



CITY OF COLUMBIA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2006
10:00 A.M.
CITY HALL – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1737 MAIN STREET
THIRD FLOOR

The Columbia City Council conducted a Meeting on Wednesday, October 11, 2006 in the City Hall Council Chambers located at 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Robert D. Coble called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. The following members of Council were present: The Honorable E.W. Cromartie, II, The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine and The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann. The Honorable Anne M. Sinclair and The Honorable Kirkman Finlay III were absent. Also present were Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Salley, City Clerk.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of August 30, 2006 and September 6, 2006 on a single motion and as presented.

1. Minutes for August 30, 2006 - *Approved*
2. Minutes of September 6, 2006 - *Approved*

PRESENTATIONS

- 2a. ****Report on the City's Credit Rating – Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager**

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager announced that the City of Columbia has maintained its AA Bond Rating and an A+ credit rating as reported by Standard and Poor's.

3. Invitation to a Community Development Seminar on the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Closing Statements and Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA) Requirements – Mr. H. Dave Whitener, Jr., Esquire

Mr. Dave Whitener, Jr., Esquire, announced that he would be conducting a Community Development Seminar with City staff to increase their knowledge of HUD Closing Statements and RESPA Requirements. Mr. Whitener is doing this on a volunteer basis in honor of Mr. Jim Meggs, City Attorney.

4. Congaree Vista Guild Update – Ms. Deirdre Mardon, Executive Director of the Congaree Vista Guild

Ms. Deirdre Mardon, Executive Director of the Congaree Vista Guild presented an update on the Vista's marketing campaign. She is responsible for administering the hospitality tax funding awarded from the City to brand the Vista as the Arts and Entertainment District of Columbia. She noted that 75% of the people that attended Artista Vista traveled at least 50 miles to do so. She reported that since advertising with the Free Times, they have a 22% increase in web hits.

5. Development Center Update – Mr. Marc Mylott, Director of Development Services

Mr. Marc Mylott, Development Services Director, explained that he began reviewing the permit process from a customer service standpoint and was able to put an organizational structure process in place to bring logic, order and accountability to the permitting process.

Ms. Krista Hampton, Development Center Administrator presented an update on the Development Center since its debut in March 2006. They are now providing informational brochures and checklists for the project review process. There are Development Coordinators that interface with customers and ensure that they have accurate information. They now have software, which tracks the status of each project. They have completed a customer service survey and the results will be shared with Council at a later date.

6. Three Rivers Greenway / The Saluda Riverwalk Project Update – Mr. S. Allison Baker, Assistant City Manager for Public Services

Mr. S. Allison Baker, Assistant City Manager for Public Services provided a brief update on the Three Rivers Greenway and the Saluda Riverwalk. They are working to connect the Saluda Riverwalk with Interstate 26 Riverwalk in West Columbia.

Mr. Mike Dawson, River Alliance Executive Director, explained that in 1996 they originally proposed a 12-mile linear system. Granby Park was completed in 1998; then the West Columbia and Cayce Riverwalks were completed in 2002; the Columbia Canal was expanded in 2004; and the Granby Park Mill Village River Link was expanded in 2006. The opening phase of the Cayce expansion is scheduled for October 27, 2006 and the West Columbia Riverwalk Extension will open on November 10, 2006. They signed a Procedural Agreement with the City of Columbia and the City of West Columbia to bid out the construction of the I-26 crossing and the Saluda Riverwalk Project. The lowest bid came back in the amount of \$6.4 million +/-, West Columbia affirmed their vote to fund \$1.4 million, and the South Carolina Department of Transportation will pay 80% of the City's portion of the bridge. A total of \$4.3 million is needed from the City to complete the project. He said that this could be done in phases based upon the availability of funding. He stated that \$2.6 million is needed from the City to leverage federal funding. He recommended that the members of Council direct staff to determine a funding source get the contract awarded and the project under construction in phases and then collectively work on a successive plan.

Mr. Jim Smith, Chair of the River Alliance Board, stated that they must utilize the federal funds as soon as possible. He asked the members of Council to review the numbers and then plan a work session to discuss the status of the entire Tax Increment Funding for this project. He said that the development of the Saluda Riverwalk would increase tourism and impact the success and expansion of the Zoo. He said that through this development they have brought property along the river into the City's Parks and Recreation system. He asked for the city's assistance in realizing the vision, noting that while the vision has changed, the project is still doable.

Mayor Bobby Horton, City of West Columbia, said that it was important to continue to work together, because this is truly a regional effort. He referred to the project as an outstanding catalyst. He offered West Columbia's assistance in making this happen.

Mr. Satch Krantz, Executive Director of the Riverbanks Zoo and Gardens, stated that the Zoo opened in 1974 and the gardens were added in 1995. He said that he is excited about this and that the zoo would be open to foot traffic. He offered his assistance in expediting the process.

Mayor Coble explained that the City has approximately \$1.3 million remaining in the TIF for this project. He said that we would have to look at other sources for the balance of funding needed. He noted that the easement acquisition process has gone well. He said that the program which does the bridge and allows West Columbia to access the federal funding should be considered phase one, because it allows us to have the kayaking / whitewater event next year. He asked staff to develop a plan for that portion and to report back to City Council on the matter.

Councilor Devine suggested that the members of Council be updated on the entire project and she cautioned her peers to talk with Richland County prior to making a decision so that they are aware of what is happening as well.

Councilor Rickenmann suggested that the members of Council be briefed prior to arranging a meeting with Richland County.

