

Council Minutes
Work Session
October 12, 2020

Mayor Womack called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He welcomed Councilwoman Breazeale back after being out with an illness. He turned the meeting over to Mr. Steese.

The first item up for discussion was impact fees. Mr. Steese highlighted some of the program details. The Planning Commission met for more public comment on September 21st. They recommended by a vote of 4-0 to send back to city council with a request not to approve.

Mayor Womack suggested that this go to a council committee for more study. He would like for Councilwoman Webb to head this committee. The committee could answer all the questions that council and the public may have then report back within 30-60 days. Mayor Womack also suggested the committee have a fee structure.

Councilman Dykes stated that he liked that idea.

Councilwoman Webb commented that we would be the first municipality in the upstate to have this type of fee. She would like to look at all the requests that home builders and realtors have.

The second item up for discussion was the signage on 123. In 2010 Council adopted an ordinance for the height of the freestanding signs along 123. The majority of the signs have come down and are in compliance but there are several that remain. Staff and some council members have discussed providing a short-term extension based on the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic. The suggestion is to extend until June 20, 2021.

Mr. Holcombe commented that most of the businesses have worked with us to get this taken care of. They have had 10 years to comply.

Councilman Garrison stated that in these times we need to show some compassion and he would be ok with the six-month extension.

Mr. Holcombe also commented that the ones that have not complied are the bigger corporations like Lowes, Burger King, etc.

Councilwoman Webb stated that some sign companies were closed due to COVID.

Mr. Holcombe stated that staff felt like the companies have had ample time to comply.

Councilman Moore asked if the majority of the smaller companies had complied. Mr. Holcombe said they had.

Councilman Dykes asked if there is a penalty for not complying.

Mr. Holcombe commented that the businesses will get a verbal warning, then a written warning, then their business license could be revoked.

Mr. Steese stated that he can have something drawn up for the November meeting.

Wayfinding Signs.

The company doing the signs has lost a lot of their production employees due to COVID and their shut down. They are about 4-6 weeks behind getting the signs finished.

Mayor Womack asked for an update on the Welcome sign at 153.

Mr. Steese stated that the DOT ripped out our power and sprinkler system. They are doing the repairs and it should be working again. New plants can not go in until they have finished that intersection and the sprinkler is repaired.

The third item for discussion was Accommodations Tax update.

The state accommodations is \$13,851.65 in the red from where we were last year. The local accommodations tax is down \$13,950 from last year. The only business that has started back up is Foothills Playhouse. Mr. Steese requested that we delay the applications for next year until the first of the year until we see if any of the events are coming back. We also need to see how much money we are going to have.

Agenda items to discuss.

Refunding of the 2009 GO Bond

This is a refinancing of the GO Bond to lower the interest rate. The new rate will be 1.24% with South State Bank. If it is approved tonight the closing will be at 11:30 in the morning. We are also going to get them to look at our hospitality bond and see if it is worth refinancing.

Gym floor repair.

It is time to refinish the gym floors at the Bagwell gym. There are a couple of places where the floor has been damaged that needs to be repaired. The bid went out and two were received. The low bid was from Floor Masters out of Powdersville at \$29,511.50. The work will start after the election on November 3rd so it will not impact volleyball and basketball seasons.

Project Updates:

Operations/Maintenance-Fire Station: There will be a walk through at 8:15 a.m. on Thursday with JDavis and DP3. There will be a place for council and department heads to sign a wall. Everyone needs to park across the road due to the construction. They hope to occupy the buildings within 90-120 days.

Stormwater updates:

The area between Carson Place and Huntington North is now flowing rainwater properly. There is a little bit of clean up that still needs to be done. They have worked on Mountainview and Page Drive putting in some drains. A drain needs to be put in on Garrison Street but there is no easement between the properties so we are having to obtain permission to do the work. Rock Springs Road is done and ready for sod. This was the first time the street crew did this type of work; they got a lot of on the job training and learned many new skills. This boosted the confidence of our guys and they will be doing more projects like this. Work on Wellington will start on Thursday. We are still waiting to hear on the grant for South 2nd and Dogwood Lane. Phase Two at Carson Place will begin in a few weeks.

Councilwoman Webb commented that the Public Works guys need a pat on the back for a job well done. It was not an easy job on Rock Springs Road.

Mayor Womack stated that it had built up their morale.

Mr. Fortner commented that they had had more training in the last three months than they have had in years. A lot of that Rock Springs Road project had to be dug out by hand due to all of the utilities.

Councilman Dykes asked about the time frame on Wellington. Mr. Fortner said approximately three to four weeks. The road will be closed.

Budget Updates:

Hospitality funds are \$91,164.16 under where we were last year. Business license are up \$188,266.40 from last year. LOST is \$157,663 with April being the lowest month. Accommodations has taken the biggest hit. The yearly audit is complete and they will present at the November meeting.

Mayor Womack asked for an update on the Silos.

Mr. Steese stated that HVAC, electrical and plumbing had been done. The brewery is moving forward. They were sent info reminding them of the milestones they need to meet per our agreement.

Councilman Robinson asked for an update on Woodside Mill.

Mr. Steese said that the mill is moving along really well. They are looking to start renting around the first of the year.

Mr. Steese commented on the SC Housing passing the standardize business license bill. By the end of 2021 all cities will have to adopt the model business license. This will make everything

across the state uniform for class codes, etc. We are waiting on guidance from the MASC about payment options. They are working on a portal so people can pay in one place and they would distribute the money back to the municipalities. It will not be a big change for us because we already use the model ordinance.

Councilman Robinson asked if they will dictate rates.

Mr. Steese stated that would be up to the municipalities.

Chase Campbell, Marketing and Events coordinator, gave an update on events. There will be no city sponsored Halloween event. After the CDC sent out their recommendations, we didn't feel comfortable putting on this event.

Mayor Womack stated that we have made recommendations to subdivisions and churches that want to have trick or treating to do drive by and used gloves and masks.

This year the Hospitals Festival of Trees will be with the downtown merchants. We are sponsoring two nights of carriage rides on November 27th and 28th. Prisma is providing new banner for the downtown light poles. The tree lighting is scheduled for the 28th at City Hall. We still do not know about the parade. The Chamber is still undecided.

Councilman Dykes asked about golf carts on the Doodle Trail.

Mr. Steese said that the City of Pickens supported the idea. Chase is working on decals. It will be the first and third Wednesdays. If groups, like from nursing homes, want to go we can take them.

There was no further discussion and the meeting adjourned.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk