

A regular meeting of the Beaufort City Council was held on February 22, 2005 at 6:00 p.m. in County Council Chambers, 100 Ribaut Road with an executive session at 5:30 p.m.. In attendance were Mayor Bill Rauch, Donnie Ann Beer, Councilmen Frank Glover, Gary B. Fordham, George H. O'Kelley, Jr., and City Manager John F. McDonough. In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, all local media were duly notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor Rauch.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion by Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman Glover, Council moved into executive session to interview the Historic Beaufort Foundation's candidate for the City's Historic Review Board.

ADJOURNMENT

Returning to open session and there being no other business to discuss in executive session, Councilwoman Beer moved to adjourn. Councilman Glover gave second. The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

----- ----

CALL TO ORDER

The regular City Council meeting was called to order by Mayor Rauch at 6:00 p.m.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was opened with an invocation by Dr. Robert Cuttino, retired Pastor of the Baptist Church of Beaufort. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Mayor.

PROCLAMATION – FLOYD DASH DAY

On motion by Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman Glover, Council unanimously adopted the proclamation designating February 22, 2005 as Floyd Dash Day in the City of Beaufort.

RESOLUTION – MRS. HATTIE HOLMES

On motion by Councilman Glover, second by Councilwoman Beer, Council unanimously adopted the resolution honoring Mrs. Hattie Holmes on her 100th birthday. (Copy of resolution at end of these minutes)

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held to receive public comment on **the rezoning of two parcels of property located at 1605 Greenlawn Drive and 1505 Greenlawn Drive** identified as District 100, Tax Map 1, Parcel 254 and District 100, Tax Map 1, Parcel 258 respectively, from "R-2 Medium Density Single-Family Residential District" to "Neighborhood Commercial District". A Notice of Public

Hearing was duly published in The Beaufort Gazette on February 14, 2005. The City of Beaufort-Town of Port Royal Joint Municipal Planning Commission recommended approval.

Libby Anderson, City Planner, noted that the two parcels are in the Greenlawn Park Subdivision which is a narrow residential strip located between commercially zoned and developed areas. The proposed zoning is consistent with the zoning of 21 parcels on Greenlawn Avenue that are currently in the process of being annexed.

There being no other comments, the public hearing was closed at 6:12 p.m.

MINUTES: REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 8, 2005

On motion by Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman Glover, Council members Glover, Beer, O’Kelley, and Rauch voted to adopt the minutes of the regular City Council meeting of February 8, 2005 as presented. Councilman Fordham abstained since he was absent from that meeting due to illness.

TOURISM ORDINANCE

As requested by City Council during their last meeting, several sections of the tourism ordinance were forwarded to the Tourism Management Advisory Commission for their recommendation.

Millie Boyce, TMAC chairman, stated the Commission was previously asked to revise the ordinance and after many months, their recommendation was presented to Council. Then two weeks ago, the Commission was asked to: **1)** Consider amending the definition of a “themed vehicle” by removing the word “trolley” (Section 7-11002). They recommend the definition not be changed. **2)** Consider a reduction in carriage rotation fees for carriage companies from \$15,000 to \$10,000. TMAC recommended the fee be left to the discretion of City Council as long as no hours are eliminated from the schedule of the full-time Tour Coordinator. **3)** Consider amending the embarkation Rotation Slots (Section 7-11067) to change the sealed bid procurement method without creating a duopoly. TMAC recommended that no sealed bid procurement take place and that all references be eliminated from the Tourism Ordinance. **4)** Consider amending the routes (Section 7-11025 – 7) to change the height limitations for touring vehicles. TMAC recommends the height requirement remain as is. “Specials” were also discussed and the Commission stated that the City Manager and Tour Coordinator have the authority to allow specials if they can be worked into the existing schedule. The Commission prefers specials not be eliminated and suggests the carriage companies assist in working it out so that everyone benefits.

Councilman Fordham introduced several other amendments prepared by him and Councilman Glover. He recommended that in the future all petitions presented to Council be dated to ensure that they are current explaining that one person in particular that signed the petitions distributed by the Point residents has been deceased for over a year.

Mr. Fordham moved to amend Section 7-11021 regarding the definition of theme vehicle and removing “trolley” as an example. Councilman Glover seconded the motion. Mayor Rauch asked how an “official or recognized means of transportation” as proposed would be determined. Mr. Glover replied that any vehicle that has been or is an official means of transportation but not any unofficially licensed vehicle.

Carl Wedler, 501 Prince Street, Point Neighborhood Association President, stated this definition would allow vehicles such as the “amphibious duc” operating in other states to be on the streets, launch from Pigeon Point, tour by water and return via the ramp by the marina and continue touring throughout the City. He added that he supports TMAC’s recommendations. Councilman O’Kelley pointed out there are other restrictions in the ordinance that would prohibit a landing craft on the streets. Mr. Wedler said it is still possible other vehicles could be introduced and changing this ordinance could open Pandora’s Box.

Martin Murphy, 411 King Street, said theme vehicles are either allowed or they aren’t, why change the definition or discuss examples.

Paul Sommerville, Pigeon Point, said he has a problem with the proposed definition because it isn’t clear as to what a theme vehicle is. He said, in his opinion, there are two issues. The first is whether or not Council agrees a travesty occurred to Walter Gay and if so what should be done. The next is that no one wants more tourist vehicles of any type in the City. It appears that the definition is being changed to try to solve Mr. Gay’s problem. But if the trolley is allowed to operate then it should not be used as an example of a theme vehicle. His solution is to leave the definition as it is but remove the word trolley. He added that a carriage is a theme vehicle but because Section 7-11022 allows horse-drawn carriages as an exception, they are allowed. He questioned if the exception should be expanded to include trolleys. The TVC is responsible for controlling the number of carriages and can do the same with the trolleys, he said.

Billy Keyserling, 731 Ribaut Road, said he attended the many TMAC meetings and observed the members, appointed by Council to give them guidance on the tourism issues, as they deliberated. Because Beaufort is small, only so much and so many kinds of tourism can be tolerated; therefore, the quality of tourism should be the focus. The ordinance was created because tourism was getting out of hand, he said. The carriages were already in business and that is why they are the exception but the ordinance was necessary to establish rules for them too. He said he made a mistake regarding the trolley as did the other members of Council. Instead of adhering to the ordinance, the decision was made because of the person appearing before them. He believes that the recommendations presented by the Committee who have worked to develop this ordinance and examined the amendments should be followed.

David Taub, 414 New Street, announced that only a few people would be speaking on behalf of many concerned residents. He explained that when he was mayor, a committee was formed to develop the original tourism ordinance when an abundant of applications for Bed & Breakfast establishments were received wanting to locate in the Point. Theme vehicles were specifically addressed because they are a burden in other communities and affect the quality of life. Because of the taxpayers in the Point, the historic houses still exist to draw the tourists. The changes being proposed to the ordinance are vague and are being driven by a small special interest which makes bad public policy. Council commissioned the TMAC to reexamine the twelve year old ordinance which they did and Council adopted their recommendations. He asked on behalf of the residents not to change the ordinance. In his opinion, there is no way to address the grievance legislatively without causing harm to the quality of life. He emphatically asked that Council not adopt the proposed changes but instead follow the recommendations presented by TMAC.

Walter Hill, Duke Street, read comments prepared by John Gettys Smith, president of the Old Commons Community Association, who was unable to attend tonight's meeting. His letter stated he backs the position of the Point Association. Beaufort's Historic District is of national interest and it is unique and fragile. Protecting it is a responsibility that the Associations urge Council to take seriously.

Speaking for himself, Mr. Hill said the City is unique and worth preserving but if the ordinance is changed; he is convinced that the City will be harmed. He attended the Point meeting last night and members voted to ask Council not to change the ordinance. On behalf of the Old Commons Association, he is also asking that it not be changed.

Dewitt Helm, 406 New Street, said while walking his dog yesterday, a large motorized vehicle did not yield to the stop sign on the corner of New and North Streets and nearly ran over them. He wondered if this will be a routine occurrence and are children and dogs going to be put at risk. He said he supports all the reasons given for not changing the ordinance. He stated accommodating one individual is bad public policy for three reasons: 1) it will open Pandora's Box; 2) changing the ordinance will result in a decrease in value in the real estate on the Point. He said the Point is the largest residential tax producing section of the City. When the property values are compromised, that will create an economic crisis as well as a safety issue; 3) if this ordinance is changed and his predictions occur, there will be a voter revolt, he said. He asked that the ordinance not be changed.

Don Starkey, 1099 Otter Circle, said he too is a newcomer to the City. The changes to the guidelines will not help if a businessman wants to operate a different theme vehicle. Any further encroachment of tourism in the Point or the rest of the City is not in the best interest, adding it is important to encourage tourists who want to stay here. He said let there be walking tours but the amount of tourism on the Point needs to be limited. Somebody has to regulate these vehicles and the words won't do it.

Dick Stewart, Federal Street, said it doesn't seem Beaufort has suffered having used the current ordinance for twelve years. Also, he pointed out that Council and the City have been working hard to make sure that downtown in particular returns to a place where people live as well as where they visit and work. That is important and in the context of tourism, it is useful to consider that one of the real differences in Beaufort is that when you enter a business downtown you are treated as a person and not as a transaction. Council's task is to balance the benefits against the costs. He asked Council to consider the issue of noise when changing the ordinance. Diesel engines and the noise they create can be an impediment to the quality of life in a residential community particularly where there are older homes and the windows don't seal as tightly as newer homes.

Jim Quattlebaum, 411 New Street, said he has heard no reasons for changing the ordinance other than Walter Gay. He said the most significant point that affects the morale of the City is that Council changed the rules contrary to the Advisory Commission's recommendation for Walter Gay.

Peter White, Southurn Rose Buggy Tours, said they appreciate that the residents of the Point put up with the traffic generated by the carriages through their neighborhood. Also, he mentioned that the carriage owners respect the fact that the upkeep of the old homes is what helps to bring the visitors.

He said the tour companies are like the ambassadors of Beaufort and control how the visitors move through the City. Without that control, the residents would see the havoc created when the tourists walk around the historic district unescorted. He asked Council when making their decisions to be fair and just to the people trying to make a living.

Martin Murphy, 411 King Street, said he does not agree that a carriage is a theme vehicle also carriages were used before cars. Referring to the Walter Gay dilemma, Mr. Murphy said Mr. Gay has benefited from Council's mistake because he has been able to operate under his appeals.

Millie Boyce, TMAC chairman, explained there are currently two local carriage companies and two bus companies who begin their tours thirty minutes apart which are allowed by the ordinance. Also, bus companies from out of town can call the TVC and be put into the rotation. There is another trolley company waiting to start his business here as soon as the ordinance is amended, she said.

Bill Black, 403 Hancock Street, said a simple solution would be to not allow any motorized vehicles and only allow the carriages to operate. This would eliminate the noise, pollution, and limit the amount of traffic. He suggested collecting the fines owed the City from the tour company violations and using them to beautify the Point.

Walter Gay, Sandlapper Tours, reviewed the events that took place when he asked to operate his tour business in the city. He also asked that the ordinance be amended to allow him to continue conducting his tours in the City.

Bob McCutcheon, 310 Hancock Street, said everyone seems to generally have the same idea of what they would like on the Point and what they do not like and everyone wants to avoid those who annoy the residents.

Libby Barnes, Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce, encouraged Council to take TMAC's recommendations seriously. Speaking to Council, she emphasized the importance of small business owners receiving clear, concise, consistent answers when they approach Council for information so that they know if he or she can conduct business in that local jurisdiction. She asked that these mistakes not happen again.

Councilman Glover referring to Mayor Rauch's question about recognized means of transportation suggested identifying Council as the official body to determine the means of transportation. As far as the "duc", it is addressed in another portion of the ordinance.

Councilman Fordham read each of his proposed amendments and amended his motion to include items 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Councilman Glover gave second. The City Manager stated item #6, regarding the fee sheet, was adopted by resolution and should be addressed separately.

The Mayor asked Mr. Fordham how he proposes to fund the TVC's salary if the fees are reduced. Councilman Fordham suggested using accommodation taxes. He said the increased fee should not have been passed.

In reply to Councilman Glover's question as to how the TMAC members voted, Jessica Mullen,

TVC, replied six members were present at the meeting. The vote for the theme vehicle was 2 to 4 and on the height requirement the vote was 5 to 1. The other votes were unanimous. Councilman O'Kelley stated \$15,000 is not fair to make a business pay on top of the other licenses and requirements to do business in the City.

