

MINUTES

A Public Hearing and Regular Meeting of Walterboro City Council was held at City Hall on Tuesday, July 8, 2008 at 6:15 P.M. with Mayor Charlie Sweat presiding.

PRESENT WERE: Mayor Charlie Sweat, Council Members: Randy Peters, Charles Lucas, Bill Young, Franklin Smalls and Mary Anne Cannady. City Manager Jeff Lord and City Attorney George Cone were also present. City Clerk Betty Hudson was absent due to illness and Bonnie Ross, Codes Enforcement, acted as recording secretary. Council Member Ted Parker was absent.

PUBLIC HEARING:

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced a public hearing, duly advertised, to receive public comments on proposed Ordinance # 2008-09, An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 18 of the Walterboro City Code of 2002, as Amended, to Regulate Certain Truck Traffic on Hampton Street, Wichman Street and Padgett Loop Within the City of Walterboro. The Mayor noted that a group of residents from Hampton Street attended a previous Council Meeting to speak on concerns with truck traffic. He explained at that time, Council had been working on things we had to do in order to change the ordinances, so that the City could enforce the laws that we had. This ordinance is a change of one of those ordinances which takes out 18 wheelers and puts back in 3 axle trucks. This gives the opportunity to stop some of those beer trucks and some of those other trucks that are long tractor trailer type vehicles. The Mayor then asked for questions from the public.

Ms. Carol Black stated she had looked at the signs at the entrance to the city. She asked if any of those signs (at the Charleston Highway and Robertson Blvd Bypass) could be moved to before the place where Robertson Blvd Bypass starts. She explained that by the time you see the signs "Trucks Prohibited"; you have already crossed over to the stop light. She asked if the Highway Department could move their signs out farther.

The Mayor explained that the Highway Department is responsible for erecting their signs. He admitted that they (the Highway Department) did, in fact, put some of the signs in the wrong places. He further stated that the sign prohibiting trucks on Paul Street was knocked down, and had not yet been replaced. So, there are several signs that the Chief of Police and I and the City Manager will have to go back and revisit some of the placing and some of the language on some of the signs. We are just in the process of starting to improve the situation.

No further comments were received, and the hearing was closed, the regular meeting then began.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The Minutes of the June 24, 2008 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting were approved as submitted on the motion of Council Member Cannady, seconded by Council Member Lucas and passed unanimously. Council Member Parker was absent and did not vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

A motion was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member Smalls, giving Second Reading and Adoption to Ordinance # 2008-09, being: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 18 OF THE WALTERBORO CITY CODE OF 2002, AS AMENDED, TO REGULATE CERTAIN TRUCK TRAFFIC ON HAMPTON ST, WICHMAN STREET AND PADGETT LOOP WITHIN THE CITY OF WALTERBORO.

On a question raised by a resident as to the date that the new ordinance would go into effect, City Manager Jeff Lord responded that after adoption of this ordinance, the city would have to wait on SCDOT's approval before the new law could be enacted.

City Manager Lord also identified that there were two typographical errors made in Ordinance # 2008-09, which should be corrected as follows: Last paragraph, change word "before" to "become", and change word "signing" to "signage". **The corrected paragraph will then read: "This ordinance shall become effective upon its passage by City Council, approval by the South Carolina Department of Transportation and erection of necessary signage to effect the prohibition".**

The motion then passed as amended by the City Manager. The vote on the motion was 6/0. Council Member Parker was absent and did not vote

NEW BUSINESS:

Appointment of Municipal Judge, City Attorney and City Prosecutor

This agenda item was deferred by Council for discussion in Executive Session later in the meeting.

Request by Walterboro Merchants Association for Fund-raising Event

Mr. David Evans, on behalf of Walterboro Merchants Association, appeared before Council requesting permission to use the City Parking Lot and close Lucas Street (between Hampton and East Washington St.) on October 10 and 11 to hold a fall antique festival and BBQ competition. Mr. Evans announced that the event would be similar to the one held in May 2008. Mr. Evans proposed doing all the activities within the confines of the parking lot, to have more of a festival atmosphere there, but also allow the organization to have a leeway to use Lucas Street to put up portolets and additional machinery that may be needed by the barbeque people. Mr. Evans also requested to have access to the water spigot as used before and to have the power turned on at the parking lot on Friday for the cooks. Security and the barbeque people will need some kind of lighting in the parking lot. Mr. Evans also requested that business licenses be waived for the vendors for this event. On a question raised by Chief Rhodes, Mr. Evans noted that he wanted to get with the Chief to see if the city would provide security or if his group would need to provide the security. He said, we would like to have a security presence at night during the event. The barbeque people will start on Friday around 3:00 p.m. The event should be over around 5 or 6 P.M. on Saturday. Mr. Evans also requested that the City help with supplying garbage cans for the event.

After a brief question and answer session between various Council Members and Mr. Evans, a motion was made Council Member Cannady to approve the requests of the Downtown Merchants Association. Council Member Peters seconded the motion that passed unanimously. Council Member Parker was absent and did not vote.

Request for Parade Permit for a "Stop the Violence March" on Saturday, August 30, 2008 - by Mr. Horace Simmons

Mr. Horace Simmons appeared before Council with a request for approval of a parade permit for a "Stop the Violence March" on August 30, 2008. Mr. Simmons stated that he has been working with kids sometime now trying to do what I can to stop the violence, keep children in school and out of trouble. The Community Action Line Against Violence is requesting permission from Council to have a march to help stop violence in the community. He stated he is asking for the help of the Sheriff Department and Police Department, but the main thing is to try and reach the parents. If you can get to the parents, then you can get to the kids and you can stop this violence.

Mr. Simmons stated that he had mentioned this in a previous Council Meeting. Labeling these kids is something I don't like and I never will, he said. Calling these kids hoodlums, I don't like that either, because they are not. There are some bad kids and there are some good kids, and there are some adults who are bad and some who are good. Mr. Simmons said, what we are going to do is to try and get everybody together, and I am asking all of you right now if you could be present, we will appreciate that very much. We will have some people coming in from out of town hopefully, and we would like to have it look good and have a whole lot of the parents present. It will be a peaceful march; it will not be something out of hand. It was noted that the march will start at the courthouse, go down Hampton Street to the Colleton Center (Hampton Street School). The speeches would be held at The Colleton Center. The march will start around 9:00 A.M. and end at the school, and the program will be at the school for about 1½ hour.

Responding to a question raised by Council Member Smalls, Mr. Simmons responded that the parade participants will be the parents, community members, and he is also asking City Council Members to also participate. He also noted that the parade will be mostly a walking parade.

Chief Rhodes pointed out that his department assisted in a big walk last Saturday with Mr. Bright. The department did not have to block any traffic, we just placed a unit in the front and a unit in the rear and that worked out. Mayor Sweat told Chief Rhodes to use his discretion on how large the crowd is, in order handle the traffic and parade walk.

Concluding the discussion, a motion for approval of Mr. Simmons request for a parade permit as requested was made by Council Member Lucas, seconded by Council Member Smalls and passed unanimously. Council Member Parker was absent and did not vote.

Add-on Agenda Item - Ordinance to Correct Referendum Date from November 8 to November 4 - By City Manager Jeff Lord

Next, City Manager Lord introduced a new add-on agenda item. He stated that previously Council adopted two ordinances to change the municipal election from partisan to non-partisan. One of the ordinances had a typographical error in it which set the date for the referendum as November 8, 2008. It should have been November 4, which will coincide with the national election date.

A motion was made by Council Member Cannady, seconded by Council Member Lucas to approve First Reading, By Title Only to:

An Ordinance Amending Ordinance 2008-03, So as to Correct the Date Set for the Referendum on Changing the Election Method of the Mayor and Council Members of the City of Walterboro from the Partisan Primary Election and General Election Method to the Nonpartisan Election and Runoff Election Method.

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

There were no Committee Reports given.

Ms. Carol Black then asked about the status of the beautification project of the South Jefferies and Bells Highway Project. Ms. Black referred to a newspaper article back in 2006, in which it appeared that TIF funding was obtained by the City for a combination of the Great Swamp, Interpretative Center and a green planting project. She stated, I have not seen anything in the newspapers about a green planting project, and I was wondering if you could give me an update on the status of that project.

Mayor Sweat responded that the City is in the process of getting final approval for the interchanges on I-95 to be re-landscaped through the state and our share of that through the county. We are still in the process of getting that final approval. Everything's done; the plans are ready to start that project. We are not going to start the connector loop, which is Jefferies Blvd. which stretches between the 2 interchanges until we get that project underway and started. Sometimes it takes a little longer to get these projects done than the general public would like to see, but we are there. We are trying on a weekly basis to hustle and get these things done. Further discussion was held.

A motion was made by Council Member Lucas to enter an executive session to discuss the deferred agenda item on appointments, development of security personnel or devices and a contractual matter on water service. Council Member Smalls seconded, and the motion passed with all members in favor. Council Member Parker was absent and did not vote.

The Meeting then entered into an Executive Session.

The meeting returned to Open Session at approximately 6:55 P.M., with no action taken as a result of the Executive Session.

There being no further business to consider, a motion to adjourn was made by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member Cannady and passed unanimously. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:57 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 August 26, 2008