

Walterboro City Council  
Regular Meeting  
December 12, 2006

### MINUTES

A Regular Meeting of Walterboro City Council was held at City Hall on Tuesday, December 12, 2006 at 6:15 P.M., with Mayor Charles H. Sweat, Jr. presiding.

**PRESENT WERE:** Mayor Charles H. Sweat, Jr., Council Members: Charles Lucas, Bill Young, Johnnie Thompson, Ted Parker, Franklin Smalls and Mary Anne Cannady. City Manager Tuck McConnell, City Clerk Betty Hudson and City Attorney George Cone were also present.

There being a quorum present, the Mayor called the meeting to order and called on Council Member Smalls for the invocation and Council Member Cannady to lead the pledge of allegiance to our flag.

The Minutes of the November 28, 2006 Regular Meeting were approved as submitted on the motion of Council Member Cannady, seconded by Council Member Thompson, with all members voting in favor.

There was no Old Business before Council.

Next, Mr. Jim Mellon of Mellon & Wechsler presented the 2005-2006 audit report of the City's budget. Mr. Mellon reported that the City received an "unqualified opinion," which is the best opinion the City can get. He then gave a brief overview of the report. A copy of the report was provided to each Council Member. City Manager McConnell expressed regrets that this was the last year Mr. Mellon would be the city's auditor, because he has decided to retire. Mr. McConnell stated that this firm had done an excellent job and the city has had an excellent relationship with the firm.

Next on the agenda was a review of the construction bids received for the Route 64 Bypass Sewer Extension project. Public Works Director Charlie Chewning reported that four bids were received as follows:

Seaside Utilities, Inc., Moncks Corner, SC	\$139,800.30
Anson Construction Co., Inc., Charleston, SC	\$144,444.00
Chandler Const. Services, Inc., Ninety Six, SC	\$162,690.00
James F. Pederson Company, Inc., Hollywood, SC	\$208,312.00

Mr. Chewning stated that the low bidder, Seaside Utilities, was a very qualified contractor and this would not be an easy job because of going downhill into the swamp and dealing with ground water problems. He stated that \$12,000 or \$13,000 of the bid was slated for well pointing. It will depend on the weather and the water table if well pointing will be needed or not. It was Mr. Chewning's and B. P. Barber's recommendation to accept the low bid from Seaside Utilities.

A motion approving the low bid of Seaside Utilities, Inc. in the amount of \$139,800.30 for the construction contract for the Highway 64 Bypass Sewer Extension, was made by Council Member Parker, seconded by Council Member Lucas and passed unanimously. In discussing the motion, Council Member Young asked if this is the expected cost for this project. City Manager McConnell responded that this was a little more than expected. Mr. Chewning stated the City had figured the cost to be a little over \$100,000, but believed the rising cost of gas may have been a contributing factor.

Next, a motion was made by Council Member Cannady to approve a street closing request made by First Baptist Church to close Memorial Street between Carn and Hampton Street on Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon for a Christmas event. Council Member Lucas seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Next, the Mayor informed Council that a request had been received from Mayor of the Town of Gifford to purchase one of the City's old police cars in tact. The police department is coming up with a price for one of their old cars. What we need from Council is a motion to allow the City to sell the Town of Gifford one of our old cars, so that they can start their police department. City Manager McConnell added that staff wanted approval to negotiate a sale without going through the bid process. The rest of the old police vehicles will go through the bid process. He said the car had probably \$1,000 of equipment and the car is worth approximately \$2,500. The automobile would sell for around \$3,000 or \$4,000. A motion was then made by Council Member Young giving approval for the City Manager

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and Police Chief to negotiate the sale of an old police car with the Town of Gifford. Council Member Cannady seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Next on the agenda, Council Members Cannady and Smalls gave a brief report on the National League of Cities meeting previously attended by Council Members on December 5-9, 2006 in Reno, Nevada.

Next, with the Mayor's approval, Mr. Bill Smoak, owner of a flower shop on Washington Street, addressed Council concerning the closing of Washington Street for the Rice Festival. Mr. Smoak stated that main street has always been closed downtown for the Rice Festival. As you know, the Rice Festival had a retreat. In Tuesday's Press and Standard, there was a lengthy discussion. Mr. Smoak then read some of the comments made in the newspaper, such as "if we make a change, we'll bring death to the Rice Festival." Mayor Sweat pointed out that this comment was received second hand via the newspaper. Mr. Smoak then stated that the following comment made is the reason he is here tonight - "I need to give back to the community." Mr. Smoak said, "they have no idea what I give back to the community, or any of the other business people downtown." It's unfair. Mr. Smoak then said he had no where else to go, because they (the Rice Festival Committee) do not listen. He then asked Council to consider that when the Rice Festival makes its request to close the street, that some compromise be made not to close the street but to leave it open. He stated he is not opposed to the Rice Festival, but is opposed to closing main street. He asked Council to consider helping the business people downtown and not close the street. In closing, he stated, let's have the Rice Festival downtown, but let's leave Washington Street open. We all need to work together to achieve that goal. Mr. Smoak then requested that Council ask the Rice Festival to negotiate this matter in good faith to leave Washington Street open and still have the Rice Festival downtown.

Council Member Lucas then asked if Council could send a letter to each entity involved in the matter asking them to meet and come up with a compromise and bring back a report to Council on what they have agreed upon around the end of January. He stated, we cannot force them to do this, but we can make a request. Mayor Sweat then stated, this could be done if this is the consensus of Council. It was the consensus of Council that this letter would be sent.

There being no further business to consider, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Council Member Cannady, seconded by Council Member Lucas and passed unanimously. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:50 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