

**CITY OF COLUMBIA
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
JANUARY 25, 2006
9:00 AM – CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1737 MAIN STREET**



The City of Columbia City Council met for a Work Session on Wednesday, January 25, 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 9:03 a.m. The following members of City Council were present: The Honorable E. W. Cromartie, II, The Honorable Hamilton Osborne, Jr., The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine and The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann. The Honorable Anne M. Sinclair was absent due to a business related trip. Also present were Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Salley, City Clerk.

PRESENTATIONS

- A. Recognition of the Dream Keeper Award Winners and Business Partners – The Honorable E.W. Cromartie, III

Councilman E. W. Cromartie, II stated that twelve (12) years ago they were able to initiate a process for what is now known as the Martin Luther King Dream Keeper Award and since then \$21,000 has been awarded to students. He said that this demonstrates a commitment to community service with the support of corporate sponsors. He recognized the following individuals as the 2006 Dream Keeper Award Winners: Miss Katherine Myers – 1st Place; Mr. James Nixon – 2nd Place; and Miss Kenya Goins – 3rd Place. He also recognized the following business partners for their corporate sponsorships of the awards: Ms. Martha Scott Smith of BellSouth - \$1,000; Mr. Tom Jackson of Palmetto Candy and Tobacco Company - \$500; and Mr. Ernest Cromartie, III of the Cromartie Law Firm - \$250.

- B. The Promotion of Columbia Attractions – Ms. Karen Brosius, Executive Director of the Columbia Museum of Art

Ms. Karen Brosius, Executive Director of the Columbia Museum of Art provided an update on a collaborative effort to promote five (5) of Columbia's attractions. She recognized representatives of the Riverbanks Zoo and Garden, the State Museum, EdVenture, Historic Columbia Foundation and the Columbia Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB). She said that their goal was to create a new marketing strategy and a media campaign to raise the profile of all Columbia attractions. She noted that this was possible through hospitality tax funding provided to the CVB. The marketing strategy includes identifying a target market; developing the creative concepts; implementing a media campaign; and then evaluating the success of it. Ms. Brosius added that they are also marketing visitors more aggressively because they generate economic impact. She introduced the new www.VisitColumbia.com website. She explained that the five (5) groups shared very detailed information in order to establish the benchmarks. Ms. Brosius reported that these attractions had a combined attendance rate of approximately 2.28 million during fiscal year 2004/2005 and more than 500,000 came from outside of Columbia. Visitors spent over \$7 million on food, beverages and admissions. She acknowledged that there wasn't any comprehensive visitor research for Columbia, so the CVB contracted with Market Search, a Columbia based firm to find out where the visitors are coming from and the market that should be targeted.

Mr. Frank Brown, President of Market Search, explained that they were asked to identify a target market for the collaborative campaign. He said that the first step was to complete a secondary analysis of the data they had on file. He stated that they looked at the information and then ranked it to determine which county was sending the most visitors to Columbia. The majority of visitors came from Charlotte, North Carolina followed by Augusta, Georgia, Greenville, Charleston and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. He noted that Aiken County, Columbia County and Richmond County, Augusta is the market to go after, because of its accessibility, substantive population, and the lack of competition there. He noted that from a budgetary standpoint they could have a greater impact in Augusta than in Charlotte. Mr. Brown explained that a recent survey of 300 people in the three Augusta counties confirmed their decision to pursue this market. Callers were more familiar with Columbia than any other major city in South Carolina; they had positive impressions of Columbia as a top destination site; 75% of the callers had been to Columbia on a leisure trip in the past five (5) years; and 60% of the callers intend to visit Columbia within the next twelve (12) months; they are familiar with attractions in Columbia. He noted that there is room for greater awareness to all attractions.

Ms. Karen Brosius stated that there are approximately 500,000 people in the Augusta market. She said that they are developing a spring media campaign in Augusta with television, outdoor billboards and print media. There will also be a response brochure that will be sent out to those that visit the new website. This campaign will be simple and direct. She said that the collaborative venture would strengthen the attractions.

B1. **City / County Joint Matters – Mr. Jonathan Marcy, Columbia Chamber of Commerce City / County Subcommittee

Mr. Jonathan Marcy, Chamber of Commerce Issues Committee Member asked City Council to express its opinion and position on the following matters involving the City of Columbia and Richland County: co-location of planning and permitting services, renovation of the Township Auditorium, Animal Services, the Detention Center Per Diem Fee Structure and a Master Sewer Plan for outlying areas in Richland County. He explained that the subcommittee is interested in co-location. He said that there were a number of meetings that they participated in and it appeared that there was an agreement on co-locating these services and that it was only a matter of the respective councils voting on the issue. He stated that the business community wants to know the City's position so that they can move forward on that basis. He said that from a customer prospective there is a real opportunity for cooperation. Mr. Marcy stated that they were told that Richland County offered the location and floor space to the City at no cost, so they are puzzled as to why this is an outstanding issue.

