

Walterboro City Council  
Public Hearing and Regular Meeting  
February 11, 2014

**MINUTES**

A Public Hearing and Regular Meeting of Walterboro City Council was held at City Hall on Tuesday, February 11, 2014 at 6:15 P.M., with Mayor Bill Young presiding.

**PRESENT WERE:** Mayor Bill Young, Council Members: Jimmy Syfrett, Paul Siegel, Tom Lohr, Bobby Bonds, James Broderick and Judy Bridge. City Manager Jeff Molinari, (sitting in for Mr. Jim Duckett, Interim City Manager); City Clerk Betty Hudson, City Attorney George Cone and Attorney Clenton Campbell were also present. There were approximately 14 persons present in the audience. Interim City Manager Jim Duckett was absent.

There being a quorum present, Mayor Young called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He then said, it looks like we will be having another blizzard. I hope everybody will survive this and that we do not have any power outages. Mr. Mayor also announced that we are delighted to have Mr. Molinari sitting in on the meeting tonight. Mr. Jim Duckett is not present tonight due to a previous business engagement. Mr. Jeff Molinari will start officially on February 17, 2014.

Council Member Syfrett gave the invocation, and Council Member Siegel led the pledge of allegiance to our flag.

**PUBLIC INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS:**

No public comments or questions were received on agenda items.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

Mayor Young then opened a public hearing, duly advertised to received public comments/questions on the City's CDBG Needs Assessment. He then introduced Ms. Michelle Knight of Lowcountry Council of Governments, who was present to conduct the hearing.

Ms. Knight stated that tonight we are holding the City's annual needs assessment public hearing. It is being done in accordance with the Citizens Participation Plan, which has been advertised with at least 7 days' notice in the local newspaper. She said, and we basically hold public hearings for the CDBG Program at three points during the program year. The first hearing is held at the beginning of the year, like this one, where we talk about what you can and cannot do with CDBG funds, and then when we submit applications for projects, we will hold a public hearing on those particular projects. Then when we have projects and we finish with the work, we hold public hearings to allow people to comment on the project whether or not they think it was successful. Tonight's purpose is just for me to give you some information about this year's program, what the state is looking at in terms of what you can and can't do with the program, and then for Council to open the floor to get public comments on things citizens might think are needs for the coming year. Basically, this will be the basis for submitting projects for the next 12 months.

Ms. Knight then gave the following highlights of the CDBG program.

1. The CDBG program was established in South Carolina in 1982. Basically, it was designed to provide assistance to units of local governments to be able to improve economic opportunities and meeting community revitalization needs, particularly for the low-to-moderate income people.

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2. For the 2014 program, the State has been allotted approximately \$19,333,299. This program has been divided among two set asides:

Community Development has \$16,153,302 set aside

Business Development has \$2,000,000 set aside.

The balance of that money is used for regional planning grants to allow Lowcountry Council of Governments and the other 9 counterparts across the state to be able to hold public hearings like this and to assist the community when they think they have developed projects, etc., and also for the State to administer and run the program.

- A. **Community Development** - \$16,153,302 set aside

The four subsets for this program are:

1. **Community Infrastructure** \$7,753,302 set aside

Under this program there are three main priorities. Those priorities are:

- a. Improving existing infrastructures to address health concerns and quality standards and insure sustainability of that infrastructure in communities.
- b. To do projects that will result in viable regional solutions or provide new access to infrastructure in areas that are near business centers where it is cost effective to extend those infrastructure projects.
- c. Consider doing upgrades where you have things you need that aren't necessarily health threats, but are things that need to be done in order to continue and maintain your systems.

As far as funding that is allowed for the program this year, you can apply for up to \$750,000 for a project in this set aside. This is a little different from previous years' where the maximum was \$500,000.

2. **Community Enrichment** \$1,800,000 set aside

This program is designed to fund facilities, services and other activities that strengthen existing communities and support a high quality of life within the following state priority areas: 1)increasing economic competitiveness, 2)education and workforce development, and 3)safe and healthy communities.

*Economic Competitiveness examples:* Developing energy efficiencies for CDBG Public facilities, Brownfield projects, downtown streetscape, planning for regional infrastructures.

*Education and Workforce Development examples:* Libraries; publicly owned (non school) facilities that mentor or offer extended education programs to at risk youth; and transportation oriented public facilities or services that serve LMI workforce populations.

*Safe and Healthy Communities examples:* Public safety facilities in LMI neighborhoods; demolition or clearance; health clinics or equipment; firefighting facilities or equipment serving LMI neighborhoods near business centers.

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3. **Neighborhood Revitalization** \$6,000,000 set aside  
Under this program, for example like you are doing N. Lemacks Street, you take a neighborhood, you develop a plan and you come back with recommendations to do comprehensive improvements in that neighborhood. It could be water works, road improvements, sidewalk improvements, lighting. Any number of things, some exterior rehab work. All of those things, but you do it under one project. The idea is you basically bring a whole neighborhood up to a certain standard. Typically, these neighborhoods are close enough to your business center and are in walking distance from a grocery store, a drug store, etc.

4. **"Ready to Go" Public Facilities** \$600,000  
This is a noncompetitive program where you can take a project that is useable in community infrastructure or Community Enrichment and but for having the money, you could actually start doing the work. So, you have done all your up-front things like it environmentally cleared, acquired all the property you need to acquire, you have had an engineer to design the work, but for having a check in hand, you can do the project.

- B. **Business Development - 2<sup>nd</sup> Major Program** - \$ 2,000,000  
-Regional Planning Program \$500,000  
-State Technical Assistance (1%) \$193,332  
-State Administration (2% of Allocations + \$100,000) \$486,665

Ms. Knight stated that this program is basically the old Economic Development Program where we provide infrastructure with grant funds to businesses that are expanding or locating in the area and promising investments and jobs creation. The other outcomes that are allowed in this program are some area economic development. There are also opportunities in the program to provide the infrastructure to new or standing businesses that are providing essential goods and services in the community.

3. All projects have to meet a national objective meaning:
- Benefit low-to-moderate income (LMI) persons.
  - Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight.
  - Meet other urgent community needs posing a serious threat to the health or welfare of the community, where other financial resources are not available to meet such needs.

As far as what low-to-moderate income means - in Colleton County if you have a family of four and you make less than \$38,150, then you are income qualified as low-to-moderate income. That number goes up or down based on the number of people living in your house.

4. Ms. Knight also pointed out that as part of the requirement for the City to participate in this program, is that the City must state that it does not discriminate in fair housing practices in either the sale or rental or housing, in residential real estate transactions or in the provision of brokerage services. If someone comes to you saying they have been discriminated against, they can contact the Lowcountry Council of Governments (843-726-5536) and we can discuss that with them and hopefully put them in the right direction if something needs to be investigated.

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5. Application Request Deadlines:

Under the "Ready to Go" and Business Development Program, there is not really an application deadline. You apply whenever you have something. Then in 30 days after you make that request, you put in your application.

For Community Infrastructure, the application request deadline is March 14, 2014, and on April 14, 2014 the applications are due for submission.

Under the Community Enrichment Program and the Neighborhood Revitalization, the application request deadline is: August 15, 2014 by 5:00 P.M., and the applications are due in by September 15, 2014 at 5:00 P.M.

6. Funding amounts that can be applied for:

	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
Community Infrastructure	\$50,000	\$750,000
Community Enrichment	\$50,000	\$500,000
Facilities	\$50,000	\$500,000
Other Activities	\$50,000	\$500,000
Neighborhood Revitalization	\$50,000	\$500,000
"Ready to Go"	\$50,000	\$500,000
Business Development	\$50,000	\$500,000
Job Creation/Retention	\$50,000	\$10,000 per job

7. Match Requirements:

Matching fund requirements for all projects are now 10% of the grant requests. However, the more you match the more competitive your application is.

Concluding her presentation, Ms. Knight told Council that at the last public hearing for needs assessment, the City ranked its priorities as follows:

1. Infrastructure.
2. Housing and Village Renaissance.
3. Downtown Revitalization.
4. Public Safety.
5. Public Facilities.

Mayor Young then opened the floor to receive comments/questions from the public. The Mayor then asked what kind of facilities would be included in public facilities. Would government facilities be included? Ms. Knight responded that this would have to be a government facility that would benefit mainly a low-to-moderate income clientele. So, it could not be an improvement to your City Hall. Having said that, there are some allowances for police substations and fire substations if they are near expanding areas in your community that are predominantly low-to-moderate income. So, you could not use it to build a fire station that is going to benefit the City as a whole.

