



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2017

The Columbia City Council conducted a Work Session on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the Work Session to order at 2:15 p.m. and the following members of Council were present: The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Howard E. Duvall, Jr., The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr. and The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann. The Honorable Moe Baddourah arrived at 4:00 p.m. The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine was absent. Also present were Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr. offered the Invocation.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

1. EPA Brownfields Briefing - Mr. Fred Delk, Executive Director of the Columbia Development Corporation and Mr. Brian Kvam, Brownfields Program Consultant for Cardno Co.

Mr. Fred Delk, Executive Director of the Columbia Development Corporation announced that the City received its first Environmental Protection Agency Brownsfield Program Grant almost seventeen years ago. He outlined the vision of the program. He reported that we've completed 99 projects; received \$1.8 million; and seen a \$303.4 million return on investment. He announced that we are being considered for an additional \$300,000 grant from the EPA.

Mr. Brian Kvam, Brownfields Program Consultant for Cardno Co. continued to report that the grant application was submitted last fall to continue the City's ongoing success through this program. He requested the City's assistance with asking Congressional leaders, Senators and the Administration to continue this program. He noted that the applications are currently being scored.

Councilor Davis asked about abandoned gas stations.

Mr. Fred Delk, Executive Director of the Columbia Development Corporation said inventory studies have been conducted for North Main Street and Gills Creek to determine which properties may be eligible for funding. He said we are limited with petroleum sites, because there is a primary federal funding source for those projects.



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Councilor Rickenmann requested a summary of the presentation and an electronic version of the report to send with a letter.

Mayor Benjamin agreed that the information should be shared broadly along with the toughest projects we've completed. He reported that the leadership of the US Conference of Mayors met with Administrator Pruitt and he indicated significant support for the Brownsfield Program and the Superfund Program. He said will continue to have those discussions.

2. Update from the Capital City / Lake Murray Country Regional Tourism Board - Ms. Miriam Atria, President/CEO of the Capital City/Lake Murray Country Regional Tourism Board

Ms. Miriam Atria, President/CEO of the Capital City/Lake Murray Country Regional Tourism Board reported that the organization experienced a 49% increase in walk-in traffic at the visitor's center; 59% increase in website traffic; Facebook campaigns generated a 66% increase in fans; and a new visitor's map was created in September. She announced that Ms. Amy Alimohamed, their Director of Sales was recognized for a new creative USB pen that provides event attendees with itineraries, rates, hotels and more. Ms. Atria continued to report on many of the organizations successes and partnerships in the golf and fishing industries. She announced that they won the bid to bring the Forrest Wood Cup back in August and the Total Eclipse will be promoted during that time as well.

Ms. Jan Jernigan, Member of the Capital City/Lake Murray Country Regional Tourism Board of Directors announced that the Greater Columbia Restaurant Association recognized four (4) individuals and Ms. Miriam Atria was inducted into the Hospitality Industry Hall of Fame.

Councilor Davis said the City is benefiting from this partnership and the dollar impact speaks for itself when it comes to tourism in this area.

Mayor Benjamin said the Capital City / Lake Murray Country Regional Tourism Board do an excellent job of actively and aggressively maintaining a balanced regional focus.

Councilor Duvall thanked Ms. Atria for her leadership with the Total Eclipse committee. He noted the multiple effects fishing has on tourism. He said scouts come prior to the event and now Universities and Colleges have taken an interest in fishing.



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3. Indefinite Delivery Contracting - Ms. Sandra Wright, Procurement and Contracts Director and Mr. Joey Jaco, Engineering Director

Ms. Sandra Wright, Procurement and Contracts Director said Indefinite Delivery Contracts (IDC) align with several of the City's strategic goals; specifically goal five for providing high quality municipal services, efficiently, effectively, and responsively. IDCs are contracts awarded for services required on an as needed basis. Specific deliverables may not be identified at the time of solicitation. IDCs are used for urgent needs also known as hot rushes. The IDCs are not meant to replace procurement code. The goal for establishing IDCs is for repair services needing prompt action and to provide pre-approved contractors with minimized response times. We will use qualified certified local and small, woman owned, disadvantaged business enterprises as much as possible, but we can't award directly or only to these businesses. They have to qualify and bid along with everyone else.

Mayor Benjamin requested a review within 12 to 18 months.

Ms. Sandra Wright, Procurement and Contracts Director said there is an IDC contract on the Council agenda. She said the use of IDCs will also reduce the number of emergency procurements and will help us to address outstanding repairs from the 2015 severe storms and flooding event.

Ms. Shannon Lizewski, Procurement Manager outlined the steps that departments will take in order to use Indefinite Delivery Contracting. She noted that a selection committee may be required for large IDCs. A minimum of three firms will be selected for each IDC. Once awarded, task orders will be issued for a defined scope and a not to exceed amount.

Mr. Joey Jaco, Engineering Director outlined the project types that will qualify for small IDCs. He said the intent is to select three (3) qualified firms per fiscal year. The price structure will be part of the qualification process and it's capped at \$25,000 per year for small IDC services. He presented the type of projects that will qualify for larger IDC services greater than \$25,000, but not to exceed \$750,000 per qualified firm per fiscal year.

Ms. Shannon Lizewski, Procurement Manager said task orders for larger professional service IDCs will have an additional review process by the Directors of the Engineering and Utility Operations Departments. She said the Procurement and Contracts Department will only serve as the facilitator. She presented a proposed term length for IDCs. The initial term is on a fiscal year basis to include two (2) renewal periods.

Councilor Davis inquired about protégé and local business opportunities.



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Mr. Joey Jaco, Engineering Director said local contractors are used for true life threatening emergencies. This process allows us to build the team.

4. Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Year Ended June 30, 2016 - Mr. Bud Addison, Audit Senior Manager for Webster Rogers, LLP

Mr. Bud Addison, Audit Senior Manager for Webster Rogers, LLP reported that the City was given the Government Finance Officers Association's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the last two (2) years. He gave an update on the statement of revenues and expenditures for governmental funds. He explained that transfers-in and transfers-out are from water/sewer into the general fund to include transfers from the accommodation tax fund; the hospitality tax fund is pledged as revenue for the purpose of settling the debt; and health insurance is transferred into the internal services fund.

Councilor Duvall asked if the \$37 million deficit is a result of health care costs, pension costs and increased compensation costs.

Mr. Bud Addison, Audit Senior Manager for Webster Rogers, LLP explained that the general fund, county services fund and the miscellaneous projects fund represent major funds. The firm gave an opinion on each column on page 38. This is the first year that the miscellaneous project fund is listed as a major fund, because that's where the multipurpose entertainment venue is funded from. It operated at a deficit this year, because the bond proceeds were received in 2015. The deficit of \$26 million doesn't concern us, because had the bond been issued in 2016 you would have been close to breaking even. It is a timing issue of matching revenues and expenditures.

Council Duvall asked about the deficit in the county services fund.

Mr. Bud Addison, Audit Senior Manager for Webster Rogers, LLP said the county services fund represents only the county's portion for emergency services; the City's portion is reported in the general fund.

Mr. Jeff Palen, Assistant City Manager/Chief Financial Officer said the reimbursement to Richland County was for the return of surplus fund balance from prior years and since that County had two years of deficits.

Mr. Bud Addison, Audit Senior Manager for Webster Rogers, LLP stated that the County's funding is at a \$3.1 million deficit and it would be equitable for them to make up the shortfall.



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Councilor Rickenmann asked for Mr. Addison to come back. He said it's very important for Council to come up with a sustainable plan for healthcare.

Councilor Davis said we also have to remember our retired employees.

Mr. Bud Addison, Audit Senior Manager for Webster Rogers, LLP referred to page 102 of the CAFR where the OPEB costs were outlined as \$7.2 million in 2015 and \$9.7 million in 2016.

Mayor Benjamin said he will never apologize for offering employees good quality healthcare; this is what we ought to do as a City. We are in a position to make sure our people are well taken care of and we will have to adjust and figure out how to continue providing excellent healthcare services for our employees and retirees.

Councilor McDowell said it would be helpful to have some comparative history of previous year's healthcare benefits; this will help to understand what we are currently providing.

There was a consensus of Council to continue the discussion of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Year Ended June 30, 2016 at the next Work Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion made by Mr. Rickenmann and seconded by Mr. Duvall, Council voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session at 3:56 p.m. for the discussion of **Item 5**, subject to adding the discussion of student housing tax credits and Bull Street.

5. Receipt of legal advice related to matters covered by attorney-client privilege pursuant to §30-4-70(a)(2)

– *Audit*



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The Columbia City Council met on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. and the following members of Council were present: The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Moe Baddourah, The Honorable Howard E. Duvall, Jr., The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr. and The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann. The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine participated remotely. Also present were Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Little Logan Shepherd led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Edward McDowell, Jr. offered the Invocation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. McDowell, Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda as presented.

PUBLIC INPUT RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

No one appeared at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

6. February 21, 2017 Meeting Minutes - *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Mr Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to approve the February 21, 2017 Meeting Minutes.



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CONSENT AGENDA

Upon a single motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Mr. McDowell, Council voted unanimously to approve the **Consent Agenda Items 7 through 18**.

7. Council is asked to approve the Renewal of Target Solutions Online Training annual maintenance fees and membership, as requested by the Fire Department. Award to Municipal Emergency Services, in the amount of \$64,956.60. This firm is located in Charlotte, NC. *Funding Source: Fire Training - Employee Training and Professional Development - 1012304-631200 - The original budgeted amount is \$65,000. - Approved*
8. Council is asked to approve Water Main Construction Services at Timberlake Court, as requested by the Utility Operations Department. Award to North American Pipeline Management, Inc., a Woman Owned Business Enterprise in the amount of \$59,681.00. This firm is located in Marietta, GA. *Funding Source: 5529999-658650/WM438601-658650. This is a Protégé Only Project. The original budgeted amount is \$88,620.00. - Approved*
9. Council is asked to approve Design Engineering Services to include Condition Assessment, Construction Documents, Bidding and Construction Administration for five (5) City Parking Facilities as requested by the General Services Department. Award to Kimley Horn and Associates as a sole source in an amount not to exceed \$157,000.00. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: Parking Improvement Project Control/Capital Project Cost/Washington Garage FY16 CIP 5329999-658650-PG001131. The original budgeted amount is \$200,000.00. - Approved*
10. Council is asked to approve the Finlay Park Playground Design, Equipment and Installation, as requested by the Parks & Recreation Department. Award to Carolina Parks & Play, LLC in the amount of \$174,560.00. This vendor is located in Cary, NC. *Funding Source: Capital Projects - Finlay Park – Rec/Phys Fitness Equip-Capital; 4039999-638500 / JL: PK005607-638500 (\$150,000) and Parks & Precreation: Parks-Building & Grounds/Special Projects; 1015104-638500 (\$35,972.80). The original budgeted amount is \$150,000.00. - Approved*



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11. Council is asked to authorize Indefinite Delivery Contract negotiations for Engineering Services related to Wastewater Flood Recovery, as requested by the Utility Operations Department and the Engineering Department. Award to Black & Veatch Corporation, Chao & Associates, Inc., AECOM Technical Services, Inc., and Michael Baker International in an amount not to exceed \$500,000.00 per firm. We also request Council's approval for the execution of the final contractual agreements, in a form to be approved by the City's Attorney's office with final approval by the City Manager. *Funding Source: 2531706-638400 (Flood Recovery Account). The City and its Disaster Recovery Program Management Team are seeking federal reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) for these services. - Approved*
 12. Council is asked to approve Contract Amendment #1 for the Busby Street Resource & Training Complex Design Services, as requested by the Parks and Recreation Department. Award to Architects Design Group, Inc. in the amount of \$175,040.00. This firm is located in Winter Park, FL. *Funding Source: 4039999 – CP106002 - The following sub-consultants will provide assistance: McCreary/Snow Architects, PA, (WBE) located in Columbia, SC, will provide local Associate Architect services in the amount of \$44,821.00, Dennis Corporation, located in Columbia, SC, will provide surveying, civil engineering and an update of NEPA services in the amount of \$15,000.00; Chao & Associates (MBE) located in Columbia, SC will provide Structural Engineering services in the amount of \$18,573.00; MECA Engineering, located in Columbia, SC, will provide Mechanical Plumbing, Fire Protection Engineering services in the amount of \$29,800.00; GWA, Inc., located in Columbia, SC will provide Electrical Engineering services in the amount of \$19,550.00; Gimball-Cotterill & Associates, located in Columbia, SC will provide Landscape Architecture services in the amount of \$8,000.00; TLC Engineering for Architecture, located in Orlando, FL will provide Technology Engineering services in the amount of \$13,000.00; and P.J. Noble and Associates (W/MBE), located in Columbia, SC will provide Community Liaison services in the amount of \$12,200.00. - Approved*
 13. Resolution No.: R-2017-015 - Authorizing consumption of wine only at the Grape Escape Smooth Jazz Wine Fest on Saturday, October 7, 2017 and Sunday, October 8, 2017 - *Approved*
 14. Resolution No.: R-2017-022 - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at the South Carolina Cornbread Festival in Earlewood Park on Saturday, April 22, 2017 - *Approved*
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15. Resolution No.: R-2017-024 - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at the Indie Grits Film Festival Opening Night Block Party on Thursday, April 20, 2017 - *Approved*
 16. Resolution No.: R-2017-026 - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at the Indie Grits Film Festival Food Event on Saturday, April 22, 2017 - *Approved*
 17. Resolution No.: R-2017-027 - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at the South Carolina Cornbread Festival Kick-Off Party on Friday, April 14, 2017 - *Approved*
 18. Resolution No.: R-2017-029 - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine beverages only within Finlay Park for the Bark to the Park Walk and Festival on April 8, 2017 - *Approved*

