



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2019

WORK SESSION - 2:00 P.M.

The Columbia City Council conducted a Work Session on Tuesday, June 4, 2019 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 2:09 p.m. and the following members of Council were present: The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Mayor Pro-Tempore Tameika Isaac Devine, The Honorable Moe Baddourah, The Honorable Howard E. Duvall, Jr., and The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr. The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann participated remotely. Also present were Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager, and Ms. Erika D. Moore, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

INVOCATION

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

Mayor Benjamin recognized the new class of summer Fellows that were in attendance: David Olds, University of South Carolina; Grace Mickle, University of Georgia; Adam Gainey, University of South Carolina; Travon Adams, University of South Carolina; and Emily Gayle, University of Georgia. We have five more superstars. They are incredibly bright and talented. They are here to learn and contribute, so let's use and engage them as much as possible. Since we've started the program, we've had almost 300 leaders come here from schools as far north as Vermont and as far west as California.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

1. 2020 Census Complete Count Committee - Ms. Chynna Phillips, MSW, MPH Research & Policy Manager for the Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina

Ms. Chynna Phillips, MSW, MPH, Research & Policy Manager for the Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina presented the draft action plan for the Complete Count Committee. The Census is being done to get an accurate count of everyone; not just U.S. citizens. It is a constitutional mandate that must be done every 10 years. Because it will be done online, we want to be cognizant of barriers that may exist. The Complete Count Committee was published in April and representatives are still needed. There will be five subcommittees: business and strategic partnerships, faith-based, community based, media and promotion, and education. She explained that hard to count individuals include children, those who mistrust government, and any area that is identified as being undercounted from 2010. You all will be considering our budget.



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Ms. Devine left the meeting at 2:23 p.m.

Councilor Davis said you must consider how to track folks who are very mobile.

Ms. Chynna Phillips, MSW, MPH, Research & Policy Manager for the Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina said there are nuances and we have to consider the homeless population. She outlined the opportunities for citizen participation. The City of Columbia has formed the second Complete Count Committee in the State.

Mayor Benjamin encouraged his colleagues to consider appointing representatives from City Council Districts One and Two.

Councilor McDowell inquired about the emphasis being placed on faith-based organizations.

Ms. Chynna Phillips, MSW, MPH, Research & Policy Manager for the Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina said that's a pillar within itself and it's a gap as well. Individuals are needed for the subcommittees. In 2010, they provided liturgical information for pastors to use.

Councilor Duvall said we need to stress the importance of participating in the Census, because it determines a lot of our funding. This Census will not get the Federal support that has traditionally been there. There could be a severe undercount in other areas.

2. Vacant Building Registration Briefing - Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department presented the vacant building ordinance proposal for a registration requirement along with changes to the boarded building ordinance. There are a lot of vacant buildings in the City of Columbia; some are maintained and some are not. A vacant building is not a code violation, but we still get a lot of complaints about them. Owners are out of state or town and we have issues with notifying them of code violations. I estimate that there are 2,000 vacant buildings in the City of Columbia and there are 250 boarded structures on our list. We have six primary objectives: identify vacant properties; establish a local point of contact; create a mechanism for holding property owners accountable; discourage vacancies; reduce blight and crime; and revamp the boarded building ordinance. I found 15 vacant building ordinances in the country and two in South Carolina. Many of the ordinances have a registration and renewal



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requirement. The fees range from \$50 to \$10,000 per year. He outlined the key components of the ordinances. The City's proposed vacant building ordinance will require an annual registration, exemptions, vacant building plan, local agent within 45-miles of the building, three categories based on condition, annual inspections, security, fees, penalties, and an appeals process. We will offer exemptions for buildings that are actively being marketed for sale or rent with the appropriate documentation; buildings that are actively being renovated; buildings that serve as a primary residence in which the owner is away for an extended period of time for work, vacation, military or medical reasons; and government owned buildings.

Councilor Duvall asked about buildings that are in probate.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said I'd like for them to be registered by someone. Those are some of our problem properties so we have to find a way to get them registered.

Councilor McDowell asked if we are in touch with heirs.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said yes, if we can find them. We give them the same opportunity as everyone else. We try to get them to cut the grass and make it look presentable at the very least.

Councilor Baddourah asked about structures owned by non-profits.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said non-profits aren't exemptions.

Councilor McDowell asked about churches.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said churches are private non-profits and they would have to register.

Mayor Benjamin sought clarification on the fees.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said the vacant building plan will help us understand the owner's intent to include when they reasonably expect to reoccupy the building; a written letter of consent allowing the City to monitor and inspect the property as necessary; the plan to address any public nuisances; a time schedule for repairs; and the plan to secure, monitor, and maintain the property. The



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building categories are: Category I: no current code violations on the structure or the premise (*simply vacant*); Category II: minimal code violations (*boarded, secured, and structurally sound*); and Category III: severe code violations (*requires boarding, structural deficiencies are evident, history of criminal activity, condemned or illegally occupied, and a probable candidate for demolition*). One of the objectives of this ordinance is to discourage someone from buying the property because it's cheap and then sitting on it for ten years because they are hoping to sell it for more money. He presented the proposed fee structure. I am proposing that we not charge for the initial registration. I am proposing an inspection fee.

Councilor Davis said the fees are reasonable; I am for the max. A lot of times it's absentee landlords; people who don't live in the area, they collect rent, and they could care less about what the facility looks like. That contributes to unsafe and indecent places for families to live. I'm for everything I've read so far.

Councilor McDowell said that could be accomplished in the initial registration.

Councilor Davis said certain neighborhoods are targeted. I hope we can strengthen the ability to take owners to livability court.

Councilor Devine returned to the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department explained the ordinance gives us a civil fine. We can assess fines for noncompliance without going through livability court and we can put a lien on the property. We can still use the court, but this gives us another way to assess fines and fees when we can't issue a summons.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said there's a lot of support for this in the public. I don't know if the public realizes the burden on the general fund and the impact it has when we don't address it over time from a community standpoint. We end up addressing it from a fiscal standpoint.

Councilor Baddourah asked if there is a difference in the residential and commercial fees.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said there's no difference in my proposal. Some of the other ordinances had lower residential fees. We can look at that if that is your preference.

Councilor Duvall said the owners may not have \$1,000 to pay. You might put that on the commercial side and keep the residential at \$500.



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Mayor Benjamin asked if vacant properties being marketed for sale still have to register at no cost.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said correct, because we want to know about it. They would be exempt from the fee. If you need to market the property for more than a year, then you would request an appeal through the Property Maintenance Board of Appeals.

Councilor Devine asked about a house that's vacant because it's not up to code. It's family property that they want to fix themselves, because they can't afford to hire a contractor. If they came up with a vacant building plan would that keep them from paying the fees.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said under the proposal, they would still have to pay the fees. We can consider an exemption for approved vacant building plans.

Councilor Devine said we do have older properties and they tend to be in historically minority communities. I don't want someone to accuse us of promoting gentrification or taking people's land. We have to be cognizant of that. What about properties that have been affected by a fire or natural disaster? I received a call from a young man whose property was destroyed by fire and there was no insurance. He is trying to get the money to fix the property. Are there any considerations for those types of things?

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said the proposal doesn't mention that, but if they pull a permit with the intention to do the rehab, that would exclude the property. I saw an ordinance with natural disasters as an exemption.

Councilor Devine said I don't want an exemption, but we do need to understand that not everybody has the financial means to fix something that was destroyed by a disaster.

Councilor Davis said we don't want folks to lose their homes unnecessarily if we can work with individuals for specific timeframes for certain aspects.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said there isn't a fee for one year. All exemptions can be handled by appeal to the Property Maintenance Board.



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Mayor Benjamin said it's recognizing the fact that every situation is going to be different. Having some type of human interaction to take into account the circumstances is important. I share the concerns articulated by Ms. Devine. I want to make sure we are very clear in articulating the public policy behind why we are doing this while being very cognizant of private property rights.

Councilor Davis said after a fire we post a notice on the property. Can't we come up with a notice to post when we are working with the property owner. This will notify the residents that there is an effort to correct the problem.

Councilor McDowell said a lot of properties have been tagged and are ready for demolition, but it becomes a budgetary issue. There are pieces of property that we can save and we should do all we can to redeem them.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said I am proposing a change to the existing boarded building ordinance. We would keep the 90-days as a target, but add an option for 1-year using polycarbonate material instead of plywood.

Councilor Baddourah said he asked the Homebuilders Association (Building Industry Association of Central South Carolina) to review it.

Mayor Benjamin said we need to address the exemption issue and fee versus registration. Let's get as much feedback as possible. Think of a robust list of people. Let's make sure our business community and other stakeholders are aware.

There was a consensus of Council to move forward with the public hearing and first reading.

FISCAL YEAR 2019/2020 BUDGET WORKSHOP

3. General Fund Budget - Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said we are going to recap the last Budget Workshop, but also streamline and move forward with a balanced budget. Those alternative approaches to revenue generation are still on the table. I want to be clear on the idea of a Public Safety fee and which revenue options are being moved forward for January 1st. We are going to start with an overview of the general fund.



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Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director said the general fund budget is in balance. A lot of the reduction came from the elimination or reduction of requests for new and expanded programs. We retained many of our existing programs and efforts with regard to the Envision Columbia initiatives. To address the remaining \$3 million that were out of balance, the City Manager made additional reductions to departments' budgets. We will work with departments to review those reductions in more detail. The goal is to maintain current year funding.

Councilor Duvall said we need to transfer money from the water and sewer fund. I would fund safe city initiatives and other things in that category. That's the only way we are going to get this budget to a healthy state.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said the Public Safety fee will do what Mr. Duvall is suggesting by creating a fee. Mr. Duvall's suggestion is a philosophical discussion for Council. We should put everything on the table.

Councilor Davis said I've always believed that when we reached this position it wouldn't be a bad thing to do. It becomes a profit margin for the City. Water and sewer is something we sell. It costs the City to provide water and sewer services. There's an outlay for that and we need to be reimbursed. We are doing quite well with meeting our obligations of the system.

Councilor Devine said I've been clear that I'm not in favor of the water and sewer transfer. There have to be increased expenses for the departments. It's not a flat budget. People need to completely understand that we have increased costs as well. If we are going to provide services, there has to be an increase in revenue. Are you able to show how our budget breaks out and aligns with our goals?

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director said we are working towards those efforts with our priority based budgeting tools. Departments are absorbing the increases, especially with regard to the State retirement increases and any other increases in operational costs.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager clarified that we say flat inherently, knowing that there are certain costs that we have to absorb. We are trying to maintain the best service delivery. We tried not to cut programs that would be obvious to our citizens.



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Councilor Devine said we have to acknowledge that's what we're doing, especially when we have so many requests and partners coming to us as well. We need to acknowledge that we continue to provide services and there are increased expenses internally. We are having to live with that internally and sometimes we're not able to give our traditional partners increases.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said certain organizations have almost become line items out of the City's general fund and we're holding them flat. I've already started getting requests from other organizations in the community and we don't have funds in the budget right now for community promotions. You are right, it's not there.

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director reported that the total general fund revenues are \$152 million, which is a 2.75% increase over the current year. These are aggressive revenue projections with regards to business license collections. It is a balanced budget. We are using \$3 million of fund balance. With regards to expenditures, Public Safety retained some increases. Non-departmental and transfers-out reflects increases in debt service. With regards to some of our external requests: The River Alliance is funded at \$50,000, which includes \$25,000 from the general fund and \$25,000 from the hospitality tax; Fast Forward remains at \$100,000 as a general fund and water and sewer expenditure; and One Columbia is funded with the 5% from accommodations tax and the hospitality tax. Homeless services have maintained a budget at \$1 million for various organizations. They've requested more than \$1 million. We'll have to work with those adjustments or their savings from the current year, which is usually \$40,000 to \$50,000. The public defender's allocation is \$100,000. They've requested \$225,000. The solicitor's current allocation is \$215,817. They've requested \$343,498. The detention center is budgeted at \$660,000. We have not had to increase the allocation at this point. This amount has maintained the current costs and trends. The current rate is \$55 and the new rate effective July 1st is \$71.

Mayor Benjamin asked that the record reflect the presence of the Public Defender E. Fielding Pringle and Counselors Cauthen and Burns in tow and in full support.

Councilor Rickenmann joined the meeting by telephone at 3:29 p.m.

Councilor Devine suggested that we look at how we fund them and what we get when we fund them. We get two full and a partial public defender. We need to make sure the whole court is working how it should be and our resources are allocated to reflect the way that should happen. To get to \$225,000 is not possible. Is there a way to look at how we expend funding for homeless services and the detention center to make sure homeless court is working the way it should be?



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Mayor Benjamin recognized Ms. Denise Gipson, wife of 5th Circuit Solicitor Byron Gipson.

