

Walterboro City Council

City Hall

June 4, 2024

Minutes

A Regular Meeting of Walterboro City Council was held at City Hall on Tuesday, June 4, 2024, at 6:15 P.M., with Mayor Bill Young presiding.

Present: Joined in the meeting were: Mayor Bill Young. Councilmembers: Carl Brown, Judy Bridge, Paul Siegel, James Broderick, Greg Pryor, and Ladson Fishburne. City Manager Jeff Molinari, Assistant City Manager Ryan McLeod, City Clerk Adrienne Nettles, Finance Director Amy Risher, Public Works Director Michael Crosby, and Kimberly Mullinax with LCOG.

Call to Order:

With the above-mentioned Councilmembers present, Mayor Young called the meeting to order, and invited everyone to join in as he gave the invocation. Councilmember Broderick led the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag.

Public Input on Agenda Items:

There was no public input on agenda items.

Public Hearings:

1. Gadsden Loop Water Upgrade and Sub-System 1-East & 3 Sewer I&I CDBG projects closeout hearing-Kimberly Mullinax, Lowcountry Council of Governments.

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor we have two (2) CDBG projects that we will be closing out. Kimberly Mullinax with LCOG is going to conduct the close out public hearing.

Kimberly Mullinax stated I am here for the closeout public hearing for these two grant projects. The first project is Sub-System 1-East & 3. This is a sewer I&I project, which is inflow and infiltration. That means that water is getting into the sewer, and it should not. This project was done to correct that. We applied for this grant back in 2021 and we received \$2,321,831 to upgrade the lines. There was excessive rain flow coming in and ground water infiltration which is a threat to public health and safety. The city did add \$369,821 in match which was for engineering. In the area that was being worked on there were around 741 residents. Fifty-one percent have low to moderate income families. This project has been underway for quite some time. It had two contracts associated with it. One contract was for digging and replacement work and the other contract was for installing a liner in the pipe. As construction comes to an end there may be some money that will go back to the state, unless we can find another eligible project. This project should be done by July or August. This project has made many improvements in the area.

Kimberly Mullinax stated the Gadsden Loop Water Upgrade is in the same area as the other project. This is a smaller project; it had a total of 334 people with a fifty-one percent low to moderate income. We had grant funds in the amount of \$783,068. We also did a local match of \$119,634.00, that is to do the sewer connections and engineering. This project is set to be monitored in July and will be closing out soon after.

Councilmember Fishburne asked, "Do you know the amount of money that could go back to the state?"

Kimberly Mullinax answered for the Gadsden Loop project it is roughly \$82,000.00 and for the Sub System 1-East & 3 it is around \$108,000.00.

Councilmember Broderick asked is this money going back because the projects came in under cost?

Kimberly Mullinax answered yes, they did.

Councilmember Brown asked does that extra money have to be used in the same area, or can we use it for upgrades in other areas?

Kimberly Mullinax stated yes, the money must be used in the same area.

2. **Ordinance # 2024-01**, AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF WALTERBORO TO JOIN WITH THE WALTERBORO-COLLETON COUNTY AIRPORT COMMISSION AND COLLETON COUNTY IN CONVEYING 8.863 ACRES OF A PORTION OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT THE COLLETON COUNTY RECREATION CENTER (Second and Final Reading).

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated the County has secured \$200,000.00 in grant money from the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. On one of the four fields they are going to build what they refer to as a miracle field. They will turn one field into a hard surface that will be handicap accessible.

3. **Ordinance #2024-02**, AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 AND MATTERS RELATING THERETO (Second and Final Reading).

Councilmember Bridge stated I want to first thank our City Manager Jeff Molinari, and Finance Director Amy Risher assisted by all the department heads for all the time and energy they put into developing the budget. I know it is very labor intensive and when you find out you have a budget that does not match your revenues you have to go back and work a lot harder. The FY 2024-2025 budget presented many new challenges. In August 2019, Wildan Financial Services presented their findings from an analysis that they conducted of the city's water and wastewater operations. Staff took those recommendations and adjusted them to meet the financial needs of the Enterprise Fund. In December 2023, Council implemented an 11% increase in water and sewer rates. Adjusting the rate structure in the Enterprise Fund will accomplish the following: Full cost recovery of utility expenditures, generate enough revenue in each system and to make operational needs of each system which is cost based. The total budget is \$14,854,656.00. That is broken down in the General Fund budget of \$8,915,536.00, and in the Enterprise Fund of \$5,939,120.00. The property tax increase will be 13.46 mils. There is no business license rate increase in this budget. There is a proposed 10% increase in water and wastewater rates. A proposed \$3.00 bi-monthly increase in commercial sanitation charges. The current charge is \$40.00. Residential charges will remain the same. The 1% credit for employee's retirement contributions is no longer funded by the General Assembly. We will have to absorb that and the increased cost to the city is \$54,826.00. Property and casualty insurance, which is provided by SCMIRF, is done through the Municipal Association and that rate has increased by 14.02%. PEBA Health Insurance rates, which is the employer portion increased by 23%. PEBA Health Insurance rates for the employees increased by 11.2%. There is also a 2% cost of living adjustment for the city employees.