Councilman Glover inquired as to whether the non-local buses are paying the fee adopted in the resolution. Mrs. Mullen answered that fee has not been implemented. The City Manager added that he will speak with the Chamber of Commerce tomorrow. Council was concerned at the time about how the fees were to be disbursed and it has not been resolved at this time. Councilwoman Beer pointed out the reason the fee was added was because the carriage companies at that time could not get along and it was necessary to have someone there to police them. Mr. O'Kelley stated there have been other businesses that caused a lot more problems and they were not required to pay \$15,000 to operate.

Fees:

Peter White said the carriage companies get along since the new ordinance has been effect. Since the specials have been eliminated, there are only four buggies on the street at one time.

Donna Starkey, Otto Circle, said she plans to open a business in the City and inquired about a business license. The difference, as she sees it, is that it isn't necessary to have the taxpayers pay someone to supervise her business.

Shirley Sutton, Carolina Buggy Tours Manager, said Peter & Rose White have been helpful since she has been the manager. She said they share ideas and business. She asked Council to consider reducing the fees.

Libby Barnes clarified the question regarding fees charged to the out of area buses. The TMAC recommended that a fee be charged to the out of town buses and since the Chamber of Commerce would be the organization responsible for the support and management of the buses, a percentage of those revenues would be left at the Chamber to help cover staffing costs.

Dennis Starkey, Otto Circle, complimented the carriage tours and Mr. Gay's tour stating both are excellent. A fee on the out of town buses might answer the questions heard tonight. By charging them more, it would minimize the amount of frivolous tours coming here and avoid raising taxes to pay the TVC's salary.

Allocation of Rotation Slots

Councilman O'Kelley said it appears that Mr. Fordham's amendment as stated in Section 7-11067 (E) eliminates the bid procurement process.

Dick Stewart, Federal Street, said he has participated in the sealed bid process in his business. Currently, through licensing, a business can be denied the right to continue if they do not comply with the terms of the license. His concern is that the auction process allows parties to dominate that process by financial will. They can also open the situation for parties unfamiliar with the rules and regulations to purchase a franchise agreement whereby they can operate as they choose. He said it seems if there are companies operating within the licensing requirements and are doing what is

perceived to be a balance between the ideal most profit-making tourism operation and the ideal, least intrusive operation in the eyes of the people who are not participating in the business, then that balance would have been achieved and those parties should be given a preference to continue their business. He suggested another means of funding be considered and select, not the folks who can pay the most but those who can operate their business in a way that is best for the City.

Height:

The current ordinance requires that mid-size vehicles not exceed ten feet in height. The proposed height is eleven and a half feet in height.

David Taub stated the confusion could have been avoided if the amendments had first been submitted to the staff for review. In his opinion, the height restrictions are aimed at allowing Mr. Gay's trolley to operate. He again asked Council to consider TMAC's recommendations.

Walter Gay, Sandlapper Tours, said there were no restrictions on height, width, or wheel base in the original ordinance. This was added after TMAC made their review. Comments were made by the Point residents that people can look in their windows. He said tourists want to see the houses not look in windows. Additionally, he said this is another way to eliminate his vehicle. He said he asked the TMAC members why the height restrictions were set at 10 feet. Their reply was because of the low hanging tree limb on Federal Street. He addressed this issue with Council stating garbage trucks, fire trucks, moving vans etc. are higher than his bus. He asked Council not to restrict the height. He suggested restricting the height of the seat from ground level to avoid two story buses.

Specials:

Special tours were not addressed by Mr. Fordham's amendments.

Paul Sommerville, Pigeon Point Road, said no revenue is being generated from the out of town buses. The fees are low and he asked if they are being imposed to generate revenue or to discourage more buses. Either way, they should be increased, he added.

Councilman Glover asked if the fees couldn't be collected and held until the decision on distribution is made. The City Manager said he will talk with the Chamber tomorrow about working out a solution.

Mr. Glover noted that the wording in Section 7-11047(i) referencing the sealed-bid procurement process needs to be eliminated and should be included in the amendment. Council approved the amendment as stated.