PRESENTATIONS

19. Purchasing Professionals Month Proclamation - The Honorable Stephen K. Benjamin

Mayor Benjamin and the members of City Council proclaimed March 2017 as Purchasing Professionals Month in the City of Columbia.

20. Columbia Firefighter Appreciation Month - Mr. Aubrey Jenkins, Columbia Fire Chief and Ms. Tara Heil, Executive Director of the Greater South Carolina Muscular Dystrophy Association

Mr. Aubrey Jenkins, Columbia Fire Chief said the Fire Department has raised approximately \$2.8 million through its partnership with the Greater South Carolina Muscular Dystrophy Association over the past sixteen (16) years. He said the department will be collecting contributions for the boot drive at various intersections within the City on March 15, 2017 through March 17, 2017. He encouraged all citizens to participate.

Ms. Tara Heil, Executive Director of the Greater South Carolina Muscular Dystrophy Association thanked the members of Council for their support and partnership. She said in the past six (6) months, the Association had three (3) ground breaking programs. She said the funds from the programs will help with their summer camp activities. She introduced Little Logan Shepherd who's a participant in the summer camp program. Logan collected the initial boot drive contributions from the members of City Council.



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Mayor Benjamin and the members of City Council proclaimed March 2017 as Firefighter Appreciation Month in the City of Columbia.

Mayor Benjamin recognized City Manager Teresa Wilson for 10-years of service with the City of Columbia.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager recognized Mr. S. Allison Baker, Senior Assistant City Manager for 20-years of service with the City Columbia.

21. American Red Cross Month Proclamation - The Honorable Stephen K. Benjamin

Mayor Benjamin said this partnership has been incredibly meaningful to our City and our community depends heavily upon local heroes to make sure the American Red Cross is able to distribute necessities to people across this region every day.

Mayor Benjamin and the members of City Council proclaimed March 2017 as American Red Cross Month in the City of Columbia.

22. Women's History Month Proclamation - The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

Mayor Benjamin said it's an honor to recognize women of every race, class and ethnic background who continually make historic contributions to the growth and strength of our nation. The role these women play is unique to our infrastructure and they make this country the best democratic country in the world. He said it's important for us to stand up and thank the women who brought a peace movement to our nation and helped to create a fair and just society for all.

Mayor Benjamin and the members of City Council proclaimed March 2017 as Women's History Month in the City of Columbia.

23. Recognition of Bluebird Property Management, LLC as the Business Spotlight Program Honoree - Mr. Angelo McBride, Office of Business Opportunities Administrator

Mr. Angelo McBride, Office of Business Opportunities Administrator said since 2009, Bluebird Property Management has provided full property management services in South Carolina and North Carolina. Because of their community involvement and contribution, reputation, innovation and diversity they were selected as this quarter's Business Spotlight Honoree. He presented a video presentation of the company's profile.



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Mr. Lee Catoe, Vice President of Community Affairs & Small Business Engagement for the Chamber of Commerce said Ms. Tammy Davis is a game changer. He presented Ms. Davis with a plaque recognizing Bluebird Property Management as the Business Spotlight Program Honoree for March 2017.

Ms. Tammy Davis, Founder and CEO of Bluebird Property Management said she loves taking advantage of every opportunity to help grow and maintain her business. She thanked the members of Council, Office of Business Opportunities and Chamber of Commerce for their support.

Mayor Benjamin and the members of Council proclaimed Bluebird Property Management as the third quarter 2017 Business Spotlight Program Honoree.

ORDINANCES - FIRST READING

24. Ordinance No.: 2017-021 - Granting an encroachment to Main & Blanding, LLC for installation and maintenance of a ramp and landing, door, landing and awning, stairwells, railing, sidewalks, grease interceptor and pump station, roof drains, and landscaping for a below grade garden/patio area within the right of way area of the 1100 block of Blanding Street adjacent to 1649 Main Street, Richland County TMS #09014-10-04, excluding outdoor dining – *Approved on first reading.*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Baddourah and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2017-021 - Granting an encroachment to Main & Blanding, LLC for installation and maintenance of a ramp and landing, door, landing and awning, stairwells, railing, sidewalks, grease interceptor and pump station, roof drains, and landscaping for a below grade garden/patio area within the right of way area of the 1100 block of Blanding Street adjacent to 1649 Main Street, Richland County TMS #09014-10-04, excluding outdoor dining.



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25. Ordinance No.: 2017-023 - Authorizing the issuance and sale by the City of Columbia, South Carolina, of its not exceeding \$8,135,000 General Obligation Bonds, in one or more series, and, pending the issuance of such bonds, authorizing the issuance and sale of General Obligation Bond Anticipation Notes, in one or more series, issued in anticipation thereof, for the purpose of funding various capital projects; fixing the form and details of the bonds or notes; authorizing the Mayor, the City Manager and the Assistant City Manager for Finance And Economic Services, or any two of them acting together, to determine certain matters relating to the bonds or notes; providing for the payment of the bonds or notes and the disposition of the proceeds thereof; and other matters relating thereto – *Approved on first reading.*

Councilor McDowell sought to amend the ordinance to include sidewalks throughout the City.

Mr. Michael Seezen, Esq., McNair Law Firm, P.A. said we can include sidewalks between readings, but we would be limited to the issuance of \$8,135,000.

Mr. Jeff Palen, Assistant City Manager/Chief Financial Officer said we need roughly \$3 million in June and over \$4 million next year. We set it at \$8.1 million to give us flexibility. I don't know how much capacity we'll have for sidewalks.

Mayor Benjamin encouraged his colleagues to communicate with the City Manager, CFO and Bond Counsel about their requests. He asked the bond counsel to provide any further legal advice to Council as well.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said part of our budget discussions included sidewalks and I asked Robert Anderson to prepare a proposal. We will present that proposal to you at the next meeting and it will be upwards of a million dollars. She said it will be a commitment over several years.

Councilor Baddourah agreed with the request to have sidewalks included in the GO Bond ordinance.

Councilor Davis suggested that priorities be left up to district representatives.



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Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2017-023 - Authorizing the issuance and sale by the City of Columbia, South Carolina, of its not exceeding \$8,135,000 General Obligation Bonds, in one or more series, and, pending the issuance of such bonds, authorizing the issuance and sale of General Obligation Bond Anticipation Notes, in one or more series, issued in anticipation thereof, for the purpose of funding various capital projects; fixing the form and details of the bonds or notes; authorizing the Mayor, the City Manager and the Assistant City Manager for Finance And Economic Services, or any two of them acting together, to determine certain matters relating to the bonds or notes; providing for the payment of the bonds or notes and the disposition of the proceeds thereof; and other matters relating thereto.

SIDEWALK VENDING PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE FIRST READING

26. Ordinance No.: 2017-016 - Granting a Franchise to Lucky Hot Dog Cart with Hot Fire Kitchen for operation of a stationary sidewalk vending cart in the mid-block pad near 1423 Main Street – *Approved on first reading.*

Council opened the Sidewalk Vending Public Hearing at 6:59 p.m.

No one appeared in support of or in opposition to this matter.

Council closed the Sidewalk Vending Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2017-016 - Granting a Franchise to Lucky Hot Dog Cart with Hot Fire Kitchen for operation of a stationary sidewalk vending cart in the mid-block pad near 1423 Main Street.