There was a consensus of Council to request a staff briefing on the Three Rivers Greenway, The Saluda Riverwalk and the Tax Increment Financing for this project. The City Manager was directed to invite a representative of Richland County to join the City in these discussions. Staff was directed to generate a financing plan for Phase I, which is the connection of the West Columbia portion of I-26 and the Zoo to The Saluda Riverwalk.

7. Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority Update – Ms. Dana D. Turner, Assistant City Manager for Commerce and Development

Ms. Dana D. Turner, Assistant City Manager for Commerce and Development, requested Council's permission to seek an extension of the Non-Responsible Party Agreement with South Carolina Electric & Gas and DHEC relating to the property on Huger Street, because the RTA may not be able to meet the deadline of relocating. They have requested a six-month extension to the original timeline. The construction of the new facility is scheduled for completion in October 2007. She noted that there would be no additional costs associated with this request.

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to extend the Non-Responsible Party Agreement with SCE&G for an additional six (6) months to allow sufficient time for construction of the new maintenance facility and office complex on Lucius Road.

- 7a. **Funding Requests from Allen University and Columbia College

Upon motion by Mr. Rickenmann, seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to authorize Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager to look at funding for the Allen University and Columbia College Projects as requested eighteen months ago. Staff is to consider any leftover bond proceeds that may be utilized.

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to approve the **Consent Agenda Items 8.** through **11.** as presented.

CONSIDERATION OF BIDS AND AGREEMENTS

8. Council is asked to approve the Purchase of a Utility Tractor for the Inspections Division, as requested by Development Services. Award to Fairfield Tractor, the low bidder meeting specifications, in the amount of \$22,136.26. This vendor is located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: 1014101-658500 - Approved*

9. Council is asked to approve the Purchase of One (1) Motorola PDR 3500, 800 MHZ Repeater Base Station with Transit Case, as requested by the Emergency Operations Center. Award to Motorola Communications & Electronics, Inc., using the SC State Contract, in the amount of \$18,388.35. This firm is located in Sumter, SC. *Funding Source: GL-2059999-658400 / JL-960700103-658400 - Approved*

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

10. Ordinance No.: 2006-057 – Granting encroachment to Adesso / Columbia, LLC for installation and maintenance of landscaping, an irrigation system, handicap ramp, curbing and covered parking adjacent to 601 South Main Street *First reading approval was given on October 4, 2006. – Approved on second reading.*
11. Ordinance No.: 2006-078 – Annexing 3.59 +/- acres E/S Cushman Drive and 3.35 +/- acres E/S Baldwin Road, Richland County TMS# 14103-03-18A and 14103-04-01 *First reading approval was given on October 4, 2006. – Approved on second reading.*

CONSIDERATION OF BIDS, AGREEMENTS AND CHANGE ORDERS

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve **Items 12.** and **13.** on a single motion.

12. Council is asked to approve Project WM4102; Emergency Asphalt Repair / Resurfacing of US 321, as requested by Engineering Administration. Award to REA Contracting, LLC, in the amount of \$95,750.00. This firm is located in West Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: Water Improvement Fund - Approved*
13. Council is asked to approve the Purchase of a 75-foot Aerial Ladder Truck for the Woodcreek Farm Fire Station, as requested by the Fire Department. Award to Spartan Fire & Safety Apparatus, the low bidder meeting specifications, in the amount of \$692,581.00. This vendor is located in Roebuck, SC. *Funding Source: 1012303-658500 - Approved*

ORDINANCES – FIRST READING

14. Ordinance No.: 2006-079 – Annexing 3.27 +/- acres, Village – Phase 2A, Woodcreek Farms, Richland County TMS# 25800-03-28 (portion) – *Approved on first reading.*

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2006-079 – Annexing 3.27 +/- acres, Village – Phase 2A, Woodcreek Farms, Richland County TMS# 25800-03-28 (portion).

RESOLUTIONS

15. Resolution No.: R-2006-041 – Authorizing Acceptance of a Deed in Lieu of Mortgage Foreclosure from DESA, Inc. for property known as 1404 Oak Street, Richland County TMS# 11407-15-09 - *Approved*

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2006-041 – Authorizing Acceptance of a Deed in Lieu of Mortgage Foreclosure from DESA, Inc. for property known as 1404 Oak Street, Richland County TMS# 11407-15-09.

16. Resolution No.: R-2006-042 – Authorizing and directing the City Attorney to commence action against the owner of Lot 8, Governor’s Hill, Richland County TMS# 09010-07-21-
Approved

Upon motion by Ms. Devine, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2006-042 – Authorizing and directing the City Attorney to commence action against the owner of Lot 8, Governor’s Hill, Richland County TMS# 09010-07-21.

APPEARANCE OF PUBLIC HAVING BUSINESS WITH CITY COUNCIL

Mr. Larry Judice, El Vista Boutique Owner, stated that there has been a great revolution for the Vista area. He admitted that he did not have all of the facts on the City’s proposal to have an emergency winter shelter at the old Fire Station in the Vista. He said that his employees have voiced concerns and disappointment with this proposal. He stated that other business owners are perplexed as to why the City would do this. He added that the problem needed to be addressed in addition to their safety and increased traffic. He stated that this is a result of poor planning.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 11:00 a.m. for the discussion of **Items 17.** through **21.** as amended.

17. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements
- YRT2, Inc. / Application for State Franchise
This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.
18. Discussion of negotiations incident to the proposed sale of property
This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.
19. Receipt of legal advice, which relates to pending, threatened or potential claim
This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.
20. **Discussion of the employment of an employee
This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.
21. **Receipt of legal advice, which relates to a matter covered by attorney-client privilege
- Screaming Eagle Road
- Carolina Wrecking
These items were discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.

- **Council adjourned the meeting at 12:20 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Salley
City Clerk