

City Council Work Session Minutes

September 9, 2019

Mayor Bagwell called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. and turned the meeting over to City Planner, Blake Sanders to give an update on the Operations and Maintenance Facility and the remodel of Fire Station 1.

There is about \$150,000 that continues to be moving parts and pieces. At the May meeting we reduced our contingency to 2 1/2 percent as part of cost savings. We need to decide if we want to go back to the architects and engineers and see if we can cut cost or raise the contingency back up to 5% as it was previously. The cost is going to continue to go up if we have to rebid. We have moved some items from the contractor's responsibility to our responsibility.

Mr. Steese stated they wanted us to take care of some items that were moved from our side to their side. They wanted us to buy the lifts, lubrication equipment for the garage. We wanted them to take of that since they will be installing. Some of the funds have exchanged sides. Whether it is our cost or their cost it is the same on the bottom line. We are already a month behind on getting the construction started.

Mayor Bagwell asked what was the advantage of having an elevator in the fire department.

Mr. Steese stated that it was ADA accessibility requirements.

Rezoning of 20.2 Acres at 1208 S. 5th Street from R-10 to FRD Mr. Steese turned over to Mr. Holcombe, Building Official.

This is not on the agenda for 2nd reading. The owners have asked to postpone for approximately 30 days. The owners don't want it rezoned until the deal is complete.

Councilman Dykes would like to see something from the DOT to address the proposed total traffic on S. 5th Street. Can this road handle the traffic from all of the new developments? We handle these one at time, but are we looking at the big picture.

Councilman Moore stated that traffic at the bridge over 123 and the red light on Pendleton, West End traffic, the new subdivisions coming were going to create a traffic mess. It appears that there needs to be an exit off Adger Road onto 123. We need to start something now to prevent future problems.

Mr. Steese stated that next month there will be a development impact fee RFP going out for a consultant to walk us through the process and State requirements. There will also be a capital improvement plan. Part of that will handle transportation problems but not on State roads, or they turn it over to us to handle. This will be a six to eight-month process. There will be some discussion about what those plans need to be. There are funds through GPATS to do mediation plans. We are also applying for a grant from Alta Planning for them to come in and do a work study for us for traffic mediation. We need a presence at GPATS to help us get funds for these projects. The mediation study will help us determine what we need to be asking for.

There needs to be conversations with the State, and with the Pickens County School District. We are meeting with the school district tomorrow. It is a planning process that needs to begin.

Councilman Robinson stated that everyone is excited about all of the new developments coming to Easley but is concerned about the traffic situation.

Mr. Steese stated that right now all the money we have for road maintenance is from the County. If we want to have conversations about roads and how to maintain them it comes down to priority and money. Funds needs to be obligated for that.

Councilman Robinson asked if a developer was required to make offsite improvements.

Mr. Holcombe stated that we can't make improvements to State roads.

Annexation of two properties on Pearson Road. Mr. Holcombe gave an explanation. There is a 10 acre tract that will have townhomes and the larger tract will have single family homes. They are ready to go on this. There will be approximately over 100 units on the 58 acres.

Mr. Steese stated that we have a right of way at Walnut Hill and they have asked for access to that. We will try to partner with them to develop the Brushy Creek Greenway through their property.

Mr. Holcombe stated the developer is willing to work with us on the Greenway. There was only two residents that showed up at the Planning Commission meeting and they were not for or against the project. They just wanted to know what the plans were for the properties. The Planning Commission approved the annexation.

Councilman Robinson asked about more traffic on Pearson Road and Pope Field Road.

Councilman Mann stated that Pearson is a nightmare especially at school time.

Mr. Steese stated it could be a three way stop.

Councilman Robinson stated that he didn't want to say no to this annexation but are we going to require some kind of traffic solution.

Mr. Steese stated that if council says no they can still get utilities and we have no say over the development.

Leasing of a portion of Tax Map #5019-10-46-5081 for Public Parking. Mr. Steese stated there has been no changes since first reading. There was no further discussion

Quit Claim of Property bordering Town and Country. Mr. Steese stated this is second reading and there have not been any changes since first reading. There was no further discussion.

Awarding of Professional Services for Brownfields Assessment Grant. Mr. Steese gave a brief explanation. We received a grant from the EPA of \$300,000. We put out an RFP for a consultant that will do the assessment and testing for us because we don't have the ability to do that in house. We received twelve submittals and the recommendation is to award Terracon from Greenville. There is no dollar value associated with this. When they do work, they will pull money from grant. The grant is not to exceed three years.

Councilman Robinson asked if this was only for City owned property.

Mr. Steese stated that it can be on private property also. The assessment can be done in phases.

Mr. Sanders stated that the EPA requires a public hearing to let the public know what a brownfield is.

Councilman Robinson asked if Terracon was working on Southern Weaving.

Mr. Steese stated they are. The company is working with several neighboring cities on the same type project.

Awarding 2019/20 Road Maintenance. Mr. Steese gave an explanation. With the money coming in from the County we anticipate having about \$800,000 to do road maintenance. We put this out to bid and based on the County's assessment of the road condition the first roads were rated 40 or below out of a 100. In June we will reevaluate the priority list.

Mayor Bagwell asked about the cost difference.

Mr. Steese stated it was based on the amount of work that would have to be done to the road.

Councilman Mann asked if some of the roads are county roads?

Mr. Steese stated when they decided to turn the funds back over to us they gave about 3 miles of roads back over to us.

Mayor Bagwell asked if the amount of traffic considered on these roads.

Mr. Steese stated that just the condition of the road.

Councilman Dykes asked if Venesky was given the award.

Mr. Steese stated they were the best price.

Councilman Moore asked if the quality of work was about the same.

Mr. Steese stated that he didn't know if Venesky had done in City roads in a while. They will have to follow DOT regulations. If their work is not up to standards, we can cash in their performance bond. They have a benefit to do quality work. Most of it is overlay of asphalt.

Councilman Moore asked how long will that resurfacing last.

Mr. Steese stated 20-40 years based on the traffic. Roads that are in subdivisions would last 30-40 years if maintained properly.

Awarding of Doodle Park Railcar Business Incubator. Mr. Sanders gave an explanation. An RFP was put out about a year ago for the green train car. We had one response from a restaurant style vendor. We decided not to go that route. We had an individual that owns Sweet Tea Cycles that approach the City about doing a bike rental retail shop there. The RFP was sent back out and they were the only one that applied. He would take full upfit of car. They will have a seasonal business.

Sweet Tea Cycles is a fully stocked mobile bicycle repair van that will fix your bikes at home or at work in Upstate South Carolina. Sweet Tea Cycles makes it as easy as possible for anyone to have a functional, reliable and safe bicycle to ride, without the hassle. The business incubator will allow Sweet Tea Cycles to implement a retail storefront that will repair bicycles on-site and offer bicycle rentals.

Councilman Dykes stated that that was good use for that car.

Approval of Lease with VGM for Parks and Recreation. Mr. Steese gave an explanation. City currently leases these pieces of equipment. The current lease is expiring and we wish to renew the lease and replace the old equipment with new maintenance equipment.

These items are used for general maintenance around all parks and to maintain quality field surfaces. By leasing the equipment, it allows us to keep newer equipment that is under warranty for the life of our usage. The leasing company requires Council approval since it is a multiyear lease.

Project Updates: Mr. Sanders gave brief updates.

General Obligation Bond Issuance

We are about 90 days behind schedule. If Council approves the GMP we can move forward. All permits are in hand. but they have not had a plan review.

TIF and Hospitality Bond

The railroad project and wayfinding signs have been discussed with the TIF committee. We are meeting with the contractor tomorrow and hope to bring to Council next month for approval. The wall should be completed by the end of the month. All the material is on-site to complete the fence. The Nalley Brown Nature Park will have a ribbon cutting on September 28th at 10:00 a.m.

We are currently working on some ADA planning for Kings Park and Woodside Park. This is for repaving of the parking lots. There has to be ADA accessible routes to the shelters, restrooms, etc.

The fencing is complete at tennis courts. Lesley has been notified to take it to completion.

After this project and several others, the City needs to have a procurement policy for damages or delays. We should write more details into the contracts, especially the smaller projects.

There is approximately \$317,000 in the TIF fund that left after projects are complete.

Councilman Dykes asked about parking spaces blocked off in front of Joe's.

Mr. Sanders stated that the construction company blocks off the area they are working in.

Councilman Robinson asked if there will be any wheel stops.

Mr. Steese stated there would be on the angled parking.

Discussion of Proposed Public Art Policy. Mr. Steese gave an explanation and showed examples from different cities. The goal is to create interactive experiences for people downtown. It gives them reasons to get out and explore the City. It works to create an experience and makes walking through town seem less of a burden. It would allow the community to publicly show their personality through art.

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It can allow the City to share their history or pride. The things Council needs to consider is the funding source, where would the locations be, a policy for approval, and guidelines.

There needs to be a Public Art Committee that consist of artist that can help guide Council on the decisions. Funds can come from the Accommodation tax, Hospitality tax, the General Fund, or obtain private donations. Staff and the Public Art Committee will work together and feel comfortable with the submissions that are presented to Council for approval.

The artists would be responsible for installing the art and then it becomes part of the City's inventory.

Councilman Garrison asked how this coincides with the architectural review committee and the TIF district?

Mr. Holcombe stated we didn't have that committee anymore.

Councilman Garrison asked if it was just for the downtown?

Mr. Steese stated it did not have to be downtown. It could be at a park, or an intersection, etc. He will email the Council all of the details.

Councilman Dykes stated he liked the idea and looking forward to this.

Additional Discussion:

Councilman Robinson asked Joni Smith, Finance Director about the financial statements.

Ms. Smith stated that the audit started today. According to the auditor we have had a good year. Any department heads that would like to see the financial she can send to them.

The General Fund has operating funds over expenses of approximately \$1,068,000.00

The Hospitality Tax Fund has about \$208,000.00. The fund was higher than budgeted.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:25.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk