



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020

The Columbia City Council conducted a virtual meeting on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 using video conferencing technology. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 2:16 p.m. and the following members of Council were present: The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine, The Honorable Howard E. Duvall, Jr., The Honorable Mayor Pro-Tempore Edward H. McDowell, Jr., The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, and The Honorable William Brennan. Also present were Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore Hammond, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Mayor Pro Tempore Edward H. McDowell, Jr. offered the invocation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda subject to adding City Noise Ordinance to **Item 24**, adding Whitewater to **Item 26**, and deferring **Items 16** and **17**.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Council is asked to approve the June 16, 2020 Council Meeting Minutes. - *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Duvall, Council voted unanimously to approve the June 16, 2020 Council Meeting Minutes.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

2. COVID-19 Update - The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

- *COVID-19 Situational Report - Mr. Harry Tinsley, Emergency Management Director*

Mr. Harry Tinsley, Emergency Management Director said we have 40 million cases of COVID-19 worldwide with 1.1 million deaths. The U.S. stands at over eight million confirmed cases and 220,000 deaths. In the state, we had over 1.7 million tests resulting in over 158,747 positive cases. The positivity rate stands at 10.9%. The average tests administered is 6,700 per day. As of yesterday there were 25 new confirmed deaths. This brings the total confirmed deaths to 3,475. In Richland County, there has been over 161,000 tests administered, resulting in 15,741 confirmed cases. The confirmed deaths stand at 246. Staff continues to increase testing sites in



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020

the City. The current recovery rate for the state is estimated at 92.2% and the fatality rate is estimated at 2.22%. South Carolina continues to remain stable. State public health officials and local partners continue to monitor case count positivity and hospitalizations.

Councilor Brennan asked if there are any zip codes with higher case counts.

Mr. Harry Tinsley, Emergency Management Director said in the last 14-day reporting for Richland County several zip codes are standing at 50% or above in new cases. These zip codes are: 29016, 29063, 29201, 29203 with the highest percentage at 73%, and 29210 with 63% of cases reported.

Councilor Devine asked how the City will be disseminating the protocols and COVID-19 precautions that the Inclement Weather Center will have upon its opening.

Mr. Harry Tinsley, Emergency Management Director said we have been working with our partners. We are increasing social distancing. We have done a safety and risk assessment walk through to prepare the facility. We will have temperature checks and additional table spacing. We provided PPE and assistance items to do proper testing. Transitions has also implemented their protocols and are communicating those through the United Way. They will be helping with case management. Richland County is coordinating with Prisma on any kind of testing they will need to do in case someone presents symptoms or a temperature spike. DHEC will provide lodging for any quarantine cases.

Mayor Benjamin said I have received many concerns in the interest of public health and working with our student body to manage the impacts of COVID-19. We are going to have to revisit our strategy and even though the governor has alleviated some of the controls, we still have a challenging situation. We have to think about a way to continue to work with partners to help us address the challenge.

- *Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant COVID-19 Study - Mr. R. Sean Norman, M.Sc., Ph.D., University of South Carolina Molecular Microbial Ecology Lab Director*

Mr. R. Sean Norman, M.Sc., Ph.D., University of South Carolina Molecular Microbial Ecology Lab Director said we have been using sewage surveillance at USC of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. We know that respiratory infections are shed through fecal material. A person that is infected of the virus will dispose of it through their fecal material, out into feces, and into a waste stream. That sewage system is connected into an urban area, a municipal catch group population. The catchment population is the people within an area that is connected to a wastewater treatment plant. Everybody that is within the catchment population within a 24-hour



**COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020**

time period will provide us a fecal sample. We get a community pool fecal sample and we identify the virus that is being shed from that population of people over time. It is not a novel process; this has been used to track opioid usage. The CDC received federal funding to establish a national sewage surveillance system. They will be coordinating with all the sites, including South Carolina and eight different states. There are multiple benefits to using sewage surveillance to track community SARS-CoV-2 abundance. Wastewater is an efficient pooled sample of community or sub-community infection prevalence. This means we can capture both symptomatic and asymptomatic samples. This process is independent of healthcare-seeking behavior and testing access. This combats uninformed access to testing and testing fatigue. The data is available within days of shedding onset. We are working very closely with the CDC to model the data and come up with a national model that will look at how sewage surveillance can be a public health tool. I am currently working on a project with the CDC and DHEC; we are sampling over a million individuals twice a week. We get these samples from utility workers from all the wastewater treatment plants and deliver them to my lab. We blend them into a small amount and extract the acid the virus is composed of. We can quantitate the number of viral particles in that sewage over that period of time and start seeing trends. We saw declines in the number of cases across the state of SC where face mask ordinances have been put in place. This verifies the success of the policies. The numbers have steadily been decreasing over time across the state. We see spikes in the sewage a little before the cases happen in the community. We have been able to inform municipalities of those possible spikes before they happen. We are going to continue monitoring this approach through early next summer.

3. Property Tax Capacity Study - Ms. Rebecca Gunnlaugsson, PhD, Acuitas Economics

Councilor Rickenmann said this is an example of true leadership. We have talked about the concerns and issues affecting our economy. This is raw data that we should be using to move forward policies with the jurisdictions around us. I look forward to taking this and building a task force that focuses on the growth of Columbia. Sometimes when we get raw data the realities are tough but it allows us to be better than we currently are.

Ms. Rebecca Gunnlaugsson, PhD, Acuitas Economics said since 2010, South Carolina has grown more rapidly than the nation. Its compounded annual GDP growth rate since 2010 is the eight fastest among states. Columbia however has witnessed slower growth than other cities in South Carolina. The excessively high property tax rates of the City, County, and school districts have emerged to the forefront of the discussion of possible causes. This study examines the relationship between growth and property taxes. The City currently finds itself caught in a continuous loop of high property tax rates that lead to slower growth and poor property valuations. The four possible causes of high property tax rates within the City are: more tax-exempt properties, lower property values, fewer other revenue sources, and greater spending



**COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020**

levels. The City's 2019 tax-exempt property stands at 7.81% of fully exempt parcels, 24.51% of fully exempt market value, and 35.10% of fully exempt acreage. According to the *2012 Governing Study vs. South Carolina Cities*, Columbia has: more fully exempt parcels than the average of 5.5% across all cities, significantly more fully exempt parcels (0.0267) per capita than the average (0.019), and slightly more taxable parcels per capita (0.32) than the average (0.31). Within the City of Columbia, 7.8% of parcels are fully tax-exempt. Exempt properties alone are not the primary force impacting the ability to raise revenues through property taxation or driving the high tax rates faced by properties in the City. Total property value is lower in Richland County, driven by lower average valuations and slower growth. Except for motor vehicles and utility, Richland County lagged peer counties in assessed value growth across all property types. The total value increased only 1.9% in owner occupied parcels in Richland County. However, the average value of a home declined 1.3%. All other counties experienced significant growth in both average value and total value. The commercial/rental parcels in Richland County increased 11.7% in total value, in line with the average value increase. In the Richland County 2014 property reassessment, the Columbia Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) lagged both Greenville and Charleston MSA's in home price rebound coming out of the great recession, yet appraised property a year earlier than the other two. Act 388's 15% valuation increase limit resulted in overall valuation reductions and the county not being able to capture the real estate price rebound once it did arrive. We have 31.6% of properties that are valued less than the market value. A number of them are driven by this five year 15% limitation. Lower property tax revenues drive higher alternative revenue sources. The City of Columbia and Richland County raise less per capita from property taxes. In fiscal year 2019, the City collected \$275 per capita from property taxes versus Charleston (\$904), Greenville (\$1,103), and Rock Hill (\$386). Property tax rates are made up of three separate millages; the city, the county, and the school. School revenues per capita exceed peers and state average, driving higher tax rates. The three school districts within the City tend to raise higher levels of revenues per pupil than peer districts. In particular, Richland One raises a higher level of local revenues via property taxes. Higher revenues combined with lower property values drive midlands school district tax millage rather high. Columbia and Richland County combined net slightly higher levels of revenues per capita than other city/county peers except for Charleston. While Richland County has fairly consistently used bond revenues throughout 2010 and 2018, bond issuance was particularly high in 2018, sending overall revenues upward. Tax revenue increases result from one of three factors: increase in housing/commercial units, increase in average value per unit, or increase in tax millage rates. Due to Richland County's relatively stagnant unit growth and average valuations between 2010-2018, the percentages of tax revenue growth attributable to tax rate increase was 92.5% for owner-occupied housing and 67.7% for commercial and rental properties. Both Columbia and Richland County have grown significantly slower than the state average. Since 2016, the City of Columbia has seen three straight years of declining population. Columbia has a significantly higher percentage of population aged 18 to 24 (26.9%) versus



**COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020**

Charleston (13.2%) and Greenville (13.0%). This is driven by the University of South Carolina and its associated student population. This advantage fades out in the 25 to 54 age group. People are being attracted to other cities. In the City we have a higher percentage of persons with bachelor's degrees, higher than Lexington and Rock Hill but lower than Charleston and Greenville. The labor force participation rate is significantly lower than the other cities and the percentage employment growth has lagged behind the other cities as well. Labor force participation can be impacted by having more retired individuals but Columbia does not have a higher percentage of those individuals than its peer cities. It is likely we have a higher percentage of military personnel and greater percentage of single earner families, where one partner stays home. We could also just have people who can't work or can't find a job. This issue is important because the more people who are not in the labor force the lower the capacity of the region is. We came up with four steps as a solution to support sustained future growth in the City of Columbia and surrounding region: make property tax rates competitive, coordinate school system finances, identify and implement competitive efficiencies between the city and county, and actively petition the General Assembly to help with some of the state law issues. Act 388's 15% valuation has limitation issues. It creates inequality among lenders, causes increases in millage rates, and prevents recoupment of valuation declines. Real change requires a collaborative effort among the city, county, and school districts of data-driven, well thought out solutions that can be implemented in phases over a period of five or more years to promote sustained economic growth for the region in the future.

Councilor Rickenmann said how we address tax exempt properties is going to be part of this multi-tier solution. We have data that shows we have to work with our partners to create a different atmosphere. This is a good tool that has been well evaluated and discusses good solutions. We all want to leave office one day knowing that this City will continue to thrive. We need to consider putting a committee together made up of all the entities because this is a collective opportunity for us to positively affect the MSA.

4. Amplify: A Cultural Plan for the Columbia Area - Mr. Lee Snelgrove, Executive Director for One Columbia, Ms. Margie Reese, MJR Partners

Ms. Margie Reese, MJR Partners said the primary objective of Amplify Columbia is to identify the most effective and efficient role of the City of Columbia in cultural development. We were looking on amplifying the rich cultural sector you have in Columbia. We talked to a large number of people through online surveys, meetings at 72 locations throughout the City, 106 town hall meetings, and over 1,000 individual interviews with citizens by local artists in the non-profit sector. The key elements of the planning process were: making sure the community at-large was involved, analysis of city funding for the arts, public art review, understanding heritage and preservation of the region, investigation of current arts and cultural sector for artists to stay in



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020

Columbia, understanding philanthropic priorities, consideration of racial and cultural equity, and potential partners within city government. The data from the conversations led us to the following key recommendations: define a cultural policy for the City of Columbia, establish a public art policy for the City of Columbia, create an office for cultural affairs, increase investment in the local arts agency, promote arts leadership development, develop neighborhood plans for arts and culture, increase support for Columbia's artists, and design an arts learning network. We have two high level recommendations, which include a Downtown Cultural Center and a Waterfront Sculpture Park and Art Walk. This plan was adopted as part of a larger Compass Plan. Since the time of these recommendations we realize that funding opportunities and obligations have changed and other human centered issues have taken importance. At a time when you have huge responsibilities, I would encourage you to think of the arts as a vital component of city life in Columbia. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have revised the recommendations to include the development and adoption of an ordinance naming One Columbia as the City's official local arts agency. This will give them greater responsibility for implementing recommendations. This will also send a huge message to the community that you consider the arts to be a priority in Columbia. Local agencies can help with grants, present programming, manage cultural facilities, provide services to artists and arts organizations, advocate for and promote arts supportive policies, ensure equity in funding, and forge partnerships. I would encourage you to look at these recommendations because the arts are always going to be important.

Councilor Duvall said the project as exceeded my expectations. I liked the way you gave concrete examples of things we can do immediately and long-term. I endorse naming One Columbia as our agent and adopting the necessary ordinance.

Councilor Brennan asked about the benefits of forming an Office of Cultural Affairs in regards to accessing funding the City has not received previously.

Ms. Margie Reese, MJR Partners said the idea of a non-profit local arts agency is that you have a designated entity that seeks federal funding on behalf of the City. Arts funding for a community your size exists and you have not been accessing it. For example, the grant that was part of the previous stimulus package which cities could apply for up to \$50,000 for general operating support. In order to be eligible for that, you had to be a previous recipient of the National Endowment for The Arts funding. There are four anchor institutions at the federal level: The National Endowment for The Arts, The National Endowment for The Humanities, The President's Committee, and The Institute for Museums and Library Services, which the City is also eligible to apply for to support exhibitions in public spaces. You use this designated entity to seek other foundation grants. The benefit is to focus on grant seeking and identify new sources to support the recommendations.



**COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020**

5. City of Columbia Public Mural Projects - The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

Mayor Benjamin said we asked staff to look at several options to engage some of our local artists. One Columbia will definitely be helping us meet our long term needs. We have so many dynamic artists and we have included examples of potential artists we might be working with.

Mr. Henry Simons, Assistant City Manager for Operations said our goal is to provide recommended locations in each district for murals that depict African American history, heritage, and culture. Ija Charles is a local artist and native of South Carolina. This presentation has some examples of her work to give the public an idea of what we would like to express in our community. We have not decided which artists will be used but we have a desire to use local talent. These recommendations are subject to change pending additional assessment from City Council. The first proposed location in downtown is 1401 Main Street, the parking lot wall facing the Wells Fargo. The other two proposed locations in the downtown corridor are 1600 Taylor Street and 1136 Washington Street. Both are City owned garages and have good visibility. We also wanted to tap into the North Main corridor with the Hyatt Park building facing the parking lot. In District Two, we recommended the Vista Greenway – Lincoln Street Tunnel which has pedestrian and vehicle traffic. As well as the Charles R. Drew Wellness Center, which has visibility to the community and Harden Street. In District Three, we recommend Valencia Park which is in the Rosewood Community. This is a local level view and there is a lot of traffic in the area. In District Four, we recommended the Woodland Park building. It is very visible to the people visiting the building and driving by. These are all possible locations that will need to be endorsed by the Mayor and City Council.

Councilor Rickenmann said I would be interested in working with an artist to create a moving billboard that can go around my district, instead of being in one place. I would like to look at that option because District Four is very widespread and I would like to share what these artists create throughout the district.

6. Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations for Fiscal Year 2020/2021 – Ms. Missy Caughman, Budget & Program Management Director

Ms. Missy Caughman, Budget and Program Management Director said the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee met yesterday to discuss recommendations for the FY 2020/2021 accommodations tax surplus. The projected revenues for the budget are deeply reduced by the impact from COVID-19. The budget for this year is \$1,374,703. The recommendation of the committee is in line with City Council desires to fund our two primary organizations: Capital City Lake Murray Country at \$206,205 (15%) and the Columbia Metropolitan Conventions and Visitors Bureau at \$1,168,498 (85%). We will continue to monitor collections.



**COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020**

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve the disbursement of \$1,168,498 (85%) to the Columbia Metropolitan Conventions and Visitors Bureau and \$206,205 (15%) to Capital City Lake Murray Country from the accommodations tax surplus, as recommended by the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 7 THROUGH 15

Upon a single motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to approve **Consent Agenda Items 7 through 15**.

7. Council is asked to approve the Renewal of GIS Software License and Maintenance Services, as requested by the Information Technology Department. Award to Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc., using the Small Municipal and County Government Enterprise Agreement, in the amount of \$89,180.00. This vendor is located in Redlands, CA. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Geographic Information Systems - Maintenance & Service Contracts (5511121-638200) \$44,580.00; Development Services - Maintenance & Service Contracts (1014101-638200) \$3,400.00; Police Administrative Services - Software Licenses (1012402-627510) \$3,300.00; Engineering - Water Systems Improvements - Software Licenses (5516220-627510) \$25,700.00; Utilities Water Distribution & Maintenance - Software Licenses (5516203-627510) \$7,000.00; Office of Business Opportunities - Maintenance & Service Contracts (1011126-638200) \$500.00; Street - Storm Drains - Maintenance & Service Contracts (5534203-638200) \$200.00; Traffic Engineering - Maintenance & Service Contracts (1013203-638200) \$2,225.00; Public Works Administration - Software Licenses (1011124-627510) \$1,875.00; Utilities Wastewater Maintenance - Software Licenses (5516205-627510) \$400.00. The original budget amount is \$89,180.00.

8. Council is asked to approve a Contract for Maintenance of EnerGov Software, as requested by the Budget & Program Management Office. Award to Tyler Technologies, Inc., in the amount of \$123,480.00. This vendor is located in Duluth, GA. - *Approved*

Funding Source: Engineering (5511701-638200) \$19,866.03; Stormwater (5534202-638200) \$3,199.40; Finance/Business License (1014303-638200) \$37,344.05; Legal/Parking/Planning and Development Services/Public Works (1014101-638200) \$34,675.48; Police (1012402-638200) \$28,395.04. The original budget amount is \$142,600.00.

9. Council is asked to approve the Purchase of Allen-Bradley Standard Controls and Rockwell Products and Maintenance Services for the Wastewater Treatment Plant, as requested by Columbia Water. Award to WESCO Distribution Inc., as a sole source in the amount of \$50,000.00. This vendor is located in Woodridge, IL. – *Approved*



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020

Funding Source: Utilities Metro Wastewater Plant - Maintenance and Service Contract (5516208-638200). Additional funds in the amount of \$31,250.00 will come from Equipment Repair/Service Supply (5516208-631800). The original budget amount is \$18,750.00.

10. Council is asked to approve the purchase of Valve Insertion Equipment for the Water Distribution Division, as requested by Columbia Water. Award to TEAM Industrial Services Inc., as a Sole Source in the amount of \$109,032.48. This vendor is located in Sugar Land, TX. – *Approved*

Funding Source: Utilities Water Distribution and Maintenance (5516203-625700). The original budget amount is \$109,032.48.

11. Council is asked to approve the purchase of CUES Equipment Repair Services and Original Equipment Manufacturer Parts for Wastewater Maintenance, as requested by Columbia Water. Award to Elxsi dba CUES, as a Sole Source in the amount of \$145,552.49. This vendor is located in Orlando, FL. I - *Approved*

Funding Source: Utilities Wastewater Maintenance - Equipment Repair/Service Supply (5516205-631800). Additional funds in the amount of \$118,552.49 will come from Auto, Trucks, Heavy Equipment Capital (5516205-658500). The original budget amount is \$27,000.00.

12. Council is asked to approve Soil and Turf Replacement and Silt Fence Installation Services for Riverfront Park Flood Repairs, as requested by Parks and Recreation Department. Award to Tolleson Limited Company, in the amount of \$295,443.20. This vendor is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: FR-Parks - 2015 October Flood Recovery (2535104-638400). The original budget amount is \$295,443.20. This is a FEMA DR-SC4241 Project.

13. Ordinance No.: 2020-091 Authorizing the Participation by the City of Columbia, South Carolina in the Recover SC Local Government Liquidity Program; Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of any Intergovernmental Agreement with the South Carolina Jobs-Economic Development Authority and Such Other Documents and Agreements in Connection with the Sale of Revenue Bonds Issued by the Authority to Fund the RecoverSC Local Government Liquidity Program, Authorizing an Appropriation or the Issuance by the City of a Tax Anticipation Note for the Initial Payment Thereunder; and other Matters Related Thereto - *First reading approval was given on October 6, 2020. Approved on second reading.*



**COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020**

14. ANNEXATION, INTERIM COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP AMENDMENT, AND INTERIM ZONING MAP AMENDMENT for 1.43-acre portion of 4030 West Beltline Boulevard; TMS# 11609-10-36(p) - *First reading approval was given on October 6, 2020. Approved on second reading.*

Ordinance No.: 2020-092 Annexing 1.43-acre portion of 4030 West Beltline Boulevard, Richland County TMS #11609-10-36 (pt) - First reading approval was given on October 6, 2020. Approved on second reading.

Council District: 2

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

Applicant: Dick Smith Motors, Inc. / WTC of West Beltline, LLC

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 09/14/2020: Annex, Assign Interim Land Use & Interim Zoning APPROVE (8 - 0)

15. Resolution No.: R-2020-091 Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at Live on Lincoln Fundraiser for the Arts on Sunday, October 25, 2020 with a rain contingency date of Sunday, November 8, 2020 - *Approved*

ZONING/PLANNING MATTERS - SECOND READING

16. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT for 1232 Whittaker Drive, TMS# 13909-09-02 – *The public hearing and first reading approval was held on September 15, 2020. – Second reading consideration was deferred.*

Council District: 4

Proposal: Request to rezone the parcel from Single Family Residential District (RS-1) to Single Family Residential District (RS-2).

Applicant: Wade Carlisle, Wade Carlisle Construction, LLC

Staff Recommendation: Approval

PC Recommendation: 07/13/2020; Approval (6-1)



**COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020**

ZONING/PLANNING MATTERS - FIRST READING

17. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT for 901, 903, 911, and 919 S. Edisto Avenue, TMS# 11211-06-17, 11211-06-18, 11211-06-19, and 11211-06-20 – *The public hearing was held on September 15, 2020 and first reading was deferred. – First reading consideration was deferred.*

Council District: 3

Proposal: Request to rezone the parcel from Light Industrial District (M-1) to General Residential District (RG-2)

Applicant: Robert F. Fuller, Attorney/Stratus Property Group

Staff Recommendation: Denial

PC Recommendation: 07/13/2020; Approval (7-0)

ORDINANCES - FIRST READING

18. Ordinance No.: 2020-098 Fourteenth Supplemental Ordinance Providing for the Issuance and Sale of City of Columbia, South Carolina Waterworks and Sewer System Revenue Bonds, in one or more Series, in the Aggregate Principal Amount of Not Exceeding \$315,000,000, in Order to Refinance Certain Outstanding Indebtedness and to Finance Various Capital Projects and Improvements to the System, Any Necessary Debt Service Reserves, Capitalized Interest and Issuance Costs; 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 With Respect to the Bonds; Prescribing the Form and Details of Such Bonds; and Other Matters Relating Thereto – *Approved on first reading.*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Mr. McDowell, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2020-098 Fourteenth Supplemental Ordinance Providing for the Issuance and Sale of City of Columbia, South Carolina Waterworks and Sewer System Revenue Bonds, in one or more Series, in the Aggregate Principal Amount of Not Exceeding \$315,000,000, in Order to Refinance Certain Outstanding Indebtedness and to Finance Various Capital Projects and Improvements to the System, Any Necessary Debt Service Reserves, Capitalized Interest and Issuance Costs; 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 With Respect to the Bonds; Prescribing the Form and



**COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020**

Details of Such Bonds; and Other Matters Relating Thereto. Councilor Devine recused herself due to a potential conflict of interest.

RESOLUTIONS

19. Resolution No.: R-2020-088 Public Input on Closing and Transfer of an unopened portion of Sloan Street adjacent to Richland County TMS #11314-09-09 and 11314-09-08 – *Approved*

Council opened the Public Hearing at 5:49 p.m.

No comments were received at this time.

Council closed the Public Hearing at 5:50 p.m.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Mr. Brennan, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2020-088 Public Input on Closing and Transfer of an unopened portion of Sloan Street adjacent to Richland County TMS #11314-09-09 and 11314-09-08.

20. Resolution No: R-2020-092 Approving the Honorary Naming of the Southwest Corner of Harden Street and Washington Street “Columbia Hospital Way” - *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No: R-2020-092 Approving the Honorary Naming of the Southwest Corner of Harden Street and Washington Street “Columbia Hospital Way”.

OTHER MATTERS

21. Council is asked to approve an Economic Development Grant Agreement for the Creation of a New Technology Training and Apprenticeship Program within the City of Columbia, as requested by the Economic Development Department. Award to Create Opportunity, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$40,000.00. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. – *Approved*

Funding Source: ED Special Allocation (5511301-638508). The original budget amount is \$40,000.00.



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020

Councilor Duvall said I endorse the idea of training coding to people, especially in this new market but this is something the private sector can handle. This \$40,000 is a good part of the Economic Development budget and that money can be better used to incentivize what we have previously used the funding for. Instead of giving eight people \$5,000 as a scholarship for coding, we keep that money and use it to help more people.

Mayor Benjamin said it's not just eight people; we expect for this to grow. We are talking about helping people who live in the bottom quantile of our society. This is potentially a transformational opportunity for folks and a way to promote equity and inclusion.

Councilor Devine said when we talk about elevating economic mobility for our citizens, this is a good project and we need to move on it so we can get folks employable in these types of jobs.

Councilor Rickenmann said this is a successful company and I am surprised they need money from us to create this program when there are grants out there. If this was another time and we weren't pressed for funds, I would agree with the innovative idea. There are currently a lot of small businesses that can use the money to stay afloat. This should be a private sector venture instead of a public sector.

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted [5 to 2] to approve an Economic Development Grant Agreement for the Creation of a New Technology Training and Apprenticeship Program within the City of Columbia, as requested by the Economic Development Department. Mr. Brennan, Mr. McDowell, Ms. Devine, Mr. Davis, and Mayor Benjamin voted aye. Mr. Rickenmann and Mr. Duvall voted nay.

APPOINTMENTS

22. Board of Zoning Appeals

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Duvall, Council voted unanimously to approve the reappointment of Mr. Marcellous Primus to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Mr. Brennan, Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Ms. Kathryn Fenner to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Rickenmann and seconded by Mr. Duvall, Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Mr. John Guignard to the Board of Zoning Appeals.



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020

23. Planning Commission

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mayor Benjamin, Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Ms. Anna Davis to the Planning Commission.

PUBLIC INPUT

Mr. Jared Johnson, Rosewood Community Art Project Advocate said In June, my neighbors and I came together to create an inclusive art project that would recognize and honor the lives of George Floyd, Brianna Taylor, Ahmad Aubrey, and the countless black lives we have lost to police violence. To support the project and in an attempt to make sure that there was a real hunger for a street mural we created a petition and met face-to-face with the businesses on Jim Hamilton and businesses in the greater area of Columbia. Our petition has 2,836 signatures and we have the support of Hunter Gatherer and City Roots. I have been in contact with various Councilmembers, the Mayor, and City Manager. This Council has a unique opportunity to work with the people of the City and Rosewood if they support the project. When was the last time the City had a grassroots petition to reach almost three thousand signatures? When was the last time the community came together to directly contact their representatives in a coordinated effort? We can't ignore the voices of the people and it's not enough to just listen, action is expected and required from all of us. I understand that a municipal power structure is different from the power structures we see in federal and state government, but mayors, managers, and council people are still representatives of the people that live in their city. We risk so much when we don't listen to our fellow citizens; individuals begin to lose interest and faith in the very government that most directly impacts their lives. Some say the Rosewood Community art project should be on a building, but limiting the words or phrases to privately owned buildings shows that the City doesn't truly believe that black lives matter. Columbia is no different from Washington DC, Charlotte, Charleston, or any of the other cities that have moved forward with street murals. There are now street murals in Spartanburg and Florence. This will not cost the City a single dime and the groundwork has already been laid. Rosewood strongly believes in free speech. The fear of retaliation is not an issue. If someone has an alternative message, I request that you hear from them as well but hold them to the same standard of requesting a petition, local business support, and presentation to the city for judgment. Art has an impact on critical thinking and sparks conversations and thoughts that have never been had. Art is vital in any great city. Let's put our artists to work and allow them to take part in the democratic process of community building. Projects like this one should not be an either-or situation or pitted against similar ideas. The location on Jim Hamilton offers a birds-eye-view and is the perfect companion art piece to go along with Owensfields park. I also would recommend that the City seriously consider granting One Columbia the authority to handle arts projects like the Rosewood Community Art Project. We are ready to continue the work. Please join us.



**COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion made by Mr. Duvall and seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session at 6:22 p.m. for the discussion of **Items 24** through **26** as amended to add City Noise Ordinance to **Item 24** and Whitewater to **Item 26**.

24. Receipt of legal advice related to matters covered by attorney-client privilege pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2)
- COVID-19
 - Sloan Street
 - Bull Street Park Renaming
 - Monuments and Memorials - National Park Service
25. 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)
- Robinson Gray
 - First Reliance
26. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2)
- 2221 Devine Street
 - IPRB – Underwriter

Mayor Benjamin left the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Council adjourned the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC
City Clerk