

October 2, 2023

CITY OF CONWAY
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CONWAY CITY HALL
229 MAIN STREET, CONWAY
MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2023 - 4:00 P.M.

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

STAFF: 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; Dale Long, Police Chief; Kym Wilkerson, Planning and Development Deputy Director/Zoning Administrator; and Alicia Shelley, City Clerk.

OTHERS: Lois Edwards, Ann Huyler, Ronald Matta. There were approximately 20 others in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Blain-Bellamy called the meeting to order, AJ Edwards of the Rock 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:** Jordan made a motion, seconded by Butler, to approve the October 2, 2023 meeting agenda. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Final Reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-10-02 (C), to annex a 0.38-acre tract and a 1.08-acre tract of properties, totaling approximately 1.46 acres, and located at 610 & 624 Hwy 544 (PIN's 382-05-01-0003 & 382-05-01-0004), and rezone from the Horry County Highway Commercial (HC) and Convenience & Auto-Related Services (RE3) districts to the City of Conway Highway Commercial (HC) district.**
- B. Final Reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-10-02 (D), to annex approximately 0.49 acres of property located at 508 Sellers Road (PIN 339-06-03-0032), and rezone from the Horry County Residential, no mobile homes allowed (SF40) district to the City of Conway Low/Medium-Density Residential (R-1) district.**
- C. Final Reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-10-02 (E), amending Article 6 – Design Standards, of the City of Conway Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), regarding the building height limit in the Waccamaw Riverfront Districts one (1) and two (2).**

D. Final Reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-10-02 (F), amending Article 4 – Use Tables and Article 10 – Subdivision and Land Development, of the City of Conway Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), regarding requirements related to a Conservation Subdivision.

E. Approval of the 15th Judicial Circuit Traffic Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement

F. Special Event – Lights, Music, Christmas – December 17, 2023

G. Approval of September 18, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: Motion: White made a motion to approve the October 2, 2023 consent Agenda. Goldfinch asked that Item IV.E. be moved down on the Agenda for discussion and the motion was amended. Helms seconded the amended motion. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT:

- Cheryl Moore Adamson spoke on behalf of the Whittemore Racepath Historical Society regarding her visit to Charleston and asked how the Whittemore Task Force Committee can move forward.
- Ronald Matta spoke in opposition of the Highway 701 annexation.

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

INTRODUCTION OF NEW HIRES:

Rogers introduced the following new employees:

- Louis Stanley, Firefighter I/EMT
- Jacob Hayden, Firefighter I
- David Parker, Fire Inspector
- Colton Pratt, Firefighter I
- Ethan Hodge, Public Works Streets & Stormwater ROW Technician
- Alexis Hardee, Finance Utility Billing Specialist
- Kaitlyn Pardes, Parks & Recreation Assistant Aquatics Coordinator
- Jeffery Myers, Parks & Recreation Grounds & Maintenance Technician
- Joseph Sampugnaro, Parks & Recreation Grounds & Maintenance Technician
- James Davenport, Parks & Recreation Grounds & Maintenance Technician
- Janet Boddington, Police Community Service Officer

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

A. Presentation of Longevity Awards – September 2023 – 5 Years: Kyle Todd, Police; 5 Years: Leigha Howell, Fire; 5 Years: Garrett Roberts, Hospitality & Beautification; 15 Years: Careyce “Antwan” Nesmith, Fire; 15 Years: Michael

Brazier, Solid Waste; 20 Years: Joshua Scott, Police; 20 Years: Christopher Jones, Police. Rogers and Helms presented the Longevity Awards.

- B. Presentation of Tree City USA designation – Lois Edwards, South Carolina Forestry Service.** Lois Edwards of the South Carolina Forestry Commission presented the City of Conway with the Tree City USA designation for the 38th consecutive year. Edwards introduced her replacement, Ann Huyler, as she is retiring.

Blain-Bellamy introduced Tristen Dennison and Rachell Hernandez, Youth Advisory Council members.

FIRST READING

- A. First Reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-10-16 (A), to annex 0.36 acres of property located at 1670 Destiny Lane (PIN 383-01-04-0009), and rezone from the Horry County Residential, no mobile homes allowed (SF6) district to the City of Conway Low-Density Residential (R) district.** Hucks informed Council that this application for annexation was submitted as a requirement to connect to city utility services. The property is located on Destiny Lane, near the intersection of Cox Ferry Road. There are currently no other properties on Destiny Lane that have been annexed into the city limits. Additionally, while this lot is a single family detached structure, a majority of the surrounding properties on the same street are duplex units. Other properties from within the neighborhood of College Place immediately adjacent to this property which were proposed for annexation in recent months were denied annexation. The Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan identifies the property as High Density Residential. The request to annex as the R district is due to the fact that properties requesting to be zoned R upon annexation can do so without a recommendation being provided by Planning Commission. Hucks said that staff does not recommend approval, but that if Council supports annexation that the request be brought back to Planning Commission for the R3, High Density Residential zoning.

Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Jordan, to deny annexation of this request.
Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

- B. First Reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-10-16 (B), to annex 0.35 acres of property located at 803 Donald Street (PIN 369-12-04-0003), and rezone from the Horry County Residential, no mobile homes allowed (SF20) district to the City of Conway Low/Medium-Density Residential (R-1) district.** Hucks stated that this annexation application was submitted as a requirement to connect to city utility services. The property is within the Sam Johnson subdivision off of Cates Bay Highway. There have been several other parcels in this subdivision that have been annexed in recent years. However, this would be the first one on Donald Street. The Future Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan identifies the property as Low/Medium Density Residential (R-1). Hucks said that staff recommends approval.

Motion: Benton made a motion, seconded by Butler, to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2023-10-16 (B). **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION:

Consideration of Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee Funding Recommendations – Mungo stated that the City received \$105,792.19 from the State Accommodations Tax for FY 22-23. SC Code of Laws (Section 6-4-10) details how these funds are allocated: (1) The first \$25,000 to the General Fund; (2) The balance remaining must be allocated as follows: a. 5% of balance to General Fund; b. 30% of balance to the City's selected designated marketing organization; and c. 65% of balance to tourism related expenses. The Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee is tasked with reviewing applications and making a recommendation on how to allocate the 65% balance of \$52,514.92 plus the \$7,888 rollover from FY 2022. On September 13, 2023, the City of Conway Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee met and considered applications from four organizations requesting funding for FY 2023: Conway Area Chamber of Commerce, Conway Downtown Alive, Waccamaw Market Cooperative (Conway Farmers Market Association), and The Theatre of the Republic. The four requests for funding totaled \$56,125. The Committee recommendations are as follows: Conway Chamber of Commerce - \$10,000, Conway Downtown Alive - \$29,125, Theater of the Republic - \$12,000, and the Conway Farmers Market Association - \$5,000 for a total of \$56, 125.

Goldfinch thanked Mungo for his many years of work on the Tax Advisory Committee. Goldfinch asked if the City could distribute the surplus. Mungo said that the Committee must honor what is on the applications.

Blain-Bellamy asked if the surplus was accumulating interest. Williams said yes.

White asked if others could apply. Mungo said anyone that has a 501 3C classification is eligible.

Motion: Benton made a motion, seconded by Goldfinch, to approve the funding recommendations of the Tax Advisory Committee. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

Moved Item IV.E. from the Consent Agenda - Approval of the 15th Judicial Circuit Traffic Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement – Long explained that this is a 2-year agreement that is renewed with the 15th Circuit law enforcement network, which consists of all of the partner agencies that exist in Horry and Georgetown County. This agreement allows for mutual aid for events, services, and law enforcement network checkpoints. Long said Council approves the agreement and then he signs as the Chief of Police for the City of Conway.

Goldfinch inquired about the City of Conway Police Department's pursuit policy. There was some discussion about other agencies in our area following the same procedures and an event that occurred over the weekend where other agency officers sped through town. Long said that he was on scene at termination, no Conway Police officers were involved, and every agency follows their own policies.

Goldfinch asked if state law speaks to what a police officer or emergency vehicle can legally drive over the speed limit given certain circumstances. Long said that is with due regard.

Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Blain-Bellamy, to approve the 15th Judicial Circuit Traffic Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Rogers informed Council of the following:

- Rogers said that staff had received a request from First Baptist Church asking for some type of agreement with the City that will allow them to close 6th Avenue on Sunday mornings. This is primarily for the safety of those crossing. Blain-Bellamy recommended that staff bring back more information to Council for review.
- The ribbon cutting for pickleball courts at Collins Park is October 16 at 1 p.m. Rogers encouraged all of Council to attend. If you've driven by Collins Park the last few days, you noticed a whole new area of construction. That's the new playground that was approved in this year's budget. It is not replacing anything, it will be an entirely new addition. Collins Park is one of the busiest public spaces in the City and this will provide even more play opportunities for that area.
- Tonight, is the start of games for fall sports at the Sports and Fitness Center. The City has 1,397 kids signed up this year, that's a greater than 5% increase from last year. Rogers said that both of his kids are signed up for soccer so he attested to how good everything looks out there. Best of luck to all of our teams and participants.
- In other sports news, the Conway High girls' volleyball team is on an impressive 10-game win streak. They have two more regular season games and then it's on to the playoffs. Rogers wished them the best and hopes their winning streak continues right through the state championship.
- CCU's Teal Nation Store will open on Main Street next Monday, October 9 with a ribbon cutting at 10:00 am.
- It's almost time for more tailgating in downtown Conway! The Chanticleer Athletic Foundation has asked the City to extend our planned road closures down to the roundabout on Laurel to accommodate their holding an additional event for season ticket holders at Chanti 's, and staff has obliged. Tailgating starts at 5:30 p.m. and the game will kick off at App State at 7:30. Everyone is invited to come pull for the Chants on the big screen on Town Green. And because of the earlier start time this time, there will be more restaurants open serving all of our visitors.
- The City of Conway sponsored night for CCU football will be Saturday, October 28. That is the same day as the homecoming parade and golf cart parade.
- Rogers said that there has been a lot of progress in the alley. Asphalt should be mostly down if it's not already and bricks are starting to go up on the ERF. The restroom building is up and the plumbing is wrapping up as we speak. Then we can move on to electrical work.
- There is a ton of stuff going on in the City of Halloween this year. The City is already seeing a crazy amount of foot traffic and saw big increases even before the month of Halloween kicked off. Rogers showed on the screen a picture that he took yesterday at 4:00 p.m. and said that's not a dinner rush, that's not a lunch rush, that's just people bringing their families downtown to enjoy the Halloween decorations. Some of the City's other sites to see this year include the tunnel of bones, our new friends at the Gardenwalk, a pumpkin display by the Clemson Extension, and the Witches Garden right outside these windows. If you've seen it during the day, you have to come back and see it at night. Of course, there are more and we have a map available. The easiest way for most people to get it is to follow the City of Halloween on Facebook.
- Rogers then told of some of the highlights happening in the City:

- The decorating contest is going on now. There are details on our website to sign up. Judging will be done during the week leading up to Halloween.
- Conway Downtown Alive's Witches, Wizards and Wine is this Thursday. Tickets sold out almost as soon as they went on sale so hopefully you got yours.
- We have our first movie in the terrace this Saturday night, that will be Halloweentown. Next Friday is Friday the 13th, so we will show the original Friday the 13th at the terrace. Please remember that Friday the 13th is not a lighthearted story for the whole family.
- The Smoke on the Waccamaw festival is next weekend, it kicks off on the 13th and goes into the 14th.
- The Halloween Costume Float is Saturday the 14th. Put on your best costume and float down the river.
- Forest of Fear kicks off October 19 and will be offered for two weekends. It should be an even better time this year than last.
- That's some of the Halloween highlights, but please check our website and follow both the City of Conway and City of Halloween on Facebook.
- Our Police and Fire departments will take part in Public Safety Day at the Myrtle Beach Convention Center this Saturday from 10-2. The public will be able to meet first responders, learn what they do, and see the equipment they use.
- The City held the kickoff meeting for the Chestnut Bay Resilience Project last week. Phase I of this project is being planned now and will involve restoration of damaged wetlands along Crabtree Canal. Phase two will involve the actual construction of the manmade Carolina Bay and the new park that will go with it. Right now, staff is preparing to procure the engineer who will do the final design work and oversee the project.
- Please remember that October 10 is the Conway Educational Foundation Hall of Fame Banquet. Our very own Mayor Blain-Bellamy will be inducted.
- Rogers said that is all he had for tonight, but there is an update on our Department of Technology Services and he turned it over to Jeff Leveille.

White asked for a tour of Chestnut Bay.

Technology Services – Leveille updated Council with the following:

City Hall and Finance:

In the past 6 months staff spent the majority of time here in City Hall re-wiring both buildings. Adding the new live stream technology that includes 5 fully remote controllable cameras, 3 in the chambers and two in the conference room along and the software to switch between them. Staff also added a new audio system allowing full control remotely of every microphone. During this process we had to move the Access channel to the Court building to allow more space for offices. Following this staff rewired the Finance building during their mini renovation.

Access Control:

Staff has been working on new access control systems for multiple buildings including Public Safety, Building/Planning, and City Hall. Next on the schedule is the Sports and Fitness Center and Finance.

October 2, 2023

Server upgrades:

With the Operating system end of life for Windows Server 2102 on October 14th, staff has been replacing several servers over the past 6 months including 2 authentication servers, certificate server, 2 file servers, the email archive server, print server, and fishing the GIS server last week. The new operating system is supported through 2029. Operating system end of life means there are not more security updates being published for it so it becomes a security risk as time goes by. Staff recently completed a phone system upgrade on 4 system servers and implemented a new call recording system expanding the capabilities of it.