Mr. Fred Johnson, Chamber of Commerce Issues Committee Chairman, stated that the Issues Committee established a subcommittee to work on five separate issues with co-location being the highest priority.

Councilman Tony Mizzell, Richland County Council, stated that he only wanted closure to the issues. He said that they had an opportunity to sale their Marion Street property, but has deferred the matter until a decision was made on co-location. He urged the members of Council to meet with Richland County in the next week or so. Mr. Mizzell told the members of Council that he felt as if City staff has given them the run around when scheduling meetings.

Councilman Osborne asked for clarification on what the County has proposed. He said that he understood that the City offered co-location space at Washington Square, but the County rejected the offer. He felt that an unspecified price tag was attached to the County's offer to co-locate on Marion Street. Mr. Osborne said that co-location makes good sense, but what services would be co-located and what objectives would be achieved. On behalf of Councilwoman Sinclair, he mentioned that the process might be more accessible via Internet.

Mayor Coble admitted that the amount of space at Washington Square was not enough square footage based on the Chinn Planning Study on Co-location space needs.

Councilman Daniel Rickenmann stated that this was ideal when the City handled all business licenses, but now the County does their own. He asked what are we trying to benefit. He said we should focus on on-line services and think further about where we should be in ten years. He noted that the detention center matter has moved on and that the Animal Mission should also be involved in discussions about the Animal Shelter. He agreed that the two Councils should meet to talk this out. He said that he has not received a lot of calls from the business community asking for this.

Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine stated that there isn't a reluctance of the City Council to meet. She proposed that both Councils have regularly scheduled meetings.

Councilman Hamilton Osborne, Jr. stated that we must know what the problem is in order to fix it? What is the objective? Will co-location fix the problem?

Councilman Sam Davis stated that time has passed since the original concept of co-location first came about. He said that technology could impact square footage needs. He noted that no one would criticize the County for selling the Marion Street building. He stated that the benefits of co-location would be the launching point. He said that progress has been made between the two Councils.

Councilman Tony Mizzell admitted that Richland County would rather see the planning functions merged and not co-located. This would eliminate duplication of services and better serve the citizens.

Mr. Jonathan Marcy stated that in the absence of data people create their own data. He said that there is confusion and they would like to see a public debate.

Mr. Fred Johnson stated that a Commercial Business Council has been formed at the Chamber and they have voiced strong desires to see the process come together. He stated that the Issues Committee would submit to both Councils a summary of concerns that the users have.

B2. **Municipal Court Update – Judge Marion O. Hanna, Chief Administrative Judge for Municipal Court

Judge Marion O. Hanna reported that Municipal Court has been running very smoothly. She stated that the specialty courts are also working very well. These are the Quality of Life and Criminal Domestic Violence Courts. She noted that cases are now processed quicker and more judiciously. She said that the Judges look for compliance with the law and not to punish people to obtain compliance. She said that the Court is looking at a speakerphone interpreter system versus using live interpreters. Judge Hanna requested support of having once-daily weekend bond court starting at 10:00 a.m. She noted that by doing so the City would save nearly \$24,000 annually on overtime and gas related expenses.

C. Project Homeless Connect Service Day Results – Mr. Rick Semon, Community Development Director

Ms. Jennifer Moore of the Community Development Department provided the results of the Project Homeless Connect Service Day on December 8, 2005. Approximately 217 homeless individuals participated in this event. Agencies provided information and took applications on housing programs, legal assistance, job training programs, mental health services, drug and alcohol services and health care services. There were educational seminars and seminars on sexually transmitted diseases. They served breakfast and lunch and provided snacks, manicures and pedicures. The agencies reported that 49 individuals applied for housing assistance, 20 applied for job training programs, 8 made appointments for benefit assistance programs and 4 made appointments for mental health services. The next Project Homeless Connect Service Day is scheduled for Thursday, April 6, 2006 at 8:30 a.m. at the Beth and Lou Holtz Shelter, 1929 Hampton Street and volunteers are welcome.