The Mayor stated if the changes are being suggested in an effort to protect a friend, this decision will only open the door for others that will continue to increase the tourism long after the friend has gone. He believes the current ordinance is sufficient and should not be amended. Mr. Fordham said he took offense to the Mayor's comments, replying Council changed their mind in their decision. It was agreed that the reason Council allowed Mr. Gay to operate his tours was because of the documentation presented by him. The Mayor said the City Attorney brought to Council's attention that the bus is a theme vehicle which is not permitted by ordinance.

Mrs. Beer stated she spoke to the individual residents in the Point about the trolley and she feels obligated to ensure they have the quality of life even though they deal with the tourists. Mr. O'Kelley stated if the carriages can be controlled, he believes jitneys can be too. He plans to study the proposed amendments before second reading to see if they can be changed to satisfy everyone.

Councilmen Fordham, Glover, and O'Kelley voted to approve the proposed amendments to the sections of the ordinance pertaining to definitions, theme vehicles, rotation slots, height, fees, and the amendment to Section 7-11047(i) on first reading. Council members Beer and Rauch voted nay. The motion passed 3 to 2. (Copy at end of these minutes)

RESOLUTION

Councilman Fordham moved to amend the resolution to change the fees for the rotation slot from \$15,000 to \$10,000 retroactive to the first of the year and eliminate the wording at the bottom of the page that refers to the bid process. Councilman Glover seconded the motion.

Rotation slots for carriages are currently \$15,000 and for local buses the fee is \$2,500 and does not apply to jitneys or trolleys the City Attorney stated. Councilman O'Kelley suggested those fees be reviewed and asked who is currently paying the \$2,500. The City Manager replied there are two rotation slots for local buses authorized under the ordinance and there are currently two operating. One is under review in the Courts and has not paid the fee. The other is a small fourteen passenger bus operating as Beaufort Tours. A discussion followed regarding how the queuing system for buses and carriages works.

Paul Sommerville said it appears Mr. Gay's vehicle is being treated as a bus. If the ordinance is changed to allow trolleys, the wording needs to state they are considered to be a bus.

On motion by Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman O'Kelley, the motion to table the resolution passed unanimously.

DAY DOCK OPTIONS

A new alternative for the day dock design was suggested by Councilman Glover during a meeting with the Mayor, dock master, staff and the project engineer. Drawings and cost estimates were presented to Council for consideration by Phil Waters of Hobbs, Upchurch, & Associates of Beaufort and referred to as Options A and B.

Option A was shown by Mr. Waters as he explained the layout. A three foot addition to the existing daydock is proposed with an angled 96 ft. extension, joining a 90 ft. section, paralleling the existing portion. The benefits to this option would be that it will not extend further westward and adds 660 ft. of dock space. Challenges consist of navigability and safety issues, it is more costly, diminished navigation, and reduces marina space. This option would cost \$114,310, he said. **Option B** was approved by Council on January 11, 2005 and extends westward. This option would increase safety, be less expensive, and provides 600 linear feet which doubles the existing space. The cost for Option B is estimated at \$106,000.

Mayor Rauch asked if there is enough water at low tide on the street side of Option B for one boat to pass another. Mr. Waters said it would have to be limited to dingys. According to Mr. O'Kelley,

the Marina Dock Master said the marsh extends out further to the west which would make it necessary to angle the dock more towards the channel if Option B is approved.

Sharon Groves said there is not enough water to extend the daydock westward and the cost of increasing the length as proposed would be expensive.

Charles Aimar, 313 Bayard Street, said he thought of the same design as shown in Option A. The advantage would be additional dock space in deeper water. That depth will probably remain the same for a number of years, he said. This is the best plan except for the closeness of the area which could pose a problem with the tide. He mentioned the agreement between the City and the residents that the marina would not move further westward than the existing day dock.

Tommy Logan, Ribaut Road, said Option A would provide more space and OCRM may not permit the westward extension because of the tidal creek. He still prefers the idea of a small narrow float next to the seawall for dingys.

Walter Hill, Duke Street, said his concern with Option A is that the tide runs at an angle to what is proposed. He suggested rotating the dock to eliminate the tightness if the cost isn't too high.

Evan Thompson, HBF Director, commended Council for reconsidering what had already approved in order to consider the concerns regarding the Landmark District. Option A is a great compromise and addresses everyone's concern, he said. Historic Beaufort Foundation supports this plan.