Camera Network:

Staff has been working on upgrading the wireless network for the Citywide camera system. The City was out of address space that was maxed out at 254 devices. Staff redesigned the network and now have support for over 16,000 devices. Staff replaced the equipment on three waters to improve the speed from 100MB per second to over 1GB per second which will provide a cleaner stream from the cameras. Staff is currently working on upgrading the parks.

Security report card:

Staff recently completed a phishing test and the results were not as good as past tests. This time staff had a 7.7% failure rate with 16 clicks out of 208 emails sent. Past tests were averaging 4% so we will have to work on more awareness here.

White asked about security at Smith Jones. Leveille said that yes, there are cameras at Smith Jones.

Blain-Bellamy asked about free Wi-Fi in the City. Leveille said that Wi-Fi is available within a close proximity to all city buildings except Public Safety, which would include the Terrace and the Town Green. Leveille said that more would be added to the back of the Court building once the renovations in the alley are complete.

COUNCIL INPUT:

Benton said that looking through the State budget 2023-2024 there is a big surplus in the budget and the City of Conway is the recipient of several pots of money this year. City of Conway Recreation gets \$900,000 for an extension, Crabtree Greenway and Canal gets \$2.4 Million, and Public Safety got some money but he wasn't sure of that amount, for plate readers. Benton thanked staff for putting in the request and to Carla Schuessler as she worked really hard on the City's behalf. Benton asked for more signage at crosswalks as cars are not yielding to pedestrians and anything that we can do to prevent an accident would be good. Benton expressed his concern at Conway High School after school and asked for more safety enforcement. Benton recognized Wanda Lilly as being an asset to the City. Benton said that he saw Brandon and Braxton on an asphalt paver while walking into the building and said that is leadership at the top doing whatever it takes to get Scarborough Alley done and he thanked them. Benton said that he has spent a lot of time at Smith Jones as his son has football practice out there and he said there is lots of activity going on. Benton asked if the City staff cleaned the facilities at Smith Jones. Rogers said that City staff takes care of what is on the pool side and Smith Jones takes care of the basketball area, playground, and the bathrooms. Benton said that they do an amazing job and he admires them for working so hard. Benton then asked if there were any updates on the Whittemore Task Force.

October 2, 2023

Blain-Bellamy said that all of the members have accepted their roles and early this week a doodle poll is going out to the members to find a date and time when everyone can be present to meet.

Goldfinch said in regards to Halloween, that his cousin from Georgetown is bringing his kids Friday to go eat, so it is not just a quality of life event for folks that call Conway home but for those that come here, and for businesses, retail, and restaurants that all benefit. Goldfinch told the Mayor that he would miss the education banquet but that she is well deserving of that accolade. Goldfinch congratulated the 35th Anniversary of the Haberdashery. Goldfinch said that he listened to the gentleman that was opposed to the Warden Station tract and nearly everything that he said was factually inaccurate. Goldfinch said that the City needs to get something out there with the facts as people do not understand, he is explaining the differences to people and it is clear that this is going to happen. Goldfinch said do you want it done right, planned out right, and well thought out, not a hodge podge of a hundred-acre neighborhoods all inserted. Goldfinch asked if we should do town hall meetings. Goldfinch said that October is open enrollment for employees and he agreed to sit for free as a courtesy to the City of Conway to explain the process for ones that are ready to retire.

Jordan said that the fall sports is crazy as his daughter is on cheer with 35-38 on the squad. Jordan said that the facilities look amazing and he thanked staff. Jordan said that his family went downtown Saturday and Sunday and there was lots of foot traffic which is great for the businesses. Jordan said that he watched the girls' volleyball match last week and those girls are impressive. Jordan then wished the girls well on their upcoming match.

Blain-Bellamy stated that she was part of the Conway Superstars event, which is a voice competition and said that there is awesome talent right here in Conway. Blain-Bellamy said that her 8-year-old neighbor won the Junior section and a lot of people attended to cheer them all on. Blain-Bellamy said this past Saturday that she attended the Mariah Faith concert, which was a fantabulous event. The Theatre of the Republic was crowded. Blain-Bellamy said that she remembers when Mariah was on National TV and talked about Conway, South Carolina and helped along with CCU to put Conway on the map. Blain-Bellamy said that Scarborough Alley is turning into something nice and gave a kudos to everyone involved.

Blain-Bellamy said that earlier she introduced the students present that are part of the Mayor's Advisory Council and now wanted to introduce, Destiny and Desmond, as her kids as well.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes approved by City Council this 16 day of October, 2023.


Alicia Shelley, City Clerk