D. Security Camera Systems Committee Report - Chief H. Dean Crisp, Columbia Police Department and Ms. Missy Gentry, Director of Public Works / Committee Co-Chairs

Chief H. Dean Crisp, Columbia Police Department, noted that the citywide camera system is not integrated due to security, safety and ADA compliance reasons. He stated that there are various systems being used throughout the City at nine (9) locations. He recommended that City Council enhance the current camera system to model Chicago and Greenville; assign staff and community leaders to begin reviewing project possibilities and phase in; encourage community input; development of educational programs; and allocate funding from sources such as the city budget, grants, private businesses, Parking Capital Improvement Funds; narcotics seizure funds or other sources.

Councilman Sam Davis said that if the City invests in more cameras he would expect that the cameras go out there where taxpayers are and where they experience the crimes and not in buildings. He said that the technology should be flexible and he understands that they may not stay in one spot for an extended period of time.

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Mr. Cromartie, Council voted unanimously to endorse the committee recommendations and to authorize Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager to proceed with the development of a Request for Qualifications for an integrated security camera system. Mr. Rickenmann was not present for the vote.

E. Subcontracting Outreach Program Review – Mr. Tony Lawton, Director of the Office of Business Opportunities

Upon motion by Mr. Osborne, seconded by Mr. Cromartie, Council voted unanimously to adopt the revisions to the Subcontractor Outreach Program as outlined.

F. Columbia Neighborhood Redevelopment Commission – Mr. Jim Meggs, City Attorney

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Mayor Coble, Council voted unanimously to endorse the City Attorney's recommendations related to repealing the original Columbia Neighborhood Redevelopment Commission and establishing an East Central Neighborhood Redevelopment Commission. An Ordinance will be drafted for consideration of the repeal; a Public Hearing will be advertised and an Ordinance will be drafted authorizing the establishment of an East Central Neighborhood Redevelopment Commission.

OTHER MATTERS

- G. Belvedere Subdivision Sanitary Sewer Connections – Mr. Steven Gantt, Senior Assistant City Manager for Operations

There was a consensus of Council to direct Mr. Steve Gantt, Senior Assistant City Manager for Operations to schedule an informational meeting with Councilman Cromartie, staff and the Belvedere Subdivision Community to ensure that the community is aware of their options to connect to the City's sanitary sewer line.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Mr. Osborne, Council voted four (4) to one (1) to go into Executive Session at 11:27 a.m. for the discussion of **Items H.**, through **K.** as amended. Voting aye were Mr. Davis, Mr. Osborne, Mr. Cromartie and Mayor Coble. Voting nay was Mr. Rickenmann. Ms. Devine was not present for the vote.

Upon motion by Mr. Osborne, seconded by Mr. Cromartie, Council voted unanimously to add the discussion of a Conflict Waiver Request related to the CanalSide Development and the discussion of an Agent Bill Payment Agreement to the Executive Session.

- H. Discussion of employment of an employee
- Municipal Court Update
This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken. Mr. Rickenmann was not present for this discussion.
- I. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements
- Animal Services – Mr. S. Allison Baker, Assistant City Manager for Public Services
Discussion of this item was deferred.
- Charles R. Drew Wellness Center - Mr. S. Allison Baker, Assistant City Manager for Public Services
This item was discussed in Executive Session. Mr. Rickenmann was not present for this discussion. See Item J1.
- Ben Arnold Center - Mr. S. Allison Baker, Assistant City Manager for Public Services
Discussion of this item was deferred.
- Detention Center – Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager
This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.
- USC Research Campus – Mr. Jim Meggs, City Attorney
Discussion of this item was deferred.
- J. Receipt of legal advice, which relates to pending, threatened or potential claim
- Convention Center Hotel – Mr. Jim Meggs, City Attorney
Discussion of this item was deferred.
- **Agent Bill Payment Agreement
This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.
- **Council adjourned the Executive Session discussion at 12:45 p.m. to reconvene the Work Session.**

- J1. **Council is asked to approve an Agreement between the City of Columbia and Richland School District One for a Learn to Swim Pilot Program at the Charles R. Drew Wellness Center through March 27, 2006.

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted five (5) to one (1) to approve an Agreement between the City of Columbia and Richland School District One for a Learn to Swim Pilot Program at the Charles R. Drew Wellness Center through March 27, 2006. Voting aye were Mr. Rickenmann, Ms. Devine, Mr. Osborne, Mr. Cromartie and Mayor Coble. Voting nay was Mr. Davis.

- **Council reconvened the Executive Session discussion at 12:53 p.m.**
- K. Receipt of legal advice, which relates to a matter covered by attorney-client privilege
 - **Code EnforcementThis item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.
- **Council adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Salley
City Clerk