-03 (First Reading)

A motion was made by Council Member Lohr, seconded by Council Member Parker giving First Reading Approval to Ordinance # 2011-03, being:

An Ordinance to Amend the Code of Ordinances of the City of Walterboro, So As to Clarify and Strengthen the Ordinance as Related to Nuisance and Procurement Appeal Procedures and to Encourage Women and Minority Owned Businesses to Submit Bids and Qualifications to City Request.

The motion passed with all members voting in favor, except Council Member Buckner was absent and did not vote.

2. Resolution No. 2011-R-05, A Resolution to Recognize and Honor Floyd Buckner of Walterboro, SC for his Exceptional Years of Dedicated Service to the Walterboro Community and Colleton County, was before Council. Mayor Young read the resolution in its entirety into the records. A copy of said resolution is attached as part of these minutes. County Council Member Floyd Buckner is the father of current City Council Member Dwayne Buckner.

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2011-R-05 was made by Council Member Smalls, seconded by Council Member Lucas and passed with all Council Members voting in favor, except Council Member Dwayne Buckner was absent and did not vote.

3. Review and Consideration for Approval the Comprehensive Park Master Plan by Wood + Partners, Inc.

Mr. Mark L. Baker, of Wood + Partners, Inc. of Hilton Head, was present and briefed Council on a master plan that will improve and upgrade every park in the city and even add a bike path through the Great Swamp Sanctuary. Wood + Partners is a consulting firm hired by the city to help develop the plan. Mr. Baker gave a presentation to Council and reported that it had not yet been decided how the proposed park improvements would be paid for and when the initial phases of construction will begin.

Mr. Baker gave a brief description of the short term and long term recommendations for improving the city parks. Mr. Baker also identified the estimated improvement costs for each park:

- Doodle Hill Park - a total of \$101,976 estimated improvements.
- Forest Hills Tennis Courts - a total of \$159,854 estimated improvements.
- Gladys Whiddon Park - a total of \$428,650 estimated improvements.

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Gruber Street Park - a total of \$199,276 estimated improvements.
Mayfield Terrace Park - a total of \$149,535 estimated improvements.
Pinckney Park - a total of \$584,502 estimated improvements.

Mr. Horace Simmons, a city resident, raised concern about the plan. He was concerned that the plan did not include a park for the "Blanchard Line area, where he lives. He stated, we have a lot of kids over there. There are no sidewalks. We don't even have a park over there. He asked if Council would look at bringing a park in his area. He said, I am retired and I like to sit in the park sometimes, myself. Mr. Simmons also stated that he was embarrassed when he told others that he did not have sidewalks in his area. We are taxpayers too. Try to get a park there too, at least for our kids. This is 2011, not 1811.

Mayor Young then assured Mr. Simmons that the city is looking at his area. He stated, even though you're not on the plan that's up there, you are not being overlooked. I promise you we haven't forgotten you.

Council Member Randy Peters noted that Mr. Simmons house is right across the street from the location where there are plans to include a new festival lawn.

A motion to approve the Comprehensive Park Master Plan as presented by Wood + Partners was made by Council Member Lucas, seconded by Council Member Smalls and passed unanimously, except Council Member Buckner was absent and did not vote.

4. Review and Consideration of Approval of the I-95 Business Loop Streetscape Conceptual Plan, Wood + Partners, Inc.

Mr. Todd Theodore of Wood + Partners gave a brief review of the corridor study for the I-95 Business Loop Streetscape Conceptual Plan. Mr. Theodore stated that his firm was tasked to look at the Business Loop Corridor, which is Exit 53, Highway 63, Highway 64 and Exit 57. Mr. Theodore then gave a brief description and recommendations as a result of the study.

Mr. Theodore provided Council with some cost estimates for this project. The 6-mile corridor is a pretty expensive corridor, he stated. He explained that cost projection estimates could be broken down into smaller chunks. In this way, it becomes a tool so that you can seek funding and identify phases of the project that you want to go after. The first phase will bring improvements to the intersection of Washington Street and Jefferies Blvd. and improve the transition from the interstate into downtown.

A motion to approve the I-95 Business Loop Streetscape Conceptual Plan as presented by Wood + Partners was made by Council Member Parker, seconded by Council Member Smalls and passed with all members voting in favor, except Council Member Buckner was absent and did not vote.

Mayor Young congratulated Wood+ Partners for their work on these projects. He said, I think you did a great job with all of this and we appreciate your help in doing such good plans. We were able to get the SCDOT grant and we are looking forward to seeing the first phase get started.

5. Request to Close Street for Cubmobile Race on March 12, 2011 - Chris Cook

A motion was made by Council Member Lucas to grant the request as submitted by the Boy Scouts to close Forest Hills Road from Jefferies Blvd. to Ireland Creek on March 12, 2011 for the Cubmobile Race. Council Member Smalls

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seconded the motion that passed with all members voting in favor. Council Member Buckner was absent and did not vote.

There were no Committee Reports given.

The Mayor then entertained a motion to enter an Executive Session. Council Member Smalls made a motion to enter an Executive Session. Council Member Lucas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, except Council Member Buckner was absent and did not vote.

The Mayor announced that the meeting would enter an Executive Session for a personnel matter related to Boards and Commissions. The meeting then convened into Executive Session.

The meeting returned to Open Session and a motion was made by Council Member Peters to appoint Mr. T. Payton Crosby to the Municipal Election Commission. Council Members Parker seconded the motion that passed with all members voting in favor, except Council Member Buckner was absent and did not vote. Mr. Crosby will serve the unexpired term of Mr. Harris Beach who had resigned.

The Mayor invited anyone who wished to stay after the meeting to talk further with the representatives from Wood+Partners about the plans presented.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Parker, seconded by Council Member Lucas and passed unanimously. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7:58 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: March 22, 2011