

Walterboro City Council
Special Called Meeting
October 31, 2012

MINUTES

A Special Called Meeting of Walterboro City Council was held at City Hall on Wednesday, October 31, 2012 at 12:00 noon with Mayor Bill Young presiding.

PRESENT WERE: Mayor Bill Young, Council Members: Paul Siegel, Dwayne Buckner, Charles Lucas, Randy Peters, and Bobby Bonds. City Manager Jeff Lord, City Clerk Betty Hudson, and City Attorney George Cone were also present. Council Member Tom Lohr was absent. There were approximately 7 persons present in the audience. The purpose of the Special Called Meeting was to discuss the development of security personnel or devices related to the recent increase in break-ins and attempted break-ins in the City in an Executive Session.

There being a quorum present, Mayor Young called the meeting to order and gave the invocation. Council Member Bonds led the pledge of allegiance to our flag.

At this point the Mayor made the following statement.

The Mayor stated that this meeting was called today to receive a briefing from our Chief of Police and City Manager. Over the past few weeks, we have had several break-ins and several attempted break-ins in the City where some items have been taken, and this has caused a number of our citizens a great deal of concern. I want to assure everyone that we take these incidents very seriously and that we believe that it is everyone's right to feel safe in their own homes. Everyone associated with the City of Walterboro, from the Mayor and Council, to the City Manager and Police Chief and every Public Safety Official in the City is dedicated to protecting our neighborhoods and apprehending those responsible. That being said, we need the public's help. We ask that you remember to keep your doors and windows locked, keep your cars locked even at home in the driveway, and don't leave keys or valuable items in your cars. Keep an eye on your neighbor's property, as well as your own. Report suspicious individuals to the Public Safety Department. Check on your elderly neighbors and those who live alone to make sure that they follow these suggestions and that they are safe. A lot of our elderly people may not have e-mail or do Facebook, and so they may not get some of the e-mails that the rest of us get. If people come to your house that is asking for work and you don't know them, you probably should decline the work and call City Hall or notify them, or you can ask if they have a City business license or a contractor's license. You can call the City to find out if they are legitimate. Several of these incidents have occurred in the daytime, so if you should return home and discover a break-in, call the police immediately from your cell phone or phone from a neighbor's house and do not enter your home until they arrive. It's just a matter of time until we catch these people, and we will catch them.

Mr. Leonard Hulquist then addressed Council regarding a recent break-in on his property. He said that one of his rental properties was broken into a week ago Saturday. He stated that he immediately called in and reported the break-in to the Police Department. The tenants were out of town. I called immediately and pressed the numbers I was told by dispatch. The officers came and were very concerned about our problem and what we could do to get it solved. They came back a couple of times since then. I am interested in what the City can do to keep this from happening again.

Mayor Young stated, this is frustrating for all of us, and our people are working on it and gathering information. You know, we do this every day. There are discussions every day about how we solve these kinds of crimes. The public does not always see what's going on, but we want to assure everyone that we are working on this. It's a matter of time, but we will get these guys.

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OLD BUSINESS:

There was no Old Business before Council.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no New Business before Council.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion to enter an Executive Session was then made by Council Member Lucas, seconded by Council Member Bonds, and passed with all members voting in favor. The Mayor then announced that the meeting will enter an Executive Session for a discussion of the development of security personnel or devices related to the recent increase in break-ins and attempted break-ins in the City.

The meeting then convened into an Executive Session.

The meeting returned to Open Session, and there being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Council Member Bonds, seconded by Council Member Lucas and passed unanimously. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 1:30 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: January 8, 2013