

September 5, 2023

CITY OF CONWAY
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CONWAY CITY HALL
229 MAIN STREET, CONWAY
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2023 - 4:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Barbara Jo Blain-Bellamy, Mayor Pro Tem Justin Jordan, Autry Benton, Amanda Butler, William Goldfinch, Beth Helms. **ABSENT:** Larry White.

STAFF: Adam Emrick, City Administrator; Mary Catherine Hyman, Deputy City Administrator; John Rogers, Deputy City Administrator; June Wood, Public Information Officer; Jeff Leveille, Technology Services Director; Allison Williams, Finance Director; Timmy Williams, Hospitality & Beautification Director; Kayla Fleming, Associate Judge; Brandon Harrelson, Public Works Director; Reggie Jenerette, Solid Waste Director; Lynn Smith, Human Resource Director; Rock Rabon, Fleet Maintenance Director; Jasmine Waites Parker, City Attorney; James Friday, Public Utilities Director; Jessica Hucks, Planning and Development Director; Le Hendrick, Fire Chief; Ashley Smith, Recreation Director; Robert Cooper, Construction Services Director; Ted Dudley, Public Utilities Deputy Director; Rosanne Dates, Grants Supervisor; Captain Tammy Carter; and Alicia Shelley, City Clerk.

OTHERS: Hillary Howard, Priscilla Fuller and approximately 30 others.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Blain-Bellamy called the meeting to order. Brandon Wilson, Ekklesia Christian Church gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The requirements for posting notice of this meeting under South Carolina's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) were met.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: **Motion:** Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Benton, to approve the September 5, 2023 meeting agenda. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Final Reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-09-05 (A) to annex approximately 4.48 acres of property located at 1136 Highway 501 Business (PIN 367-11-03-0003), and request to rezone from the Horry County Highway Commercial (HC) district to the City of Conway Highway Commercial (HC) district.**
- B. Final reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-09-05 (D) to annex approximately 0.29 acres of property located at 21 Clemson Rd (PIN 383-10-03-0003), and rezone from the Horry County Residential, no mobile homes allowed (SF10) district to the City of Conway Low/Medium-Density Residential (R-1) district.**
- C. Final reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-09-05 (E) to annex approximately 0.39 acres of property located at 29 Clemson Rd (PIN 383-10-03-0001), and rezone from the Horry County Residential, no mobile homes allowed (SF10) district to the City of Conway Low/Medium-Density Residential (R-1) district.**

- D. Final reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-09-05 (F) to annex approximately .14 acres of property located at 113 Quail Run (PIN 383-09-04-0070), and rezone from the Horry County Residential, no mobile homes allowed (SF10) district to the City of Conway Low/Medium-Density Residential (R-1) district.**
- E. Final reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-09-05 (G) to annex approximately 0.27 acres of property located at 131 Quail Run (PIN 382-12-03-0005), and rezone from the Horry County Residential, no mobile homes allowed (SF10) district to the City of Conway Low/Medium-Density Residential (R-1) district.**
- F. Final reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-09-05 (H) to annex approximately 0.16 acres of property located at 184 Quail Run (PIN 383-09-04-0039), and rezone from the Horry County Residential, no mobile homes allowed (SF10) district to the City of Conway Low/Medium-Density Residential (R-1) district.**
- G. Special Event – Conway Ghost Walk – October 18-21, 2023**
- H. Special Event – Smoke on the Waccamaw BBQ Festival – October 13-14, 2023**
- I. Approval of Bid for Fencing at Sherwood Park (Budgeted)**
- J. Approval of Bid for Sports Field Lighting at the Billy Gardner Sports Complex (Budgeted)**
- K. Approval of Bid for Fencing at the Billy Gardner Sports Complex (Budgeted)**
- L. Approval of a Resolution to Accept a Letter of Credit for Wild Wing Phase 5A**
- M. Special Event – Halloween Golf Cart Parade – October 28, 2023**
- N. Approval of Bid for Selection of Contractor to Build Scarborough Alley Public Restrooms (Budgeted)**
- O. Approval of August 21, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes**

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: **Motion:** Benton made a motion, seconded by Jordan to approve the September 5, 2023 consent agenda with the exception of moving Item IV.H. down on the Agenda to Consideration. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT:

- Justin Schools spoke regarding the need for more recreational field space in Conway and recommended that the Whittemore Elementary site be utilized for that purpose.

Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Helms, to close public input. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

- A. Presentation of Longevity Awards – August 2023 – 5 Years: Alicia Shelley, Administration; 5 Years: Sabrina Tiitto, Police; 5 Years: Nicholas Pruett, Beautification; 5 Years: Vicki Stone, Planning; 5 Years: Jordy Collins, Construction Services; 5 Years: Jamison Stewart, Recreation; 10 Years: Steve Warren, Fire.** Emrick and Jordan presented the longevity awards.
- B. Update from HTC regarding Fiber Upgrades –** Kevin Cox of HTC presented Council with an update on fiber upgrades into the City of Conway.

CONSIDERATION:

- A. Consideration of Special Event Request – An Evening Under the Oaks – November 11, 2023 –** Rogers informed Council that the Community Counts Charities has applied for a special event permit to hold a fundraiser at the Riverfront Park on November 11 from 5-9 p.m. The event will be a ticketed private event that will include dinner, alcoholic drinks, live music and a silent auction.

Motion: Jordan made a motion, seconded by Goldfinch, to approve the special event, An Evening Under the Oaks, as presented. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- B. Consideration of a Resolution to Apply for an Opioid Settlement Planning Grant –** Rogers stated that the City of Conway is the beneficiary of a portion of the national opioid settlement, which resulted from a lawsuit against makers and sellers of opioid medicines in the United States. Other local beneficiaries include Horry County, Myrtle Beach, and North Myrtle Beach. The four local recipients have held planning meetings to discuss joining forces to spend the money, which has limited allowed uses. The first step in consideration of spending this money is a master plan. A master plan will study possible uses, the feasibility of those plans, and will allow the City to consider how it wants to move forward. There are planning grants available in addition to the opioid settlement funds. Each beneficiary is eligible for \$25,000 in funding. The County and Cities may combine these funds for a total of up to \$100,000 to develop a master plan. Myrtle Beach has offered to handle these funds, the bidding process, and oversee the selected contractor.

Motion: Blain-Bellamy made a motion, seconded by Benton, to approve the Resolution authorizing staff to apply for an opioid settlement planning grant. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- C. Consideration of Creation of Whittemore Task Force –** Emrick stated that the background on the Whittemore Elementary School was in Council's packet and that at last Council meeting the Mayor requested that a Task Force be formed to begin preparation for not just the acceptance of the Middle School, but also what should be done with the Elementary School property and remaining building. Emrick said that staff recommends that City Council create a Whittemore Task Force with the following conditions: (1) Clearly set forth the goal of this task force; (2) Determine the appropriate number of members of the task force; (3) Appoint the members of the task force; (4) Set the first

meeting of the task force with instructions that the group establish a Chairperson from the task force to lead the endeavor from meeting to meeting; (5) Establish a sunset date of the task force by which a product meeting the end goal is produced and presented to Council as a final report. Emrick also said that staff recommends an expediated process to avoid the Middle School building sitting empty between school use and City occupation.

Blain-Bellamy stated that she would like to see the task force members come up with two plans. The first plan would be for the Whittemore Elementary School site and the second plan would be the Whittemore Middle School site should the City of Conway become owners. Blain-Bellamy said that the primary use of the property would be implemented within five to 10 years. The Committee should protect the history of the property while improving the fundamental needs of the City. Blain-Bellamy stated that she would like to have 11 people on the committee that would consist of two City Council members, two staff members, a banker, Whittemore Racepath Historical Society, Whittemore Alumni Association, the Council on Aging, Smith Jones representative, and a non-biased honest community leader. Blain-Bellamy said that the committee could start immediately and have a recommendation brought to Council within 180 days.

There was more discussion regarding the committee.

Emrick reiterated the conditions as outlined by the Mayor.

Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Helms, to establish a task force and put on next Council Agenda as an Executive Session item to select members. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- D. Consideration of Bid for the Public Works Annual Sidewalks/Driveway Repair and Maintenance Contract** – Harrelson stated that the Public Works Department sent out a RFP for sidewalks/driveway repair and maintenance annual contract. One bid was received on September 8, 2023 by GeoWorks LLC. The annual contract will begin September 6, 2023 – September 6, 2024 at midnight. Harrelson said that staff recommends accepting the bid by GeoWorks.

Goldfinch asked if procedurally did Council need to formally take action to nullify the previous contract. Emrick said that awarding the new contract would start a new contract and give acknowledgement that the old contract was over.

Blain-Bellamy asked if it was a huge price overage. Harrelson said no, that staff does more of replacing sidewalks than anything else and it would be about a \$2 per square foot increase.

Benton stated that the previous contract actually expired in July. Harrelson said that there was a verbal agreement to continue the contract, which was allowed in the contract.

There was more discussion regarding if a formal action was needed to end the Benton Concrete contract. Council encouraged staff to set more guidelines on future contracts.

Motion: Benton made a motion, seconded by Blain-Bellamy, to approve the GeoWorks LLC bid for the Public Works annual sidewalks/driveway repair and maintenance contract. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

Moved Agenda Item IV.H. Special Event – Smoke on the Waccamaw BBQ Festival – October 13-14, 2023 – Smith stated that this was the 2nd Annual Smoke on the Waccamaw BBQ Festival and further explained the request as presented in Council’s packet.

Benton asked who was serving the alcohol and was it a joint venture. Smith stated that Jimmy Day of the Shrine Club has applied for the ABC permit and would be serving the alcohol.

Benton asked if insurance would be provided. Smith said yes.

Motion: Blain-Bellamy made a motion, seconded by Jordan, to approve the special event, Smoke on the Waccamaw BBQ Festival. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:

Emrick informed Council of the following:

- Emrick thanked all of City staff who worked the Hurricane last week, putting in long hours and hard work. Partially because of their efforts, we had almost no damage in the City. Of course, it helped that the storm shifted slightly to our west, pushing most of the heaviest rain from falling on Conway. That being said, our river levels are continuing to rise, and we are by no means out of the woods yet. I’ve got the river level forecast on the screen, as you can see the river levels are expected to continue to rise to nearly 13 feet. At 12.5 feet, we will need to close the Riverfront Playground and remove some of the equipment. We will almost certainly have to close Riverfront Park as well. That being said, we have made flooding our top focus for the last several years and we can handle this with just inconvenience. For reference, in 2021, the river reached 15.6 feet with no property damage anywhere in the City.
- The Tailgate and Viewing Party for the CCU game on Saturday was a lot of fun. People joined throughout the evening and estimate that there were about 350 total people. Staff will definitely do it again if we are able to get approvals to do so. Next time, hopefully it won’t be so late at night and we know that will help with crowds. The one thing we did not plan for well, was students from Coastal coming over. We had a lot of them, but they did not have chairs or blankets when they got here and so we will address that next time.
- Emrick announced the upcoming events:
 - On Thursday the 7th, Coastal is holding their groundbreaking of the new Indoor Practice facility. This is at 10 a.m.
 - The MASC Regional Advocacy Meeting is at 11 a.m. at 5th and Main on the 12th.
 - The Coastal Carolina Association of Realtors is hosting a volunteer workday at Collins Park on the 15th beginning at 9 a.m.
 - Also, on the 15th, Conway High School will hold its Homecoming Parade downtown. I will have more details on the time you will need to be at the firetruck closer to the date, but make sure this is on your calendars.

- The Conway High School Educational Foundation Annual Banquet is October 10th, at which time our Mayor, Barbara Blain Bellamy will be added to the Hall of Fame.
- By the next Council meeting, the City will start to undergo its transformation for Halloween. We have two staff work days scheduled for next week. The pumpkin trees kick off the season and they will start to be installed on September 17th. The October Calendar is starting to fill out with even more events and fun than last year. I will update you more on this at the next Council meeting.
- As we have done the past few years, we will continue our 9/11 tribute at the Main Street bridge. We will raise two ladders from our fire trucks, representing the twin towers of the World Trade Center, over the bridge at 8:46 a.m. next Monday, September 11. That is the time the Trade Center was first hit. We will lower the ladders at 10:28 a.m., the time that the second building fell. If you have never witnessed this tribute, please do this year. We are usually joined on the bridge by the American Legion for what is a very moving scene.
- As you know, the Riverwalk Extension project has been let to contract. We should start seeing equipment and supplies start to show up over the next few weeks. We have tentatively scheduled a groundbreaking for November 3rd at 10 a.m.
- The Warden Station Tract of property that has been working its way through city review is before the Planning Commission this Thursday evening. This is a reminder that these meetings are broadcast via YouTube, so I would encourage you all to watch and see some of the deliberations that Planning Commission makes to help you be informed when the issue gets to Council. It is on Council's next agenda for 1st reading on the annexation and rezoning request and 2nd Public Hearing for the proposed Development Agreement.
- We hear a lot of concern about roadways and meeting future needs of roadways due to development. There is a great opportunity to have your voice heard if you share in these concerns. The Waccamaw COG is updating its Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan and there is an in-person meeting on September 6th at the Horry County Justice Center from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m.
- Emrick reminded all of the City Code as it relates to City Council Members contacting City Staff Members. Emrick read the relevant portions of the Code and asked that everyone take note. Sec. 1-4-17 - Communication between city administrator and the mayor/city council. The mayor and individual council members should make any individual requests they may have of the administrator at council meetings in the presence of the entire council. Any request not routine in nature made by the mayor and council members outside of a council meeting shall be in writing. The entire council shall be provided a copy of such requests. The mayor and council members shall in no way individually direct the administrator. This may only be done by a majority vote of council. The mayor and council members may make inquiries of individual employees; however, they may in no way direct them. Any employee who feels that he/she is being directed by a council member shall report such incident to the administrator. The administrator shall report any such incident to the mayor and council in writing. In the event the mayor or a council member violates the intent of this section, he/she may be subject to reprimand by a majority vote of council.

