

May 17, 2021

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CONWAY CITY HALL
229 MAIN STREET
MONDAY, MAY 17, 2021 - 4:00 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Barbara Blain-Bellamy; Jean Timbes, Mayor Pro Tem
Council Members: William Goldfinch, Shane Hubbard, Larry White, Alex Hyman, and Justin Jordan

STAFF: Adam Emrick, City Administrator; Mary Catherine Hyman, Deputy Administrator/Planning & Development Director; John Rogers, Deputy Administrator/ Grants & Special Projects Director; Jeff Leveille, Technology Services Director; Reggie Jenerette, Sanitation Director; Robert Cooper, Building Official; Ashley Smith, Director Parks & Recreation; Rosanne Dates, Grants Coordinator; Nick Przybylski, Lifeguard; Brooke Holden, Public Information Officer; Dale Long, Police Chief; and Barbara Tessier, City Clerk

OTHERS: Josh Finklea, Marelle and Nick Ross, Margaret Harriott; Media: Kathy Ropp

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Blain-Bellamy called the meeting to order. Josh Finklea 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: White made a motion, seconded by Goldfinch, to approve the May 17, 2021 meeting agenda. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Final Reading of an ordinance to annex approximately 0.11 of an acre of property located at 1619 Church Street (PIN 338-10-03-0022 formerly a portion of PIN 338-10-03-0014) and request to rezone from Horry County Highway Commercial (HC) to City of Conway Highway Commercial (HC).
- B. Resolution to ratify and retroactively consent to certain Horry County Ordinances
- C. Final reading of an ordinance to repeal City of Conway Ordinance 2019-04-15 (J) an ordinance relating to the identification and collection of hospitality tax.

May 17, 2021

- D. Final reading of Ordinance #2020-12-07 (C) an ordinance relating to the identification and collection of Hospitality Fees to set and impose at the rate of 1% as authorized by state law.
- E. Final reading of Ordinance #2020-12-07 (D) an ordinance amending Ordinance #2019-04-15 (K) relating to collection of local Accommodations Tax to set and impose the rate at 0.5% as authorized by state law.
- F. Approval of May 3, 2021 Minutes

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: **Motion:** Hyman made a motion, seconded by Hubbard, to approve the May 17, 2021 meeting consent agenda. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT:

There was no public input. **Motion:** Blain-Bellamy made a motion, seconded by White, to close public input. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

- A. **Presentation of Proclamation to Conway High School Champion Wrestler – Johnny Guardian.** Guardian was unable to attend. The Mayor presented the Proclamation to two of Guardian’s wrestling coaches.
- B. **Presentation of Gun Violence Awareness Day Proclamation.** The Proclamation was presented by the Mayor to Marcelle Ross.
- C. **Employee of the Month – Public Service – April 2021 –** Rogers congratulated Rosanne Dates and presented her with an Employee of the Month award certificate.
- D. **Hero Award – May 2021 –** Smith congratulated Nick Przybylski and presented him with a Hero Award certificate.
- E. **Approval of special event request - 1st Annual Juneteenth Soul Food Festival at Smith Jones Park.** Margaret Harriott, applicant, informed Council that this request was to bring the community together. The event will have motivational speakers, food vendors, retail vendors, and an area for children. Harriott asked for Smith Jones Street to be blocked at Parmley and Rosehill to prevent traffic from entering the area.
Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by White, to approve the Juneteenth Soul Food Festival of Smith Jones Park. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING:

Public Hearing and First Reading of Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Budget An ordinance to levy taxes and establish the Municipal Budget for the City of Conway, South Carolina, for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022. A. Williams informed Council that the comprehensive budget totals \$50 million, which is 1.5% over the current budget. Williams outlined the FY2021-2020 budget highlights, which includes a Cost of Living salary increase of 1.7% for qualifying employees and the addition of seven new full-time employees. Property taxes millage will increase by the Cost of Living rate from 76 mills to 77.3 mills. There will be new fees for streetlight and sidewalk maintenance, Solid Waste will increase fees on one roll-out cart with a single pick-up to \$24/month, and a commercial dumpster lease program will be instituted. Stormwater fees will increase by 19% monthly for both residential and commercial. Water and Sewer rates will be increased by 6% for both residential and commercial.

There was no public input. **Motion:** Hyman made a motion, seconded by White, to close public input. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

Motion: White made a motion, seconded by Jordan, to approve first reading. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION:

Consideration of Marina Pump Station Bid. Friday informed Council that the Marina pump station was taken out of commission during Hurricane Florence and sustained significant damage. FEMA considered the building a loss and the City received \$228,000 for the loss of the station and for mitigation against future floods events. Additional funding will come from previously budgeted local funds. An engineer's estimate, as required by FEMA, predicted the cost of the project to be approximately \$1,201,464.

Five bids were received, however, one vendor had to withdraw their bid. Staff recommends the project be awarded to A.C. Schultes of Carolina, the lowest bidder at \$1,110,506.

Staff was asked why, if the bids were fairly similar, a South Carolina company was not selected. Emrick commented that they were the lowest bidder, and it was a federal project whose guidelines must be adhered to.

Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Timbes, to approve awarding the contract to A.C. Schultes of Carolina with a bid of \$1,110,506. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

- The Recreation Department is doing site visits with the engineers who are considering bidding on the Smith Jones pool rehab project. Because we are using CDBG monies, engineers are required.
- Conway Superstar is tentatively scheduled for August 14 at McCown Auditorium at 6 p.m.

May 17, 2021

- The Recreation Department is working on a new river-oriented event for August. Stay tuned for details.
- A Pop Up Splash Pad event is planned for the 4th of July.
- Timmy Williams met with SCOT about the Highway 501 medians. Staff hopes to be replanting them soon.
- Staff placed a graduation banner in front of City Hall to honor our Conway area school's graduates. The banner will be up until the beginning of June.
- The Grounds Maintenance Department is installing thousands of American flags throughout the City to celebrate Memorial Day, Flag Day, and the 4th of July.
- When the original notice of Stimulus money that they City would receive under the American Recovery Act, the City was to receive \$9.6 million. This figure was given with a caveat that the final figures were still being calculated. Last week the final preliminary guidance came out and the City's amount was reduced to \$4.3 million. No explanation has been given by the government. A majority of cities and towns in South Carolina were also informed of significant reductions in their anticipated amount. We will continue to push for an explanation.
- Spending the stimulus monies will ultimately be determined by Council. At some point the newly approved budget will likely need to be amended to address these funds. One thing that is clear, is that we can reimburse the City for losses determined to be caused by COVID. Our preliminary assessment puts that loss at about \$2 million, which includes expenses that we went out-of-pocket for that were COVID-related and for revenues that were depleted because of COVID. This would include recreation center closure, Municipal Court closure, and un-reimbursed time missed by employees.
- Tonight we have updates from the Solid Waste Department and the Building Department.

Solid Waste Department – Reggie Jenerette

- Department has two open positions for Heavy Equipment Operator I
- 656 green 95-gallon roll carts were purchased and 508 have been sold so far this year
- 962 blue 65-gallon recycle carts were purchased of which 500 were purchased with SCDHEC grant funds. 500 of the blue carts were given free via the grant and an additional 312 were sold
- There were 304 commercial pick-ups with
- 671 tons of solid waste was picked up in April
- Solid Waste Authority increased their rates on April 1, 2021
- The total landfill bill for April was \$72,366.63

Building Department – Robert Cooper

- Three new employees have been hired. Two in Facilities Maintenance as Building Maintenance Technicians and a new Building Inspector was hired to replace Jim Hill ,who retired in April after 15 years with the City
- 627 permits were issued from January through April, which is about double from the same time last year

May 17, 2021

- Of the 627 permits, 162 were for new single-family dwellings and one 16-unit apartment building. Single-family dwelling permits were triple what was issued same time last year
- Performed 2,887 inspections, including property maintenance inspections
- Major projects currently being worked on by Facilities Maintenance employees are: installed electrical and irrigation for Teal Alley, completed renovation of the IT and Police offices in the Human Resources building, began renovations on the new Planning and Building Department building, constructing a two-story building at the baseball fields housing bathrooms, a press box, and concession area.
- Other projects include: replacing/installing electrical services, replacing toilets and water heater at Recreation Department, installed a gear dryer at Fire Station 1, worked with HTC to install fiber optic cables from the annex to the new Planning and Building offices, replaced the water fountain at Collins Park.
- Attended the National Flood Conference in Myrtle Beach
- May is Building Safety Month

COUNCIL INPUT:

Hyman commented that Groovin' on the Green was fun and well attended and saw many employees and their families there.

Timbes noted that while she was recuperating from surgery, she watched the Council meetings on TV. An upgrade to technology is needed. Suggested a portion of the stimulus monies could be used for that purpose.

White was thankful that a building on Highway 378 had been demolished.

Hubbard thanked the Solid Waste Department for cleaning up debris from the storm.

Blain-Bellamy congratulated Conway Downtown Alive and City staff for some outstanding events. The opening of Teal Alley was quite an event, and is one of the things that will cement the relationship between CCU and the City. Pleased with the attendance at Groovin' on the Green. The recent clean-up event brought out a lot of City staff and their families to clean up around the City.

Blain-Bellamy stated there was a tendency of developers purchasing a plot of land that is in the County, clear-cutting the property, and then requesting annexation into the City. She stated that there has to be a way to de-incentivize that activity. There has been debate among us about the City's Tree Ordinance concerning whether it is purposeful or fair, and how it affects one type of situation versus another. There have been over the years, a growing tendency for parcels to have been purchased with the restrictions already in place and known about. However, she stated, there are some developers who purchase such land and believe that they have ample political clout to make their purchases and expect the City to waive the requirements of the Tree Ordinance that we believe to be necessary.

May 17, 2021

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by White, to go into Executive Session. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- A. **Discussion of employment of a new City Clerk and a Planning Director [pursuant to SC Code §30-4-70(A)(1)]**
- B. **Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements relative to the Riverfront and downtown. [pursuant to SC Code §30-4-70(A)(2)]**
- C. **Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed purchase of property along the Highway 378 Corridor. [pursuant to SC Code §30-4-70(A)(2)]**

RECONVENE FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion: White made a motion, seconded by Hyman, to come out of Executive Session. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

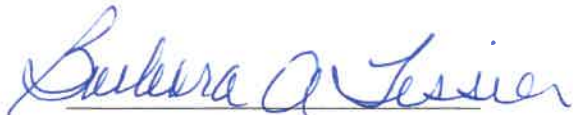
POSSIBLE ACTION ON MATTERS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion: White made a motion, seconded by Hubbard, to authorize the City Administrator to enter into negotiations for the purchase of property on Highway 378. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

Motion: Hubbard made a motion, seconded by Goldfinch, to authorize the City Administrator to enter into a contract with Genford Development relating to arrangements relative to the Riverfront and downtown, provided certain conditions were met. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes approved by City Council this 7th day of June 2021.



Barbara A. Tessier, City Clerk