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of Council I am going to run through each department and if it is okay, Mr. Mayor, I am going to go through the Enterprise Fund as well.

Mayor/City Council

- Status Quo

City Manager

- Status Quo

Finance

- Status Quo

Public Works

- Purchase of Air Compressor
- Trash/Debris Truck (Awaiting approval of USDA grant application)
- Workers Compensation premiums increased by \$9,475

Planning and Development

- Allocated \$25,000 for demolition for various substandard properties.

Police

- 10% salary increase
- Purchase of 2 new police vehicles (awaiting approval of a USDA Grant)
- Workers Compensation premiums increased by \$16,817.00

Judicial

- Status Quo

Fire

- Replace two roll up doors at Station 1

Parks

- Purchase one (1) traffic message board
- Purchase of a Ventrac power bucket
- Purchase of an ATV trailer

Tourism

- Main Street SC expenses

Walterboro Wildlife Center

- Status Quo

Water

- Purchase of one (1) pickup truck
- Purchase of one (1) F-450 Service Truck
- Workers Compensation premiums increased by \$117,905

Utility Support

- Included the interest payments for the line of credit for the Wastewater Treatment Plant

Sanitation

- Workers Compensation premiums increased by \$13,153

Sewer

- Sludge and disposal rates increased
- Lift station demolition
- Relocation of sewer force main on Wellstone Lane
- Workers Compensation premiums increased by \$3,684

Sewer Support

- Workers Compensation Premiums increased by \$26,932

4. **Ordinance # 2024-03**, AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY ENTERPRISE FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 AND MATTERS RELATING THERETO (Second and Final Reading).

5. **Ordinance # 2024-04**, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, SOUTH CAROLINA, AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE FEE SCHEDULE FOR THE UTILITY SUPPORT DEPARTMENT (Second and Final Reading).

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of City Council, this ordinance will codify the proposed increases that we have in water, wastewater and commercial sanitation. This is a stand-alone ordinance. When we update and recodify our ordinance, the Comprehensive Fee Schedule will be updated to reflect the recommended changes in the 2024-2025 budget.

6. **Ordinance # 2024-05**, AN ORDINANCE PURSUANT TO TITLE 5, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 5-3-150, SUBSECTION 3, OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED. TO ANNEX AN AREA KNOWN AS TMS # 147-09-00-080 INTO THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, A SOUTH CAROLINA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (Second and Final Reading).

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of Council, this is a piece of property right off Bells Highway. This parcel is going to be consolidated with another parcel that fronts Bells Highway for future development. They have requested to be annexed into the city.

7. **Ordinance # 2024-06**, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, SOUTH CAROLINA AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF CORONAVIRUS STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS (Second and Final Reading).

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of Council, we received \$2,701,301.32 through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. We are required by ordinance to identify and approve all our expenditures from that fund. The following are the different projects and the amounts that will be expended:

- In 2023 we had revenue loss of \$40,763.00
- Resurfacing of the Forest Hills Tennis Courts - \$82,720.00
- Design and Engineering for the Water Tower Park - \$21,050.00
- Demolition of Old Rizer/Ford Building and Pickney Park Storage Building - \$173,000.00
- Air monitoring for demolition project - \$9,553.74

With these expenditures and accrued interest, there will be a remaining balance of \$1,597,162.26 for future expenditures. The entire \$2.7 million must be obligated by December 31, 2024, and the entire \$2.7 million must be expended by December 31, 2026.

Old Business:

1. **Ordinance # 2024-01**, AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF WALTERBORO TO JOIN WITH THE WALTERBORO-COLLETON COUNTY AIRPORT COMMISSION AND COLLETON COUNTY IN CONVEYING 8.863 ACRES OF A PORTION OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT THE COLLETON COUNTY RECREATION CENTER, IDENTIFIED BY TMS NUMBER 132-00-00-028 TO COLLETON COUNTY (Second and Final Reading).

Motion: Councilmember Brodrick; Seconded by Councilmember Pryor

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

2. **Ordinance # 2024-02**, AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 AND MATTERS RELATING THERETO (Second and Final Reading).

Motion: Councilmember Brown, Seconded by Councilmember Bridge

Discussion: None

Carried: Mayor Young, Mayor Pro Tem Siegel, Councilmembers Bridge, Brown and Pryor voted aye, Councilmembers Broderick and Fishburne voted nay. Motion carried, 5-2.

3. **Ordinance # 2024-03**, AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY ENTERPRISE FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 AND MATTERS RELATING THERETO (Second and Final Reading).