RESOLUTIONS

27. Resolution No: R-2017-028 Adopting and incorporating the Local Business Enterprise Preference Policy into the City Procurement Regulations - *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No: R-2017-028 Adopting and incorporating the Local Business Enterprise Preference Policy into the City Procurement Regulations.



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OTHER MATTERS

28. Council is asked to approve the Installation of one (1) Speed Hump on Wayne Street, as requested by the Traffic Engineering Division. *The Fire Department and Police Department have reviewed and approved the proposed location. - Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Rickenmann and seconded by Mr. Duvall, Council voted unanimously to approve the installation of one (1) Speed Hump on Wayne Street.

29. Council is asked to approve the Installation of two (2) Speed Humps and one (1) raised crosswalk on Randall Avenue, as requested by Traffic Engineering Division. *The Fire Department and Police Department have reviewed and approved the proposed location. - Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to approve the installation of two (2) Speed Humps and one (1) raised crosswalk on Randall Avenue.

30. Council is asked to approve the Installation of three (3) additional street lights in the Belvedere Neighborhood, as requested by the Traffic Engineering Division. *The total amount for this project is \$356.76 and the year-to-date total expenditure is \$3,289.08. - Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to approve the installation of three (3) additional street lights in the Belvedere Neighborhood.

CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS DISCUSSED DURING THE WORK SESSION

No matters were discussed at this time.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS / REFERRALS

Upon a motion made by Mr. Baddourah and seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to refer a proposal to add a public art component to Owens Field Park to the Arts and Historic Preservation Committee.



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APPEARANCE OF THE PUBLIC

Mr. Bobby Rogers, Greenview Community resident appeared before the members of Council in reference to the old Sanders Middle School. He attended a School Board meeting in December and they referred him to the facilities director who seems favorable to converting the building into a community/training center. He requested the City's assistance with getting the school. He invited the members of Council to a meeting on March 23, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. at Greenview Park to hear their ideas. He added that the school has been vacant for ten years and there is an opportunity to do a lot of things.

Councilor McDowell asked if the community has discussed a pro-forma.

Councilor Rickenmann said he spoke with someone from the School District and they are waiting on a proposal for consideration.

Mayor Benjamin said there is a conceptual document that lays out the vision for the property, but no one knows what the cost is. He said we need to figure out how to complete the due diligence. He agreed that the property represents a great deal of promise and progress.

Mr. James Williams, Jr., 212 Ridgepoint Road said the area hasn't been appraised. He said there were sports fields and a creek on the property. He asked if they can discuss the financial issues with the City of Columbia. He considered the option of applying for grants.

Councilor Duvall said we aren't in any position to get involved with the restoration of the school.

Mayor Benjamin said the School District should have some numbers. He noted that they are required by State law to offer the property to a charter school first. He suggested that they spend time charting a path forward.

Councilor Davis said your due diligence should include a complete description of the services and programs, the challenges presented by the facility, and the numbers.

Mr. John Holmes, Homeless Helping Homeless apologized to the members of Council for misinformation that a member of Homeless Helping Homeless presented at a previous Council meeting. He said we are for the City officials and not against them. He invited members of City Council to their meetings held at Transitions on Mondays at 6:00 p.m. in the Novinger Room. He invited members of the public to support the organizations car wash fundraiser on Saturday, March 18, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. at the McDonalds on Forest Drive.



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Mr. James Chitwood, Jr. Homeless Helping Homeless commended and thanked the members of Council for their leadership and for doing great work within the City.

Mrs. Jimmie McCullough, 1549 Levity Street expressed concerns with the water problems she has experienced on her property for over fifty (50) years. She said the City cleans the ditch, but rain causes it to flood. She said a house on her street has been vacant for at least five (5) years, it's owned by the bank and the grass isn't cut often. She said a tree from that property is now over her house.

An unidentified female attested to the longstanding water and sewer problems.

Mayor Benjamin said staff will identify how we can help relieve some issues and we will also find out which bank owns the property. He asked staff to identify the things that we can do in the public right away. We have plans for stormwater improvements and he asked staff to determine if this project will positively impact Ms. McCullough's property.

Councilor Davis said we will solve that problem in the long range, but staff will work with you to see what we can do in the meantime.

Councilor McDowell told the representatives of Homeless Helping Homeless that we are a part of you and you are a part of us. All of us find ourselves in situations where we are up against the wall. We are here for you.

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Moore, CMC
City Clerk