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director said we still have more work to do with the departments and the City Manager. The general fund has a revenue issue and being able to address our ongoing growth, services, and costs. In the coming months, we will continue discussions on the GO bond and hospitality tax debt. We are still seeking to pursue a property tax audit with Richland County and revenue options at our State House. We are not looking at a single source of how to address our revenue and expenditure needs. The budget public hearing is advertised for next Tuesday, June 11, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.

4. Revenue Options - Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said at the previous meeting, we showed you two alternates in addition to the budget being \$3 million out of budget. We have balanced the budget. Those optional items that are very critical are still not in the balanced budget. We want to recap the direction that Council gave on moving forward with revenue options for January. I still have the Public Safety fee on the table that you could implement right now by amending the proposed budget.

Mayor Benjamin said it is important for folks to realize the current state of affairs.

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director said we are looking for direction from City Council on at least one of the options. The revenue options are independent of each other; both can be considered. A lot of the City's property is nontaxed parcels, which means that the City's tax burden is not shared with all of the users of its services. City Council charged us to look for revenue options that would allow us to better distribute those cost of services among users that also benefit from those services. The City's current millage rate is 98.1, representing less than 20% of the Richland County residential property tax. It has not changed in 10 years. We are going through reassessment later this year. We generate \$57million in property taxes representing 44% of revenues. Public Safety functions account for 50% of our budget when you include their vehicles and equipment. State law limits our options for generating revenue. We are trying to determine options for increasing our overall assessed values, the overall tax base, and revenues that cover the costs of operations and prepares the City for growth. There are 46,000 parcels in the Richland County portion of the City of Columbia. Less than 10% are non-taxed, which is 30% of the total market value. Approximately \$3.4 billion is non-taxed. The majority of the properties are owned by the State of South Carolina. Government makes up 36% of the non-taxed parcels by market value. Homeowner and



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homestead exemptions make up a large number of parcels. This exercise has been valuable for us in terms of seeing where the 27% non-taxed values come from.

Mayor Benjamin said there is a limited amount of resources. We are an outlier; we are a capital city with a large university and several other colleges and universities; large healthcare infrastructure; and the Army's most significant training base in the world. In terms of area, 76% of our real estate is not on the tax rolls. Act 388 limits the amount that property owners have to pay or the ability to raise taxes. Then there's the general philosophy; we don't like to raise taxes. Our businesses tend to pay a disproportionately higher amount in taxes than they would in other communities. We intentionally do not raise taxes. On the left side of the column, there are several institutions that receive general services that the taxpayers pay for. We are trying to find ways to be more equitable and thoughtful in the ways we spread the responsibility of government. That's the philosophical discussion we are having.

Councilor Baddourah said a lot of the fees we are trying to generate are to support Public Safety when it comes to fire, police, and public works. It's a lot of the core services you expect from municipal government.

Councilor Davis said I don't know how much the public fully understands in terms of contributing versus non-contributing properties. I would suggest that we include specifics in our discussion.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said the Mayor gave a great summary. What doesn't rest easy with me at this point is that the revenue options that would totally address non-taxable parcels, entities, business license options, etcetera, is going to take us to January 1st to implement. This is a good option as well, but in order for it not to be considered a tax, it has to be a fee and it has to be applied across the board. Again, I want to reiterate that I hear you. Your first priority is to non-taxable entities; however, we're not quite there yet. A minimal Public Safety fee would be across the board, but I do think with the growth of this City and to meet Public Safety needs, everybody should be touched by that, because they would be benefiting from those additional services. ShotSpotter is already paying dividends to this City. We have to do something to advance our security camera infrastructure. Those things are not sustained in the current budget. That is why I'm still proposing this fee as an option as well at a very minimal level. Philosophically, I know there are discussions about how you do it by formula. Should a resident pay the same \$5 as the University? We can look at doing this by the number of water taps you have. It's not about where you live; it's about the City and what Public Safety infrastructure we have across the City. You may live in one place but you may play in another. We want to expand



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the security cameras in the residential corridors as well. I understand that the first option is to deal with the non-taxable entities, but I do think this should be considered also.

Councilor Duvall asked the City Manager to look into the legality of putting a Public Safety fee on the water bill. There may be some precedent cases out there that don't allow it.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said in other parts of the country, it is called a city services fee. It can be done through one bill.

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director said the storm water fees are on the water bill a well.

Councilor Baddourah said the \$2.5 million is a specific fee that goes exactly to Public Safety. It's our choice to implement that fee for this year only. My understanding from the last meeting is that you were asked to bring back the numbers for Council to consider.

Councilor Devine said we shouldn't say that it's only for one year. We have a ton of needs.

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director said funding Public Safety is a top priority for this Council, the City Manager, and the management team. City Council has directed us to identify those sources.

Councilor Rickenmann said we need to do our homework on the public safety fee and it needs to be based on the parcels. I'm very uncomfortable with charging a fee to everyone, because they are already paying for public safety. Looking at our numbers, there are some things we should question. Looking at the property the City has under the development corporations. Do we need to hold onto those 90 parcels? What are we doing to reduce our footprint and to consolidate? There are some things that we need to review at the same time we are doing those audits. We need to focus on pursuing the avenues to make it more equitable. Before we look at any source, we have to make some effort here.

Mayor Benjamin concurred with Mr. Rickenmann.

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director said the public safety fee is proposed at \$5. The annual collection would be \$2.5 million assuming a July 1st effective date. We are looking for direction from City Council with regards to the fee. We need to finalize an ordinance. We will need to communicate public information regarding the collection and uses of the fee. We would have a public hearing.



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Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager referenced the Public Safety items we will forego for now and continue to do the research in hopes that some of the other revenue options will come to fruition. The previous discussion from the Police Chief briefing included competitiveness and salary increases, additional equipment needs, commercial code enforcement and the need for additional staffing, additional park rangers, maintenance, and repairs at the Saluda Greenway and Bull Street Park as major items that can be incorporated.

Mayor Benjamin asked if upgrades to the camera system includes ShotSpotter.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said it does not; neither of those are included in our current proposed budget.

Mayor Benjamin sought clarification on the reoccurring costs.

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director said the \$1.9 million is a blend of upfront and reoccurring costs. We can identify facility and equipment needs beyond \$2.5 million.

Councilor Devine inquired about the reoccurring cost of ShotSpotter.

Mr. William "Skip" Holbrook, Police Chief said ShotSpotter costs about \$325,000 per year for three square mile increments; we are at six square miles now.

Mayor Benjamin explained that ShotSpotter is a new gunshot detection technology that the Columbia Police Department is using very effectively to take guns off the street and to put a real dent in some of the violent crime we are seeing.