The Mayor then asked Ms. Knight if Council would need to do the priority ranking at this time. Ms. Knight responded that the ranking does not necessarily have to be done tonight. She suggested that Council discuss this matter and maybe complete the ranking of CDBG needs at its next meeting. She suggested that the ranking be done prior to the March request deadline.

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Councilman Syfrett suggested that Council wait until Mr. Molinari comes on board to assist with the ranking of the CDBG priority needs. Council agreed by consensus. Mayor Young reminded everyone that the March 11 meeting maybe cancelled and that the ranking of the CDBG needs would need to happen at the next Council Meeting.

No further comments or questions were received. The public hearing was closed and the regular meeting began.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The Minutes of the January 14, 2014 Regular Meeting, the Minutes of the January 28, 2014 Work Session and the Minutes of the January 28, 2014 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting were approved as submitted on the motion of Council Member Siegel, seconded by Council Member Lohr and passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

There was no Old Business before Council.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Request to Close Streets for 5K Run/Walk and 1 Mile Fun Run, March 15, 2014 from 8:00 A.M. to 9:30 A.M. by Walterboro-Colleton Chamber of Commerce

A motion granting this request as submitted was made by Council Member Bonds, seconded by Council Member Broderick and passed unanimously.

2. Request for Street Closings and Use of Parking Lot on April 30, 2014 for Annual Downtown Walterboro Criterium Pro Cycling Classic

A motion was made by Council Member Bonds, seconded by Council Member Lohr, to approve the street closing request and use of the City parking lot as submitted by the Criterium Committee. The motion passed with a vote of 6/0 with Mayor Young, Council Members Syfrett, Siegel, Lohr, Bonds and Bridge voting in favor, and zero (0) votes against. Council Member Broderick recused himself from voting on this agenda item since he is a member of the requesting Committee.

3. Consideration of Requests for Annual Antiques, History and Arts Festival, May 16 & 17, 2014, by Becky Broderick

A motion was made by Council Member Siegel, seconded by Council Member Syfrett, to approve the requests as submitted for the Annual Antiques, History and Arts Festival on May 16 & 17, 2014. The motion passed with a vote of 6/0 with Mayor Young, Council Members Syfrett, Siegel, Lohr, Bonds and Bridge voting in favor, and zero (0) votes against. Council Member Broderick recused himself from voting on this agenda since his wife submitted the letter of request.

4. Acceptance of Resignations on the City's Boards and Commissions: James T. Rabb from the Election Commission, Jackson Hughes from the Accommodations Tax Advisory Board and Carroll Brown, III from the Tree Protection Committee

A motion to accept the above resignations as submitted was made by Council Member Bridge, seconded by Council Member Broderick and passed unanimously.

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5. Next the Mayor announced that on the date for the March 11, 2014 City Council Meeting, he and Council Member Broderick will be out of town in Washington, D.C. to meet with our senators and congressmen. He suggested that Council might wish to cancel the March 11 meeting and if there is a pressing matter, then another meeting can be scheduled.

Council Member Siegel moved to cancel the March 11, 2014 regular meeting and if a need arises, another meeting will be scheduled. Council Member Lohr seconded the motion that passed with all members voting in favor.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

There were no Committee Reports given.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion to enter an Executive Session was then made by Council Member Bonds, seconded by Council Member Siegel and passed unanimously. The Mayor announced that the meeting will convene into an Executive Session for a personnel matter on Boards and Commissions Appointments.

The meeting then entered into an Executive Session.

The meeting returned to Open Session, and a motion was made by Council Member Lohr to newly appoint Mr. Dana Chaney to the City Appearance Board and Mr. Charlie Sweat to the Tree Protection Committee. Council Member Broderick seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

There being no further business to consider, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Council Member Bridge, seconded by Council Member Lohr and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M. Notice of this meeting was distributed to all local media and posted on the City Hall bulletin board at least twenty-four hours prior to meeting time.

Respectfully,

Betty J. Hudson  
City Clerk

**APPROVED: February 25, 2014**