Don Starkey, Otter Circle, said factoring in the turning radius of a boat, the current, and the tide, the corner area may be useless. Also, boats using the ramp could back into the dock. The number of boats that will be able to use the daydock should be considered, he said. In his opinion, it will only accommodate seven more than can dock there now. According to the eight year old soundings he used, he agreed that the westward extension would protrude into the marsh. Both options have limitations he said. Additionally, he suggested limiting the dockage time and allow reservations to be made in advance.

Rick Griffin, Downtown Marina Operator and Harbor Master, having managed the marina for 38 years and operated vessels of all kinds up and down the coast offered his opinion. An inexperienced boater who may have eased in on the inside of the dock during an out going tide will have difficulty when the tide changes and he tries to leave. He said there are concerns with both options but Option A is better than no additional space. However, he believes the linear extension could be slanted about 30 degrees and supports it because it would be the safest configuration for the boaters, the least expensive, and the most sufficient use of the dock space.

Tommy Logan asked if low pedestal lighting would be used so as not to be offensive to the residents of Bay Street. Mr. Waters said they would.

Sharon Groves still concerned with storm control asked what will be done to secure the floats to the pilings. Mr. Waters explained storm surge is considered when the design is prepared. She asked that consideration be included in the design to avoid the dock from becoming a hazard during a storm.

Rick Griffin said to prevent a section of the float from breaking loose would be an astronomical cost. He added that if a storm surge occurred to that extent, the marina floats may also break loose.

Councilman O'Kelley moved to approve Option A. Councilman Glover gave second.

Mr. O'Kelley suggested that the Harbor Master determine the size boats allowed to dock closest to the marina arms and to ensure the larger boats have the east/west arms.

Tommy Logan asked Council to consider decking approximately 16 feet of the acute angle to discourage boats from tying there.

The Mayor asked that the final design be brought back to Council.

Council members Glover, Fordham, Rauch, and O'Kelley voted in favor of Option A. Councilwoman Beer voted nay. The motion passed 4 to 1.

ORDINANCE ANNEXING 23 PARCELS ON GREENLAWN DRIVE

The ordinance annexing 23 parcels of property located in the Greenlawn Subdivision and adjacent to Greenlawn Drive was presented to Council for second reading and adoption.

Councilwoman Beer moved to adopt the ordinance on second reading. Councilman Glover gave second. Council voted unanimously to adopt the ordinance on second reading. (Copy of ordinance at end of the February 8, 2005 minutes)

ORDINANCE ZONING 21 PARCELS ON GREENLAWN DRIVE

The ordinance zoning 21 parcels located on Greenlawn Drive Neighborhood Commercial and zoning two parcels on Greenlawn Drive General Commercial was presented to Council for second reading and adoption.

On motion by Councilman Glover, second by Councilwoman Beer, Council voted unanimously to adopt the ordinance on second reading. (Copy of ordinance at end of the February 8, 2005 minutes)

ORDINANCE AMENDMENT – PERTAINING TO BODY PIERCING FACILITIES

An ordinance amending the Unified Development Ordinance by adding restrictions for body piercing facilities was presented for first reading.

Councilwoman Beer made a motion, seconded by Councilman Glover to approve the ordinance on first reading.

Body piercing facilities are permitted in the Light Industrial zoning district and due to questions about the size of that area, a zoning map will be provided at the next meeting.

Council approved the ordinance on first reading. (Copy of ordinance at end of these minutes)

ORDINANCE REZONING TWO PARCELS ON GREENLAWN DRIVE

An ordinance changing the zoning designation of two parcels of property located on Greenlawn

Drive, from R-2 to Neighborhood Commercial was presented for first reading.

Councilwoman Beer made a motion to approve the ordinance on first reading. Councilman Glover gave second. The motion passed unanimously. (Copy of ordinance at end of these minutes)

ARCHITECTURAL FIRM FOR THE MUNICIPAL COMPLEX PROJECT

A Request for Qualifications was prepared for design services for the Municipal Center project by LCK Construction Services of Columbia, SC, the construction management firm hired by the City to assist with the project. A four member staff selection committee reviewed the fifteen qualifications received and using an evaluation sheet prepared by LCK assigned weights to each of the qualifying characteristics for each firm. The four firms who scored the highest made a presentation to the selection team in mid January. The selection committee recommends the City enter into contract negotiations with Liollo Architects of Charleston, SC for design of the City of Beaufort Municipal Center.

Libby Anderson, Planning Director, said this team is a very diverse consultant team. They are proposing to partner with other firms to provide not only an architect, but a traffic engineer, a cost engineering team, landscape architects and land planners, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing engineers. All of which were factors in the decision. Additionally, they have worked extensively in the County and in the Beaufort Historic District, she said.

Councilman Fordham suggested using the plans from the newly completed West Columbia Municipal Complex. Councilman O'Kelley asked if there wasn't a local firm that could do the project rather than hire outside the City. The Mayor pointed out the importance of making the right decision and because this meeting has become lengthy, suggested tabling this item in order to hear about the other firms. Councilman Glover expressed concerns with the cost associated with partnering with other firms and inquired if there wasn't a firm that has the ability to provide these services in house. The City Manager explained usually partnerships are formed for projects such as this because of the unique challenges of combining the different departments. Also, of the seventeen firms who submitted qualifications, none had that ability. He said, too, that cost is determined by a percentage of the project cost. The budget prepared in November, 2004 included \$531,000 for the architectural and engineering program. Mr. Glover asked if delaying the decision would affect the schedule. The City Manager answered that if Council could make a decision in the next week or two, the timeline would not be adversely effected.

The Mayor asked to see examples of the buildings built by the fifteen firms and learn more about the other teams. Mr. Glover agreed he would like to hold a workshop to hear from staff regarding the selection.

On motion by Councilman O'Kelley, second by Councilman Glover, the decision on the architectural firm was tabled for further review at a workshop.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

The City Manager reported to Council that a request to conduct bicycle tours in the Historic District has been received. This has been referred to TMAC for their consideration and a recommendation to Council.

Updating Council on the **Waterfront Project**, he said a Request for Prequalifications for Bidders for the Waterfront Park Restoration Project will be going out next week. The 100% drawings are due on February 28th to the architect. They will be reviewed by the construction manager and the staff during the next ten days. Bids are scheduled to go out around the end of March or first of April. Regarding the **Sidewalk Improvement Project** around the City, including Ribuat Road, Bay Street, Carteret Street, Greene Street, and several others, bids are to be received on February 28th.

An update on the **Bladen Street Streetscape Improvements** was presented by Bradd Stuart, City Planner.

He said the priorities developed from public input and determined by the study were new street lighting, bury overhead utility lines, more landscaping, installation of traffic lights at Boundary Street, exposing the brick under the pavement at North and Bladen Streets, improvements at Duke and Bladen Streets. A conceptual streetscape plan was developed including onstreet parking, widening the sidewalks, signage, streetlights, and pedestrian access. Several grants have been applied for from DOT and last summer the City received an award for the improvements of the north end of Bladen Street from Duke to Boundary Street. He displayed the plan created by staff as a result of the public meeting held in November. The plan will be provided for approval at a later date.

Councilman Glover asked if the travel lanes have been reviewed by DOT. He commented that the intersection radius of some of the streets appear to be tight and he was concerned if larger vehicles will be able to navigate properly.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULED

A workshop was scheduled for Tuesday, March 1, 2005 at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall to review the municipal complex project.

MOTION TO EXTEND MEETING

On motion by Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman Glover, Council approved the motion to extend the meeting past 10:00 p.m.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor read a letter from Captain Brian Jezewski of the South Carolina Army National Guard thanking Council for their part in the welcome home reception given for Troop B 202 Calvary I.

REPORTS BY COUNCIL

FORDHAM: Mr. Fordham referred to a letter from Marvin Dukes regarding truck traffic on Ribaut Road and asked that a report on this subject be presented at the next meeting. The City Manager replied that DOT is involved and he spoke with Robert Clark of the Department of Transportation who is checking the status.

GLOVER: Councilman Glover reported he attended the site visit in West Columbia Monday and was impressed with the facility.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

BILL RAUCH, MAYOR

COUNCILWOMAN DONNIE ANN BEER

COUNCILMAN FRANK GLOVER

COUNCILMAN GARY B. FORDHAM

COUNCILMAN GEORGE H. O'KELLEY, JR

ATTEST:

BEVERLY W. GAY, CITY CLERK