Councilor Devine said we've done a good job of promoting what we're doing and how we are being proactive. Everybody wants to know when they are getting this in their area. As we talk about a Public Safety service fee, we need a plan for expansion.

Mr. William "Skip" Holbrook, Police Chief said our plan is data driven. We address neighborhood concerns. We installed cameras in strategic places. Obviously, in our business district and our crime hotspots. We covered entry and exit points for neighborhoods and main thoroughfares. With ShotSpotter, we relied on where our firearm discharges occur. It has proven to be spot on. We do have reports beyond our footprint. We have some neighborhoods that are vulnerable and not at the quality of life we expect for our citizens.



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Councilor Davis said the mobile cameras have given us some success. How does that fit into your long-term projections in terms of cost?

Mr. William “Skip” Holbrook, Police Chief said it works and in the next phase of our cameras we are requesting that the technology be compatible with ShotSpotter. The technology exists now where ShotSpotter alerts orientate the camera towards the gunfire. That will be a tremendous tool. We want to monitor the security cameras from a real-time crime center.

Councilor Rickenmann proposed that until we fund these basics: what the Police Department needs for competitiveness and equipment, the fire stations, and all others, that we reserve or freeze all funding to outside groups. We need to re-evaluate our internal functions as well. Are they still useful? Are they still providing the return on investment? I would suggest that we freeze some funding and functions until we have taken care of those things first. It’s essentially a 6-month freeze, because it’s going to take us that long to come up with the right solution.

Councilor Baddourah added that we need constant funding for Public Safety. I want to look at providing cars to all policemen. I want to make sure we have enough fire stations to serve all of the apartments and the development. The city is expanding. We need to continue pursuing a constant funding source.

Mayor Benjamin said we must continue to make it more competitive and we have to get cars on the street.

Councilor Devine reiterated that there isn’t one answer; we must look at it holistically. I’ve said that before, especially when it comes to our parks. It’s easy to say that we need to take care of our internal needs. Looking strategically at the point about homeless court and homeless services, if we can keep that vulnerable population from committing crimes, that’s less stuff our law enforcement has to deal with and they can deal with other things. It’s hard to say that we’re not going to fund any outside groups. Our partners might be providing something that allows us to provide the basic service. I do agree that every year has to be analyzed to determine what we’re getting and if it’s better suited for us to handle internally or to partner. Where do we need to be over the next five years? We thought we were handling competitiveness and salaries three years ago and now we’re back here making decisions to help Skip with recruitment and retention. We need to know what the longer-range plan is.



We Are Columbia

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Mayor Benjamin said Chief Holbrook and his team have done a fantastic job with recruitment, diversifying the force, and building a force that's not only focused on 21st century policing, but also a force that looks like this City. We have to continue to be competitive, put out ideas, and make resources available. Over the last eight years, we've increased the Public Safety budget by 60%. It is a significant investment, but it is the most important thing you can do as a city. If we continue to fund the right partners and those funds are used effectively and efficiently, they'd be able to focus on making sure we maintain strong ties with the community and that we are keeping the community safe. I am open to as much creativity as possible. As much as we can discuss publicly, let's do that. It is important for the public to understand that we've been digesting, sharing, iterating, and testing the bounds of the law and realizing that we are a state of 46 counties; not a few hundred cities. Most of the tools that allow us creativity are not necessarily city tools. We will be pushing the envelope. We have an educational process that we have to go through and we have to help our delegation understand that we are unique. Those entities that may not pay property taxes, make us strong in other ways and serve as economic engines in other ways, just not in the ways that provide the services we need to be a 21st century city. At some point, we'll have to bite the bullet and let the chips fall where they may, but knowing that we've gone through the predicate steps to make good public policy decisions.

Councilor Davis said I am agreeing so much, because when we move around the neighborhoods, those are the kinds of things that we're having to say to folks. Last month, chief sent out the accomplishments of his key staff. We are going to lose those kinds of people if we don't do what we need to do and we won't be able to replace them. Our situation is unique. We have a partnership with the military. There's a massive piece of land with no monetary return, but there are partnerships. We need to fund our guys, because they partner with Fort Jackson. Unfortunately, there are institutions in the city that aren't in a contributing poster, but we provide services for them. We have a good case to go down this list and come up with alternatives that we can all buy into. We must collectively make the case and be prepared to defend it.

Mr. William "Skip" Holbrook, Police Chief added that we have immediate needs. I've participated in a conversation with our planning folks about our future annexations. It's part of what we're seeing with the growth of our city. It is exciting, but it also creates challenges. We are already seeing what the annexations and demands look like now in Harbison. It used to be a sleepy area, but we are seeing a different dynamic in the last 12-months in terms of the requirements on police and part one crimes. Our operational tempo has to match our capacity and we are slightly out of alignment. As we continue to grow, that disparity is going to create additional problems. We must be sensitive to that. We are a capital city police department and we want to carry ourselves as such.



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Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director said our next step is to advertise for a public hearing.

Mayor Benjamin asked if there is a legal way to apportion the fee amongst those who are non-taxpaying versus those who are paying or does it have to be uniform.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said that's correct.

Councilor Devine asked if you can apply the gas tax across the board and then give a rebate to people who pay property taxes. That was a suggestion Mr. Rickenmann had.

Ms. Teresa Knox, City Attorney said no, there's not a way that we know of. We really need to talk about this in executive session.

Councilor Baddourah said we are committed to finding a continuous funding source to get him all the tools he need.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said they have an ordinance prepared and ready for you the way we are proposing to do it as a straight out \$5 fee. You would have to approve that at whatever point you all decide to move forward. It just backs up the collections. If this is the direction you're interested in going right now, then we need that direction.

Councilor Baddourah said I'd like to exhaust the other options on the table. How much will all of that generate?

Councilor Devine reiterated that staff won't have the audit information until January 1st. If we wait until we have all of that, then you're talking about not implementing anything to cover the first 6-months of the 2019/2020 budget. You're talking about implementing something on January 1st, but that doesn't mean revenue on January 1st.

There was a brief discussion on the implementation timeline, adding a repeal cause, and next steps.

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director reported that the City issued 10,000 business licenses last year and that's consistent with prior years. Of those, 6,000 are in-city businesses and there are another 3,800 out-of-city businesses that do business within the city. There are 267 non-profits, fee exempt business licenses issued at no fee. Of that, 107 are medical related services, physician offices, and hospitals.



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Councilor Devine said some of the churches with retail are paying now. Are medical services and physician offices automatic exemptions? Does our ordinance allow for a fee and we're not charging it?

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director clarified that the exempt medical services or doctor's offices have been bought by non-profit hospitals or are university related. Medical facilities or offices not owned by the hospital more than likely pay as business license fee.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said part of the exercise is to determine the status through an audit. We will do a combination of things internally and it is going to require some outside assistance to get this done.

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director said the current business license ordinance has to be revised to remove the exemption for non-profits that have business-type activities. The selection process is underway to hire a firm to assist with the research. We will do a public hearing, because we are adjusting fees. The effective date is January 1st.

Mayor Benjamin requested a list of non-profits that are not contemplated in the medical services category; the ones included in the \$155 million total market value properties. All non -profits are not created equal.

Councilor Rickenmann said if you charge that non-profit group 1% on their property, that's \$1.5 million in the first 6-months. We should be pursuing that. If we have to freeze something for 6-months, we should be able to find 1% out of a \$152 million budget. I can't do a \$5 fee.

Councilor Duvall concurred.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager asked if Council is clear on what we will forego for now for Public Safety.

Mayor Benjamin said we need to talk some more.



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EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session at 4:40 p.m. for the discussion of Items 5 through 8 as amended to include the discussion of the organizational structure as part of Item 5 and adding a discussion regarding the development of security personnel or devices pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(3) related to security measures. Mr. Rickenmann did not participate in Executive Session.

5. Discussion of employment of an employee pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2)
 - *Municipal Court Judges*
6. Discussion of matters relating to proposed location or expansion of services to encourage location or expansion of industries or other businesses pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2)
 - *Development Incentives*
7. Receipt of legal advice related to matters covered by attorney-client privilege pursuant to §30-4-70(a)(2)
 - *Lower Richland Sewer*
 - *Smoking Ordinance*
 - *Ban the Box*
 - *Gills Creek Debris Removal*
 - *Public Safety Fee*
8. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2)
 - *Capital City Stadium*

COUNCIL MEETING - 6:00 P.M.

The Columbia City Council conducted a meeting on Tuesday, June 4, 2019 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 6:22 p.m. and the following members of Council were present: The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Mayor Pro-Tempore Tameika Isaac Devine, The Honorable Moe Baddourah, The Honorable Howard E. Duvall, Jr., and The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr. The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann was absent. Also present were Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager, and Ms. Erika D. Moore, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.



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PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Boy Scout Troop 425 led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

INVOCATION

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

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda, subject to deferring consideration of Item 30 (*Ordinance 2019-033*).

PUBLIC INPUT RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

No one appeared at this time.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 9 THROUGH 24

Upon a single motion made by Mr. Baddourah and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve the **Consent Agenda Items 9 through 24**.

9. Council is asked to authorize increased funding for Utility Relocation and Upgrade Services for Water and Wastewater Improvements for Fiscal Year 2019/2020, as requested by Columbia Water. Award to the following three consultants in the total amount of \$3,547,394.12. - *Approved*

Funding Source: 5529999-SS751401-658650 - \$509,382.00, 5529999-WM448901-658650 - \$170,416.00, 5529999-WM449001-658650 - \$815,958.00, 5529999-SS751501-658650 - \$202,920.00, 5529999-WM449201-658650 - \$546,441.50, 5529999-WM449101-658650 - \$91,080.00, 5529999-WM432319-658650 - \$977,888.31 / 5529999-SS609919-658650 - \$233,308.31. The total amount of funding allocated to the work orders associated with local utility relocation projects will be \$5,827,394.12.

Below is the information provided for each consultant under the original approved RFQ:

CDM Smith Inc. has headquarters in Boston, MA and a local office in Columbia, SC. CDM Smith, Inc. proposed to utilize 2% SBE, 10% MBE, and 8% WBE for sub consultant services.



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Hazen and Sawyer has headquarters in New York, NY and a local office in Columbia, SC. Hazen and Sawyer proposed to utilize 10% MBE and 15% WBE for sub consultant services.

Michael Baker International, Inc. has headquarters in Pittsburgh, PA and a local office in Columbia, SC. Michael Baker International, Inc. proposed to utilize 5% SBE, 8% MBE, and 15% WBE for sub consultant services.

10. ANNEXATION, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP AMENDMENT, AND ZONING MAP AMENDMENT - 6313 North Main Street, 6315 North Main Street, 6317 North Main Street, 6319 North Main Street, 6319A North Main Street, 6323 North Main Street, 6325 North Main Street, 6327 North Main Street, and 6329 North Main Street; TMS# 11712-04-03 - *Approved on second reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2019-031 - Annexing and Incorporating 6313 North Main Street, 6315 North Main Street, 6317 North Main Street, 6319 North Main Street, 6323 North Main Street, 6325 North Main Street, 6327 North Main Street, 6329 North Main Street, and 6331 North Main Street, Richland County TMSU 11712-04-03 into the Plan Columbia Land Use Plan Putting the Pieces Together adopted by Ordinance No.: 2015-014 on February 17, 2015 - *Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 1

Proposal: Request to annex, assign land use classification of Urban Core Community Activity Center (UCAC-2) and assign zoning of General Commercial District (C-3). The property is currently classified as Mixed Residential (High Density) and zoned General Commercial District (GC) by Richland County.

Applicant: Alpine of S.C., Inc.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 04/01/2019; Approval (7-0)

First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.

11. ANNEXATION, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP AMENDMENT, AND ZONING MAP AMENDMENT - 160.87-acre portion of 300 Clemson Road; TMS# 25700-02-03 (p) - *Approved on second reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2019-029 - Annexing and Incorporating 300 Clemson Road, Richland County TMS# 25700-02-03(p) into the Plan Columbia Land Use Plan Putting the Pieces Together adopted by Ordinance No.: 2015-014 on February 17, 2015 - *Approved on second reading.*



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Council District: 4

Proposal: Request to annex, assign land use classification of Urban Edge Residential Small Lot and Urban Edge Mixed Residential (UER-1 and UEMR) and assign zoning of General Residential District (RG-1). The property is currently classified as Neighborhood (Medium Density) and Mixed Use Corridor and zoned Rural District (RU) by Richland County.

Applicant: Lee Lorick Prina II, Trustee / Mungo Homes Properties, LLC

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 03/04/2019; Approval (6-0)

First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.

12. ANNEXATION, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP AMENDMENT, AND ZONING MAP AMENDMENT - 107 S. Williams Street; TMS# 08816-10-04 - *Approved on second reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2019-030 - Annexing and Incorporating 107 South Williams Street, Richland County TMS U08816-10-04 into the Plan Columbia Land Use Plan Putting the Pieces Together adopted by Ordinance No.: 2015-014 on February 17, 2015 - Approved on second reading.

