

Walterboro City Council
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 26, 2005

MINUTES

A Regular Meeting of Walterboro City Council was held at City Hall on Tuesday, April 26, 2005 at 6:15 P.M. with Mayor Harry Cone presiding.

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

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

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Public Works crews for the good job in cleaning up the streets after the Rice Festival ended on Saturday evening.

The Mayor announced that Council Member Cannady was unable to attend the meeting due to a previously scheduled board meeting, and that Council Member Parker was absent due to a family matter.

The Minutes of the April 12, 2005 Regular Meeting were approved as submitted on a motion by Council Member Young, seconded by Council Member Thompson with all members voting in favor. Council Members Cannady and Parker were ABSENT and did not vote.

Under New Business, Council considered the existing vacancies on the Downtown Improvement District Review Board and the Economic Development Commission. City Manager McConnell reported that one interest letter was received from Anthony Washington of Wichman Street, to serve on the Economic Development Commission. To date, no interest letters have been received for the Downtown Improvement District Review Board. Council agreed by consensus to defer this matter to another meeting to be considered when all Council Members are present.

A proclamation designating May 2005 as Mental Health Month in the City of Walterboro was adopted on the motion of Council Member Thompson, seconded by Council Member Sweat, with all members voting in favor. Council Members Cannady and Parker were ABSENT and did not vote. A copy of said proclamation is attached as part of these minutes.

Next, Council considered a policy that City Council would approve all street closings. The Mayor stated this matter is the result of a recent event held in the downtown area. Some Council Members were notified after the fact about the event. Complaints had been received from some of the downtown merchants regarding the closing of Washington Street. Council Member Smalls pointed out that the complaint he received was not on the street closing or the event, but the time and fashion in which the merchant was notified. City Manager McConnell stated that in the past, this matter was handled by the Police Department, who coordinated the street closings with the Highway Department. Because Washington Street is a city-owned street and not a Highway Department street, Mr. McConnell asked Council if it wanted to approve ahead of time the closing of any street, as it does the hanging of any banner.

Walterboro City Council
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 26, 2005

MINUTES/Page II

Council Member Thompson strongly felt that Council should approve any closing of the streets, with the exception of a safety matter, in which case, the Police Department would handle the street closing. In a discussion that followed, Council Member Young felt that Council should know what time and how long the streets would be closed, so that people who are affected would get this information. He also felt that more time should be given to the merchants in case they have plans for a sale or other event. He proposed having the merchants notified at least 48 hours in advance. Further discussion was held on the advance notification for the merchants. City Attorney Cone proposed that notification be given the merchants before the Council Meeting discussing the closing.

Concluding the discussion, Council Member Thompson MOVED to refer this matter to the City Manager to come up with a policy on street closings. Council Member Sweat seconded the motion that passed unanimously. Council Members Cannady and Parker were ABSENT and did not vote.

Next, City Manager McConnell pointed out that one of Council's priorities was to have a new and improved website. He stated that Finance Director Jeff Lord has been working on this for some months now and the new website is now ready to go on-line today.

Jeff Lord then gave a brief overview of the City of Walterboro's new website, using an on-time computer and overhead screen. This website is available via the internet, and contains an array of information on the City, including a section on Our Government, Utilities, Police, Judicial, Fire, Finance, Public Works, City Council, Minutes, Agendas, Upcoming events, etc. The Mayor, Council Members and staff can be contacted by e-mail via the website. The website address is www.walterborosc.org.

Council Member Young expressed concern about listing the names of persons with outstanding arrest warrants on the website. He asked if there could be legal consequences. Staff pointed out that this was a common practice for other municipalities, as well as newspapers and television stations. There was concern expressed over legal action if someone was listed by error or if a person's name was unjustifiably posted as a result of a personal dispute. Staff pointed out that all warrants must be approved by a judge and that only those persons who had not responded to the warrant would be listed. Jeff Lord pointed out that there is a disclaimer on the website indicating that a person is not necessarily guilty, but is wanted by the police.

Next, City Manager McConnell reported on proposed annexation of properties along Sniders Highway. He stated that one of Council's priorities was the annexation of the Highway 63, I-95 Interchange. In that area, there are 52 properties. To date, 47 or 90.3% of the property owners have signed the petition for annexation. The total assessed value of properties in the petition is \$1,483,666. As of today, \$1,408,246 or 94.9% are represented by signatures. He stated that staff anticipates these numbers may approach 100%, but felt the numbers would be in the high 90's on both signatures and assessed valuation. He thanked Mayor Cone and Curtis Stroble for their help in this process. Approval was granted by Council by consensus to start the public notice phase of the annexation.

On a question raised by Council Member Young, City Manager McConnell stated that the annexation would go out to the last motel on the other side of I-95, both sides of the road. He pointed out that there is a

Walterboro City Council
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 26, 2005

MINUTES/Page III

section of the road on the right going out that was not included. The right side starts at Carolette Drive and goes from there is included. Mr. McConnell stated that all properties in this annexation front on Highway 63. There are no off-road properties included.

The Mayor announced that Public Works Director Charlie Chewning had a knee operation and is doing well.

Council Member Young announced that a Budget Committee Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 3 at 5:30 P.M. He asked that the members of the Budget Committee remain so that he could give out assignments for this meeting. He also invited the press and anyone else who wished to remain for the meeting.

There being no further business to consider, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Council Member Sweat, seconded by Council Member Young and passed unanimously. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:55 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 May 10, 2005