

Walterboro City Council  
Public Hearing & Regular Meeting  
April 26, 2011

### **MINUTES**

A Public Hearing and Regular Meeting of Walterboro City Council was held at City Hall on Tuesday, April 26, 2011 at 6:15 P.M. with Mayor Bill Young presiding.

**PRESENT WERE:** Mayor Bill Young, Council Members: Dwayne Buckner, 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. There were approximately 18 persons in attendance at the meeting.

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

### **PUBLIC INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS:**

There were no comments given on agenda items.

### **PUBLIC HEARING:**

#### 1. **Ordinance # 2011-05.**

The Mayor announced a public hearing duly advertised to receive public comments on the following proposed ordinance:

1. Ordinance # 2011-05, An Ordinance Authorizing the Conveyance of a Twenty-One (21) Acres, More or Less, Tract of Land, to the County of Colleton, a Body Corporate and Politic.

The Mayor clarified that this 21 acres of land is in the recreation area. If you have been there before, I believe this is the three softball fields we have used for years and years, and that 21 acres is owned by the City and we are conveying that to the County, as part of the restructuring of recreation responsibilities in the county.

No further comments were given. The Public Hearing was closed and the regular meeting began.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **Ordinance # 2011-04,** An Ordinance Allowing the City of Walterboro to Join the County of Colleton in Abolishing Walterboro-Colleton City-County Recreation Commission AKA the "Walterboro-Colleton County Recreation Commission" AKA the "Walterboro-Colleton County Recreation and Parks Commission"; and Abolishing Said Commission, was given Second Reading and Adoption on the motion of Council Member Lucas, seconded by Council Member Peters and passed unanimously.
2. **Ordinance # 2011-05,** An Ordinance Authorizing the Conveyance of a Twenty-One (21) Acres, More or Less, Tract of Land, to the County of Colleton, a Body Corporate and Politic, was before Council for Second Reading and Adoption.

A motion was made by Council Member Parker giving Second Reading and Adoption to Ordinance # 2011-05. Council Member Smalls seconded the motion. In discussing the motion, Council Member Buckner expressed concern that the City was only getting a \$1 or \$5 for transferring 21 acres of land to the county. He stated, I just think it is a bad deal for the City. Mr. Buckner proposed the following alternatives:

**MINUTES/Page II**

- 1) Since our city residents pay additional taxes, they should have some type of representation on the Colleton County Recreation Commission for those additional taxes, or
- 2) The City residents should have some type of reduced fee for activities at the Recreation Center in exchange for that 21 acres or we could also look at making sure that the County fulfills its obligation for fixing the tennis courts at the Forest Hills Park.

Council Member Buckner further stated, when I look at this deal, the City is not getting anything for this 21 acres outside of the additional responsibility of maintenance and upkeep of the parks that are in the city limits. So, I just think it is a bad deal and our city residents deserve to have their tax dollars be represented on that board or some type of negotiation. Therefore, I will be voting against this ordinance.

Mayor Young stated, this is part of an agreement that the City and the County made in order for the County to be able to bond the improvements to the Recreation Center out there for \$2.5 million. The city's children and residents will benefit from being able to use those facilities out there. The 21 acres are something that has been utilized for years as softball fields. This is not 21 acres that was just sitting out there, not being utilized.

The motion giving Second Reading and Adoption to Ordinance # 2011-05 then passed with a vote of 6/1 with Mayor Young, Council Members Peters, Lucas, Parker, Smalls and Lohr voting in favor and Council Member Buckner opposing the motion for adoption.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Street Closing Request and Use of Downtown Plaza for Annual Memorial Day Ceremony**

Mr. James White, Veterans Affairs Officer, was present on behalf of the Veterans Council. He stated, this is a regular annual request, and I am glad to be able to present you with this letter, as well as ask for your attendance on May 30<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M.

A motion was made by Council Member Peters, seconded by Council Member Smalls, to approve the street closing request and use of the downtown plaza for the Annual Memorial Day Ceremony by the Veterans Council as submitted.

Mayor Young asked Mr. White about the theme for the ceremony this year. Mr. White responded that the theme will be "The Soldier's Story." He explained that what we are planning to do this year, instead of trying to find one keynote speaker, we are going to have war veterans from the Veterans Victory House to come out and tell part of their story. This is something new we are doing this year, and I think it would be something great for every participant.

The motion then passed unanimously.

2. **Consideration to Have the City Manager Publish an Annual Public Safety Report**

Council Member Buckner then moved to have the City Manager publish an annual public safety report. Council Member Smalls seconded the motion.

In discussing the motion, Council Member Buckner explained that he had asked that this item be placed on the agenda coming from our retreat, to direct the

**MINUTES/Page III**

City Manager to publish an annual public safety report. However, we know that at any time of retreat, there is no official public action taken. I thought it was necessary that we authenticate this and make it a part of the official public record, so that our citizens would have an opportunity to have a report from our Public Safety Department, so we will know exactly where we stand as far as that Department and its function.

Council Member Parker stated, I thought we already had that report. City Manager Lord clarified, the directive from the retreat was to increase the public awareness of the accomplishments that we have had with crime and so, it is something that we are working on to do. It's something that the resources have to be aligned for us to be able to do that. So, it's something that we are already working on. Council Member Lohr then asked, when would this be likely to come out. City Manager Lord explained, we turn in the numbers to the FBI at the end of each fiscal year, so it will be in January. They scrub those numbers to make sure it's right and then they still have not come out for 2010 yet. So, for 2010 they still have not come out yet.

Further discussion was held and the City Manager affirmed that the cost for this is in the proposed budget. Unless there are changes made to the proposed budget, I am planning on doing this report. Mr. Buckner again explained that he wanted to make the request for this report a part of the official public record of the city. At the retreat, it is my understanding there is no official action taken by the Council. I think it is important that we make it a part of the official public record and I also want to go on the record as saying that, it is important that we do this, because right now, from riding on Jefferies Boulevard, there is one of our business owners who is publishing a report of his own. I think we need to make sure that we do our own report, because if we don't do it, someone else will. We need to do that so that our citizens will have a detailed report from our Public Safety Department. We already have the directive, and I don't see where there should be an issue making it an official part of the public record.

Council Member Lucas suggested that the sample given of such a report was entirely too long. He suggested, whatever we do, it needs to be short and simple.

Mayor Young then stated, I really don't see the need to redo something we have already done. We gave the City Manager a lot of directions at the retreat, to come back and formulate ways to do things, and this is one of those things that's being done. To try to make everything that we talked about at the retreat part of the public record, but it is in the budget and its kind of redundant to do this again.

The motion to have the City Manager publish an annual Public Safety Report was defeated on a vote of 3/4 with Council Members Buckner, Smalls and Lohr voting in favor and Council Members Parker, Peters, and Lucas and Mayor Young voting against the motion.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

No committee reports were given.

The Mayor then thanked everyone for coming out tonight. He stated, we will not have an executive session tonight, because we do not have all the information that we thought we would have.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Parker, seconded by Council Member Smalls and passed unanimously. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:33 P.M. Notice of this meeting was distributed to

Walterboro City Council  
Public Hearing and Regular Meeting  
April 26, 2011

**MINUTES/Page IV**

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: May 10, 2011**