Council District: 2

Proposal: Request to annex, assign land use classification of Urban Core Neighborhood Activity Center (UCAC-1) and assign zoning of General Residential District (RG-2). The property is currently classified as Mixed Use (High Density) and zoned High Industrial (HI) by Richland County

Applicant: Vulcan Lands, Inc.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 04/01/2019; Approval (7-0)

First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.



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13. ANNEXATION, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP AMENDMENT, AND ZONING MAP AMENDMENT - 88 Hillmark Drive; TMS# 07216-04-03 - *Approved on second reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2019-028 Annexing and Incorporating 88 Hillmark Drive, Richland County TMS #07216-04-02 into the Plan Columbia Land Use Plan Putting the Pieces Together adopted by Ordinance No.: 2015-014 on February 17, 2015 - *Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 2

Proposal: Request to annex, assign land use classification of Urban Edge Residential Large Lot (UER-2) and assign zoning of Single Family Residential District (RS-1). The property is currently classified as Mixed Use (High Density) and zoned Single Family Residential-Low Density (RS-LD) by Richland County.

Applicant: Majed Salaymeh

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 4/01/2019; Approval (7-0)

First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.

14. FUTURE LAND USE MAP CONFIRMATION AMENDMENT - 120 Sparkleberry Crossing Road; TMS#25705-07-29 - *Approved on second reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2019-026 - Amending the City of Columbia Comprehensive Plan 2018 Future Land Use Map to include 120 Sparkleberry Crossing Road; Richland County TMS# 25705-07-29; annexed by Ordinance No.: 2019-023 enacted May 7, 2019 - *Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 4

Proposal: Request to affirm land use classification of Regional Activity Corridor (AC-3) following the annexation of the property. The property currently has interim classification of Regional Activity Corridor (AC-3).

Applicant: Sparkleberry Crossing Retail, LLC

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 03/04/2019; Approval (7-0)



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First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.

15. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT CONFIRMATION - 120 Sparkleberry Crossing Road; TMS# 25705-07-29 - *Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 4

Proposal: Request to affirm zoning of General Commercial District (C-3). The property is currently classified as Mixed Use Corridor and zoned General Commercial (GC) by Richland County.

Applicant: Sparkleberry Crossing Retail, LLC.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 03/04/2019; Approval (7-0)

First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.

16. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT - 2508 Chestnut Street; TMS# 11509-02-02 - *Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 2

Proposal: Request to rezone the parcel from RG-1 to C-3

Applicant: Larry D. Patterson

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 03/04/2019; Approval (7-0)

First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.



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17. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT - 1517 Gregg Street; TMS# 11403-10-05 - *Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 2

Proposal: Request to rezone the parcel from C-1 and C-3 to C-1

Applicant: Richard E. Carlisle, CAN Community Health, Inc.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 03/04/2019; Approval (7-0)

First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.

18. ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT - Amend §17-258 - Body Piercing and Tattoo Establishment

Ordinance No.: 2019-035 Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 17, Planning, Land Development and Zoning, Article III, Zoning, Division 8, District Descriptions, Use and Dimensional Regulations, Sec. 17-258 Table of permitted uses, SIC 7298 Massage parlors, spas - *Approved on second reading.*

Proposal: Amend the text of §17-258 -Table of Permitted Uses (SIC 7298) to permit body piercing facilities and tattoo establishments by special exception in C-5 (Central Business District).

Applicant: Daniel J. Rickenmann, Columbia City Council

Pertinent Section: Chapter 17, Article III, Division 8, Amend §17-258 - Table I - Table of Permitted Uses #7298

Staff Recommendation: Approval

First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.



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19. ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT - Amend §17-401 to Exempt Signage Associated with the Regional Transit Authority at Transit Stops

Ordinance No.: 2019-036 Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 17, Planning, Land Development and Zoning, Article III, Zoning, Division 12, Signs, Sec. 17-401 Definitions, Sign - *Approved on second reading.*

Proposal: Amend the text of §17-401 to exclude signage installed by the Regional Transit Authority at Transit Stops from the definition of Sign.

Applicant: Krista Hampton, Director of Planning and Development Services

Pertinent Section: Chapter 17, Article III, Division 12, Amend §17-401- Definitions

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 04/01/2019; Approval (7-0)

First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.

20. Ordinance No.: 2019-032 - Annexing 111 Sparkleberry Crossing Road; TMS# 25705-07-26 - *Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 4

Proposal: Request to annex, assign interim land use classification of Regional Activity Corridor (AC-3) and assign interim zoning of General Commercial District (C-3). The property is currently classified as Mixed Use Corridor and zoned General Commercial (GC) by Richland County.

Applicant: Frost Partners, LLC

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 05/06/2019; Approval (7-0)

First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.

21. Ordinance No.: 2019-027 Amend Sec. 19-35 Receptacle requirements; placement of receptacles - *First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019. - Approved on second reading.*



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22. Ordinance No.: 2019-034 Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Contract of Sale for the transfer of 2924 Hope Avenue, Richland County TMS #11313-12-07 - *First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019. - Approved on second reading.*
23. Resolution No.: R-2019-050 Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only within Boyd Plaza adjacent to the Columbia Museum of Art for the Contemporaries Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 12, 2019 - *Approved*
24. Resolution No.: R-2019-051 Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only within Boyd Plaza adjacent to the Columbia Museum of Art for the Artful Cinema on Thursdays, July 25, August 1, August 8 and August 15, 2019 - *Approved*

PRESENTATIONS

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager recognized Police Chief Holbrook for 5-years of service with the City of Columbia. We talk a lot about the progress that has been made under his leadership. He just celebrated his oldest son's wedding; his daughter's accomplishments in school; and his middle son's work ethic with our Parks & Recreation Department. He and Michelle are a part of the fabric of our community. He's a policeman's chief. He's a 21st century policing champion and has been honored for such. He is truly a member of this community and my friend.

25. Recognition of Columbia Youth Commission - The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

Mayor Benjamin said I am so excited as we engage Generation Z. We often talk about young people being the future of this City. We are actually seeing young people lead right now. We asked young people across Richland One, Richland Two, Richland-Lexington Five, and our private schools to conduct an election. We had 3,000 votes and ended up with our first Columbia Youth Commission. These young people have been elected to represent their peers. We are going to swear in our new Columbia Youth Commission: Ms. Hayden Cohen, Ms. London Patel, Mr. Ronit Pathak, Ms. Laney Strickland, and Ms. Sha'Niah Williams. Also elected were: Savannah Folding, Tyganda Gilmore, Shiyana Gilbert, and Faith Robertson. He recognized Lauren Harper for her efforts in pulling together the Youth Commission.