Motion: Councilmember Pryor; Seconded by Councilmember Broderick

Discussion: None

Carries: All ayes

4. **Ordinance # 2024-04**, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, SOUTH CAROLINA, AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE FEE SCHEDULE FOR THE UTILITY SUPPORT DEPARTMENT (Second and Final Reading).

Motion: Councilmember Siegel; Seconded by Councilmember Bridge

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

5. **Ordinance # 2025-05**, AN ORDINANCE PURSUANT TO TITLE 5, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 5-3-150, SUBSECTION 3, OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED, TO ANNEX AN AREA KNOWN AS TMS # 147-09-00-080 INTO THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, A SOUTH CAROLINA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (Second and Final Reading).

Motion: Councilmember Broderick; Seconded by Councilmember Pryor

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

6. **Ordinance # 2024-06**, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, SOUTH CAROLINA AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF CORONAVIRUS STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS (Second and Final Reading).

Motion: Councilmember Bridge; Seconded by Councilmember Brown

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

New Business:

1. **Ordinance # 2024-07**, AN ORDINANCE PURSUANT TO TITLE 5-3-150, SUBSECTION 3, OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED, TO ANNEX AN AREA KNOWN AS TMS # 147-15-00-076 INTO THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, A SOUTH CAROLINA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (Introduction and First Reading).

Councilmember Brown asked where this property is located.

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated it is the old Asten Johnson.

Motion: Councilmember Siegel; Seconded by Councilmember Bridge

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

2. **Resolution # 2024-R-04**, ADDENDUM TO EMPLOYER RESOLUTION PARTICIPATION IN THE STATE INSURANCE BENEFITS PROGRAM REGARDING CITY OF WALTERBORO COUNCILMEMBER COVERAGE.

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of Council, the PEBA Board of Directors met back in March and looked at the definition of an employee for health insurance purposes. Per PEBA, you all are considered employees of the City of Walterboro. To continue our health insurance plan for Councilmembers we must pass a resolution to send to PEBA and the resolution must be done by July 1, 2024.

Motion: Councilmember Bridge; Seconded by Councilmember Brown

Discussion: None

Carries: All ayes

3. Consideration of a request to use the downtown waterfall for a Mini Anime Convention, July 20, 2024, 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of City Council you have in your agenda packet an email from Deonna Frasier, requesting permission to use the Downtown Waterfall on July 20, 2024, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM. This is for a Mini Anime Convention. Staff asks for Council's favorable consideration.

Motion: Councilmember Fishburne; Seconded by Councilmember Pryor

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

City Manager's Report

1. Consideration of a request to purchase a new sanitation truck.

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of Council you have in your agenda packet a memo and supporting documentation from Public Works Director Michael Crosby to purchase a new sanitation truck. The current budget (FY 2023-2024) included the purchase of a new residential sanitation truck. The city received bids from three (3) dealers. The low bid is from Amick Equipment out of Booneville, MS in the amount of \$307,291.59. We have also put in for a USDA Grant to help with the purchase of the truck. That grant application is in the amount of \$50,000. If we are successful, the net cost would be \$257,291.59. We ask for Council's favorable consideration of this request. If approved, we anticipate delivery in December. The truck will be financed through a 5-year lease purchase program, the debt service payments will be incorporated into the FY 2025-2026 budget.

Motion: Councilmember Pryor; Seconded by Councilmember Broderick

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

2. Judicial and City Prosecutor Reappointments.

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of Council, Associate Municipal Judge Deborah Kane O'Quinn would like to continue to serve as Associate Municipal Judge. If reappointed her term will run for two years and will expire June 30, 2026.

City Prosecutor Maryann Blake would like to continue to serve as City Prosecutor. If reappointed, her term will run for one year and expire on June 30, 2025. We ask for Council's favorable consideration of both reappointments.

Motion: Councilmember Broderick; Seconded by Councilmember Brown

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

A motion was made to go into Executive Session by Councilmember Brown, seconded by Councilmember Fishburne. Mayor Young explained that City Council would be going into Executive Session to discuss Provision of Water/Sewer Service to Encourage the Location or Expansion of Industries or other Businesses in the area, Potential Sale/Purchase of Property and Receipt of Legal Advice-Business License.

Executive Session:

A motion was made to come out of Executive Session by Councilmember Pryor, seconded by Councilmember Fishburne, all in favor motion carries.

A motion to reschedule the July Regular City Council Meeting to Tuesday, July 9, 2024, was made by Councilmember Brown, seconded by Councilmember Bridge, all in favor, motion carries.

There being no further business to consider, a motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Bridge, seconded by Councilmember Broderick, and passed unanimously. Mayor Young adjourned the meeting at 8:14 P.M. Notice of the meeting was distributed with the agenda packets, to all local media, posted on City Hall bulletin board and posted on the City's website at least twenty-four hours prior to the meeting.

Respectfully,

Adrienne Nettles
City Clerk