COUNCIL INPUT:

Benton complimented staff on their preparations for the storm and was highly impressed with how prepared the City was. Benton said that he would like to continue to work on the parking lot at Kingston Lake and Fourth Avenue. Benton stated that he was excited to have Whittemore Elementary School back on the forefront of Council as it is a sacred and special place that holds a lot of history. Benton then said that he would like to see a historic marker on the grounds of Whittemore Elementary School and to keep those grounds on our radar and well maintained. Benton also encouraged all to use those grounds as fields right now.

Helms thanked Smith for having her on the radio at halftime during the football game discussing the good things that the City is doing, and how staff did prepare us for the storm and always makes Council look good. Helms then read the pledge on the bottom of the Council Agenda and said that Council has the best interest of all people. Helms said that she was very appreciative of the Mayor putting Whittemore Elementary School at the forefront.

Goldfinch said that he attended the tailgate Saturday night, and it was one of those quality of life events where families come out, friends get together, and really have a good time. Goldfinch stated that he is on the Ride IV Committee and he thinks that the City has a good chance this time around to get some major infrastructure, another bridge over the Waccamaw but people need to hear and know it. Goldfinch said that he is only one voice but while he is on that committee he will work tirelessly to see something that benefits Conway as a whole and he needs everyone's help. Goldfinch said that he needs everyone talking to other people in government and friends as this is a real issue. Goldfinch stated that Horry County is the biggest county geographically east of the Mississippi River and our friends in other parts of this county that do not share in the same interest that we do because they do not have to traverse that Waccamaw River every day like we do, so their interest is elsewhere. Goldfinch reiterated that we need to be loud and fight hard to get this needed infrastructure, and he needs everyone's help.

Jordan followed up on a few items and said that he was out of town and missed the tealgate but heard a lot of chatter about it and thinks everyone had a great time. Jordan asked when is the next one and said next time the event with food trucks could be bigger and better. He gave kudos to all involved. Jordan thanked staff and said that morning at 6:15 a.m. he saw the street sweeper already working and all of staff that made preparations prior to the storm, he thanked them as well saying that 24 hours after the storm you would not know that anything ever happened. Jordan said that he had the opportunity to participate in the ribbon cutting at the high school for the new field turf and it is an incredible facility, and he then encouraged everyone to get out and attend the games. Jordan said that time is of the essence on the Whittemore task force and he thanked the Mayor for bringing it to the forefront.

Blain-Bellamy read a letter from Dargan Construction complimenting staff from the Planning and Building Departments, especially Zack Noseworthy, who served as the projects main code official, for their services with the Fairfield Inn. Blain-Bellamy then read a letter regarding the Conway All Stars Baseball team thanking for all the support they received. Blain-Bellamy said that the Mayors Youth Advisory Council was set up this past school year and Council is offering this opportunity that when the City has points of interest that Council might want input from that group.

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Blain-Bellamy said that CCU vs. UCLA was not Upper Conway Lower Aynor, although she saw a board that said that. Blain-Bellamy said that she saw the CCU team deboarding their plane and their t-shirts read, "Straight Outta Conway," and she is going to try to get one of those t-shirts as she is really proud of the team. Blain-Bellamy said that the tealgate event was really nice and she was impressed with what staff had done to set a scene that was reflective of College football. Blain-Bellamy invited everyone to come at the next chance. Blain-Bellamy thanked all of staff for the storm preparations before and after.

Goldfinch asked if there would be a workshop with the student task force. Blain-Bellamy said that every opportunity to interact among both groups would be advantageous to the other as we should learn from our youth.

Rogers said that the youth council met at the end of last year and will meet sometime this month at the high school. The committee was told that staff would like for them all to come to a Council meeting to meet City Council and also, the chairman of the youth council will be tasked with reporting to City Council on certain intervals.


EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion: Jordan made a motion, seconded by Helms to enter into Executive Session for the following: Discussion of Contractual Negotiations Incident to the Potential Acquisition of Downtown Properties. [pursuant to SC Code §30-4-70 (A) (2)]. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

RECONVENE FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion: Blain-Bellamy made a motion, seconded by Butler to leave Executive Session. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion: Jordan made a motion, seconded by Blain-Bellamy to authorize staff to make an offer on Downtown property at the price discussed. **Vote:** Blain-Bellamy, Butler, Goldfinch, Helms and Jordan voted yes, with Benton voting no. Motion carried 5-1.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Benton to adjourn the meeting. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes approved by City Council this 18 day of
September _____, 2023.



Alicia Shelley, City Clerk