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26. SAVVY Arts Venture Challenge - Mr. David Cutler, USC School of Music Director of Music Entrepreneurship and SAVVY Founder

Mr. David Cutler, USC School of Music Director of Music Entrepreneurship and SAVVY Founder said we are in the 6th season of the SAVVY Arts Venture Challenge. We have 75 artists who traveled from far away as Rwanda to be with us this week. We've identified eight local, non-art businesses or entities and we have eight teams of artists. The challenge involves pairing each team with the local organizations. Each partner identified three challenges that they faced. On Sunday, each team interviewed the liaison and narrowed it down to one challenge. This week, we are developing an arts based solution to the challenge. This evening each team will dine with a different partner to learn more about the community. He acknowledged the SAVVY team.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said we have two groups: members of our Police Department will meet at 1800 Main and another group including Leshia Utsey, Public and Media Relations Director; Missy Caughman, Budget and Program Management Director; and Pam Benjamin, Human Resources Director will engage with a group at Villa Tronco.

27. 2019 National Homeownership Month Proclamation - The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

Recognition of Palmetto Citizens Federal Credit Union as the "Partner in Excellence" Award Recipient and Ms. Jemma Smith as the "Preserving the Dream" Award Recipient - Ms. Gloria Saeed, Community Development Director

Ms. Gloria Saeed, Community Development Director said we are excited about Homeownership Month. On June 1, 2019, staff hosted a homeownership workshop with 20 people. On Saturday, June 8, 2019 we will celebrate part two of four All Access Columbia events. She recognized Mr. Sam Cox, Mortgage Manager for Palmetto Citizens Federal Credit Union as the Community Development Department's Partner in Excellence. She presented Ms. Jenna Smith with the Preserving the Dream Award.

Mayor Benjamin and the members of City Council proclaimed June 2019 as National Homeownership Month in the City of Columbia.



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28. South Carolina Ag and Art Tour - Mr. John Newman, Chair of the Richland County Ag + Art Tour Planning Committee

Mr. John Newman, Chair of the Richland County Ag + Art Tour Planning Committee said the Ag + Art Tour started in York County in 2014 and it has since grown to ten counties. The Ag + Art Tour will be held in Richland County on June 29 and 30, 2019. The statewide tour has won tourism awards and we are very proud to be a part of it. We have five sites at farms and farmers' markets and ancillary sites that are related to local food, farming, and the arts. The tour is free to participants. A Taste of Ag + Art is scheduled for June 21, 2019.

PUBLIC HEARING & ORDINANCE FIRST READING

29. Ordinance No.: 2019-009 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 5, Buildings and Building Regulations, Article VI to add Vacant Building Registration – *Approved on first reading.*

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department explained that the biggest complaint he receives is about vacant buildings. The issue is with people properly maintaining them. They pose a hazard over time and they create blight. This ordinance gives us the tools needed to enforce this and improve neighborhoods. The driving force is the Broken Window Theory of blight leading to crime and if we reduce blight, we can reduce crime. Most crime hotspots correlate with areas of boarded buildings. Through this ordinance we hope to identify the vacant buildings; establish local contacts; hold property owners accountable; discourage vacancies; reduce blight and crime; and revamp the boarded building ordinance. I researched over 15 other municipalities and counties across the country with vacant building registration ordinances. The City of Cayce and the City of Sumter has one. Our ordinance includes an annual renewal one year from the date they register; exemptions, a vacant building plan, a local agent, three categories, annual inspections, fees, and penalties. If the building is actively being marketed for sale or rent, the owner will be exempted from fees, but they still have to register. Other exemptions include buildings being renovated; buildings that serve as a primary residence for an owner who's away for an extended period of time; and government buildings. He reviewed the components of the vacant building plan; the categories; and the fees. The boarded building ordinance only allows for structures to be boarded for 90-days. I am proposing that we add an exception for a longer period with the requirement that owners use Plexiglas material instead of plywood. This ordinance gives us the tools to enforce vacant buildings.



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Councilor Davis said David and his staff looked all over the country for comparisons and quality impact. We should continue to consider and hopefully approve this as a Council given the feedback we receive from people who live, work, and recreate in the City of Columbia. This will add to the better parts of the quality of life in the City.

Councilor McDowell said this puts more teeth in it. Some pieces of property can be rehabilitated and some have gone too long without anything being done. We understand that there are financial limitations associated with demolishing a house. All houses don't have to be demolished. This helps us to identify who owns pieces of property that have not been visited in a number of years.

Councilor Baddourah said between now and second reading, I'd like to reach out to business owners and business associations that have commercial property and maybe define a different fee structure for residential and commercial properties, if that's possible or come up with a more realistic program when it comes to residential and commercial. I can move forward with first reading as long as we have more time to adjust.

Councilor McDowell asked if this applies to properties in communities with historical covering.

Mr. David Hatcher, Housing Official for the Code Enforcement Division / Columbia Police Department said they'd still have to register, but we wouldn't tear the houses down. That information will be included in the application process.

Councilor Davis said part of the issue is the demolition of a house. Demolition is not always the preferred result. If you demolish the property in a neighborhood, you have a vacant lot that's high maintenance. You don't want it to become a haven for people who don't intend to do the right thing. We did consider that and we don't particularly want to see a demolition happen.

Council opened the public hearing at 7:12 p.m.

Ms. Catherine Bruce, Waverly Community resident said I have objections to the ordinance because some of the language doesn't reflect the fact that we want to accommodate people with income issues or who are poor. The Broken Windows Theory has been challenged. We are not making a decision based on that. I heard that a lot of property is owned by organizations that are not paying taxes. Perhaps some of the burden can be shifted to the institutions so that everybody can register, but a fee isn't attached to low income people. I'd like to see a funding source for low income people trying to repair their property.



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Ms. Doretha Bull, Lyon Street Community resident said the City Council is trying to eliminate poor, non-European people from the area. Why are we registering property that is already registered on the tax books? Why are we charging taxes and registration fees for the same property? Poor people like myself need assistance from the City to help us maintain our property. I pay \$2,000 a year to maintain my property. That means nothing to the people in the community. The Police Department only comes through when I'm on the property. This ordinance has not gone out to the community. It needs to be introduced to every homeowners' association in the City. Why can't you assist us with getting grant money to fix our properties?

