

Regular Council Meeting

March 5, 2013 at 6 p.m.

Members Present:

Joe Owens, Mayor
Boyd Jones, Mayor Pro-Tem
Abbott L. Bray, Jr.
Eric L. Fowler
Casey Jordan Hallman
L. Dale Harley
Tommy Parler
B.J. Unthank
Teddy Wingard

Members Absent:

None

Others Present:

Jenny Cunningham, City Administrator
Stuart Jones, Building Official
Mardi Valentino, City Clerk/PIO
Brian Carter, Director of Planning and Zoning
Sid Varn, Director of Planning and Engineering
Donna Smith, Director of Economic Development
Members of the Public and Press

Wyatt Coleman, Fire Chief
Rodney Howell, Fire Training Officer
Dennis Tyndall, Police Chief
Shane Phillips, Police Captain
Matt Edwards, Police Major
Charles Garren, Public Works Director

Agenda Item I – Call to Order

Mayor Owens called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. and noted a quorum was present. *The State, Free Times, Lexington County Chronicle, Cayce-West Columbia News, and The Columbia Star* and radio and television stations were notified of the meeting by e-mail on March 1, 2013.

Agenda Item II – Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Council Member Bray gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item III – Requests for Appearance

- A. Mayor Owens recognized Ms. Jacqueline Buck, Executive Director for Keep the Midlands Beautiful. Ms. Buck announced that the organization recently moved into the city of West Columbia and now has an office at 1307 Augusta Road. She stated that Keep the Midlands Beautiful serves both Lexington and Richland Counties, which fund the organization. Volunteers with Keep the Midlands Beautiful will be partnering with the West Columbia Police Department to clean up areas in the city with properties that need attention. She explained that Keep the Midlands Beautiful will be involved with the Great American Clean Up event and will assist neighborhood associations in targeting areas that need improvement. Mayor Owens welcomed Ms. Buck and Keep the Midlands Beautiful to the city and said he looked forward to the organization assisting the city with beautification efforts.
- B. Mayor Owens recognized city bond attorney Lawrence Flynn with Pope Zeigler, LLC. Mr. Flynn gave a brief overview of the two recent bond refunding. He explained that between refunding the water/sewer bond and the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) bond the city will save about \$250,000 in interest. He said the interest rate for the water/sewer bond was lowered to 1.42%, which is a savings of \$142,000 or \$24,000 a year. He said the interest savings on the TIF is about \$100,000 or \$20,000 per year.

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Agenda Item III – Requests for Appearance (continued)

- C. Mayor Owens recognized Mr. John Banks, Tourism Director for the West Metro Visitors Center. Mr. Banks thanked Council for designating the Visitors Center as recipient of the 30 percent funds from the accommodations taxes collected by the city. Mr. Banks gave a brief account of activity on the Visitors Center website, which received over 4,400 hits and approximately 3,000 people checking area hotel rates. Mr. Banks noted that Mike Mayo, owner of Palmetto Outdoors, booked 46 groups for tubing on the Congaree River and 29 history tours of the Riverwalk area through the website. Mr. Banks stated that a social media expert was hired to initiate an expansion of the social media program.
- D. Mayor Owens stated that Mr. Dan Creed, an engineer who represents the developer Augusta Road 344, LLC, would delay his presentation of a plan for storm drainage and sewer line easements through Fowler Park after Council reconvenes from executive session.

Agenda Item IV – Announcements by Mayor

- A. Mayor Owens and Police Chief Dennis Tyndall presented the Uniformed Police Officer of the Year Award to Sergeant Marion Boyce.
- B. Mayor Owens and Police Chief Dennis Tyndall presented the Police Administrative Officer of the Year Award to Detective II Stacy Turner.
- C. Mayor Owens and Police Chief Dennis Tyndall presented the Police Civilian Employee of the Year Award to Animal Control Officer Morgan Pileggi.
- D. Mayor Owens and Police Chief Dennis Tyndall presented the Police Rookie of the Year Award to Patrol officer First Class John King.

Mayor Owens made the following announcements: The West Columbia Beautification Foundation will meet at 8:30 a.m. on March 6, 2013. A Special Council Meeting will be held at 6 p.m. on March 18, 2013. The Planning Commission will meet on March 25, 2013 at 6 p.m. The West Columbia City Hall will be closed for the Good Friday Holiday on March 29, 2013.

Agenda Item V – Approval of Minutes

- A. Mayor Owens entertained a motion to approve the minutes for the following meetings: the Regular Council Meeting held February 5, 2013 and the Special Council Meeting held February 19, 2013. Council Member Unthank so moved and Council Member Fowler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item VI – New Business

- A. Mayor Owens stated that first reading consideration of an ordinance to approve easements for storm drainage and a sewer line through Fowler Park would be deferred until after the council returned from executive session.
- B. Mayor Owens entertained a motion for first reading consideration of the Planning Commission's recommendation to establish a zoning classification for .35 acres of recently annexed property located at 1528 Double Branch Road (Tax Map # 004644-04-004) as R2 (medium density residential). Council Member Parler so moved and Council Member Hallman seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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Agenda Item VI – New Business

- C. Mayor Owens entertained a motion for first reading consideration of the Planning Commission's recommendation to establish a zoning classification for .21 acres of recently annexed property located at 327 Derrick Street (Tax Map # 004636-04-005) as R3 (low density residential). Council Member Fowler so moved and Council Member Unthank seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- D. Mayor Owens entertained a motion for consideration of a resolution to authorize the consumption of wine at the "Wine on the River 2013" fundraiser sponsored by the West Columbia Beautification Foundation on April 27, 2013 at the Riverwalk Park. Council Member Parler so moved and Council Member Bray seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- E. Mayor Owens entertained a motion for consideration of a resolution to authorize the sale and consumption of beer and wine at the Riverwalk Park Amphitheater during the Riverwalk Music Festival April 27, 2013 and at the Rhythm on the River Concert Series beginning May 4, 2013 for eight consecutive weeks. Council Member Parler so moved and Council Member Unthank seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- F. Mayor Owens entertained a motion for consideration of a resolution to authorize the sale and consumption of beer and wine at the "Wine on the River" fundraiser at the Riverwalk Park Amphitheater on August 24, 2013, sponsored by the Lexington Medical Center Foundation's Women of Hope. Council Member Bray so moved and Council Member Fowler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- G. Mayor Owens entertained a motion for consideration of a proclamation to designate March 2013 as March for Meals Month in recognition of the Meals on Wheels programs in South Carolina. Council Member Hallman so moved and Council Member Unthank seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- H. Mayor Owens recognized Sid Varn, director of Planning and Engineering, who stated the city opened bids for the repair of the roof on the control building at the Lake Murray Water Treatment Plant. He said the lowest bid in the amount of \$15,000.00 was submitted by Specialized Roofing & Insulation, Inc. Mr. Varn said after reviewing the bids he recommended that council accept the lowest bid of \$15,000.00 submitted by Specialized Roofing & Insulation, Inc. Mayor Owens entertained a motion for consideration of bids to repair the control building roof. Council Member Parler made a motion to accept the lowest bid and Council Member Fowler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- I. Mayor Owens recognized Donna Smith, director of Economic Development, who presented Council with renderings of dedication signage at the Riverwalk Park for former mayor Wyman M. Rish. The signage highlights the life accomplishments of Mayor Rish who was elected to the West Columbia City Council in 1989 and served as mayor from 1991 until he died in office in December 2003. Ms. Smith said the estimated cost of the signage ranged from \$4,500 to \$6,000.

Mayor Owens recognized Council Member Wingard who stated the request for storm drainage and sewer line easements through Fowler Park would be discussed in Executive Session. He stated he was recusing himself from any discussion or action taken by city council because the adjacent property at 1809 Augusta Road that needed the easements for development was owned by his nephew, Greg Wingard.

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Agenda Item VII – Adjourn to Executive Session for a Contractual Matter

Mayor Owens entertained a motion to adjourn to executive session to discuss a contractual matter. Council Member Parler so moved and Council Member Unthank seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Council adjourned to Executive Session at 6:18 p.m.

Agenda Item VIII – Reconvene to Regular Session

Mayor Owens entertained a motion to adjourn executive session and reconvene to regular session. Council Member Parler so moved and Council Member Unthank seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Council reconvened to regular session at 7:15 p.m. Mayor Owens stated that council discussed matters of a contractual nature, but no action was taken in executive session.

Mayor Owens recognized Mr. Dan Creed with Heritage Engineering Inc, who stated he represents Augusta Road 344, LLC and did the engineering for the storm water drainage and sewer line proposed across Fowler Park. He stated the adjacent property at 1809 Augusta Road is being developed by Augusta Road 344, LLC for Wingard's Towing Service and the most direct way to connect the sewer line and storm drainage to the infrastructure was to install the lines through Fowler Park. Mr. Creed displayed a rendering of the proposed lines and described how the lines would connect to the sewer service and storm drainage systems.

Mayor Owens stated that any time a municipality gives up public land for a private use the council must pass an ordinance to approve the action. He said the city council would consider taking first reading on the ordinance, but council members had some concerns about the placement of the lines. Mayor Owens recognized Council Member Harley who stated he had reservations about the location of the catch basin. He felt the catch basin might be dangerous to children and animals and should be moved to another location nearer to the edge of the park. He stated he would not vote for the ordinance unless he saw modifications.

Mayor Owens recognized Council Member Unthank who said after viewing the description of the initial plan that city council needed to have a chance to study the proposal to see what is best for the city. He explained he was willing to work with the developer to come up with a viable plan. Mayor Owens recognized Council Member Fowler who said the catch basin should be moved outside the park fence even if a pine tree would need to be removed.

Mayor Owens recognized Mr. Greg Wingard, owner of the property at 1809 Augusta Road and a proprietor of Wingard's Towing Service. Mr. Wingard stated that he is a life-long resident of West Columbia and he is currently developing the property at 1809 Augusta Road. He said as part of the proposal to run the sewer and storm drainage lines through Fowler Park that any pine trees needing to be removed would be replaced. The disturbed area would be compacted and the grass would be replenished with hydro seed. He emphasized that he wanted to contribute to improving the park. Mr. Wingard also stated that if the ownership of the property at 1809 Augusta Road transfers to a new owner then the responsibility maintaining the sewer and storm drainage lines would transfer as well.

Mayor Owens recognized Council Member Unthank who made a motion to take first reading on an ordinance to approve easements for storm drainage and a sewer line through Fowler Park contingent upon modifications being made for council to review before the second reading. Council Member Parler seconded and a vote was taken. Mayor Owens, Mayor Pro-Tem Jones and Council Members Bray, Fowler, Hallman, Parler and Unthank voted in favor of the motion. Council Member Harley voted in opposition. Council Member Wingard recused himself from voting due to a conflict of interest as he previously stated. The motion passed seven votes to one vote.

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Agenda Item IX – Adjourn

Mayor Owens entertained a motion to adjourn. Council Member Unthank so moved and Council Member Parler seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Council adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marta M. Valentino, CMC
City Clerk