Mayor Benjamin asked Ms. Gloria Saeed to discuss the Maintenance Assistance Program and the and PEAR Program with Ms. Bull.

Council closed the public hearing at 7:18 p.m.

Mayor Benjamin said let's take note of Ms. Bruce's points, as well and talk about those some more between now and later.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2019-009 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 5, Buildings and Building Regulations, Article VI to add Vacant Building Registration.

Mayor Benjamin said the press covered the work session aggressively. Let's continue to push the information out. From the discussion earlier and tonight, we found a few other ways to continue to work to perfect the ordinance. I do want to continue to focus on the issues regarding equity. Let's think of creative ways to give people the opportunity to improve their properties and at the same time making sure that they are not having to deal with blight in their communities that may affect their property values and their quality of life.

Council reopened the public hearing at 7:21 p.m.

Ms. Dana Taylor, Euclid Drive resident said some houses have been sitting there for 30-years. Something needs to be done to these abandoned places. I have a list of ten houses in one area and two of them have been there for the last 15-years. Seniors want houses built, not apartments.



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Councilor Devine explained that there's nothing illegal about a house being vacant. Mr. Hatcher can let you know if the house has a code case. Sometimes it's hard to contact someone and that's what we're trying to address. If there are some that aren't on your list David, make sure you add them. Sometimes the neighborhoods don't recognize the challenges the City has in addressing some of these things. Code Enforcement has to do what they are able to do within the law. This is an opportunity to recognize that homeowners might need additional assistance and we need to know who to contact when there are issues. She asked David to share the status of the houses with the members of Council.

Councilor McDowell said budget constraints may be the issue.

Councilor Davis said this is an attempt to address exactly what you are talking about. People like you who worked for quite a while are now looking for affordable housing for seniors.

Mr. Ronald Hollis said my parents passed away and the kids inherited the house. We went through Probate Court and there are two executors of estate on file. I've sent certified letters to my siblings because I am going to stop paying property taxes and sell the house. It's one sibling who doesn't want to sell. I am in a predicament. What can I do?

Mayor Benjamin said there will be provisions for folks who are in your situation to not see the fines or enhanced registration fees if in fact you are facing a challenge with your family. We are going to aggressively pursue the house not being boarded up. There are ways to be aesthetically pleasing for the other residents. Those issues will be addressed case by case.

Councilor Devine said we have no control over taxes. If you don't pay your taxes, the County will sell the property for non-payment of taxes.

Mr. Ronald Hollis said siblings who don't want to sell, continue to pay the taxes.

Ms. Kay Patterson asked if the ordinance will also include buildings. I've seen buildings sit dormant for years.

Mayor Benjamin said it includes commercial property as well.

Council closed the public hearing at 7:30 p.m.



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ORDINANCES - SECOND READING

30. Ordinance No.: 2019-033 Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Twelfth Amendment to Purchase Agreement between the City of Columbia and Bright-Meyers 2001 LLC for the sale of 5.97 +/-acres (Capital City Stadium), Richland County TMS# #11204-02-02 - *First reading approval was given on May 7, 2019. – Second reading consideration was deferred.*

ZONING / PLANNING MATTERS - SECOND READING

31. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT - 1616 Gervais Street and 1620 Gervais Street, TMS# 11401-09-03 and 11401-09-05 - *Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 3

Proposal: Request to rezone the parcel from C-3 to C-3, -DD

Applicant: Jon E. McDonald, Harley Ellis Devereaux

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 03/04/2019; Approval (7-0)

First reading approval was given on May 21, 2019.

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to give second reading approval to the *Zoning Map Amendment* for 1616 Gervais Street and 1620 Gervais Street, TMS# 11401-09-03 and 11401-09-05.

ORDINANCES - FIRST READING

32. Ordinance No.: 2019-042 Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 23, Utilities and Engineering, Article IV, Wastewater Service, Sec. 23-112 Violations; penalty – *Approved on first reading.*

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Duvall, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2019-042 Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 23, Utilities and Engineering, Article IV, Wastewater Service, Sec. 23-112 Violations; penalty.



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COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, JUNE 4, 2019

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33. Ordinance No.: 2019-044 Granting an encroachment to The Grand for installation and maintenance of twelve (12) tables with umbrellas and forty-eight (48) chairs within the tree zone and sidewalk right of way areas of the 1600 block of Main Street adjacent to 1621 Main Street for use by its patrons for outdoor dining during normal business hours of 11:00 a.m. until 12:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday, 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m. on Friday, 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m. on Saturday and 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 a.m. on Sunday – *Approved on first reading.*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2019-044 Granting an encroachment to The Grand for installation and maintenance of twelve (12) tables with umbrellas and forty-eight (48) chairs within the tree zone and sidewalk right of way areas of the 1600 block of Main Street adjacent to 1621 Main Street for use by its patrons for outdoor dining during normal business hours of 11:00 a.m. until 12:00 a.m. Monday through Thursday, 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m. on Friday, 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 a.m. on Saturday and 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 a.m. on Sunday.

RESOLUTIONS

34. Resolution No.: R-2019-047 Authorizing the City Manager to execute an Intergovernmental Agreement between Richland County and the City of Columbia for the Innovista Transportation Projects 2 - Greene Street Improvements, Phase 2, SCDOT Project No. 0038231 from Huger Street to Gadsden Street; CF#332-14 - *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2019-047 Authorizing the City Manager to execute an Intergovernmental Agreement between Richland County and the City of Columbia for the Innovista Transportation Projects 2 - Greene Street Improvements, Phase 2, SCDOT Project No. 0038231 from Huger Street to Gadsden Street; CF#332-14.

APPOINTMENTS

35. Planning Commission

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve the reappointment of Ms. Latrell Harts to the Planning Commission for a second three-year term.



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36. River Alliance

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted [5 to 1] to approve the appointment of Mr. Perry Orth to the River Alliance for a three-year term. Voting aye were Mr. McDowell, Mr. Baddourah, Ms. Devine, Mr. Davis, and Mayor Benjamin. Mr. Duvall voted nay.

37. Transportation Penny Oversight Committee

There was a consensus of Council to re-advertise the vacancy for a period of 14-days.

CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS DISCUSSED DURING THE WORK SESSION

No matters were discussed at this time.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS/REFERRALS

No committee reports or referrals were made at this time.

APPEARANCE OF THE PUBLIC

No one appeared at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

City Council recessed to Executive Session at 7:39 p.m. for the discussion of matters previously stated [during the Work Session].

Council adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Moore, CMC
City Clerk