

**CITY OF COLUMBIA WORK SESSION MINUTES
MAY 24, 2006
9:00 AM – CITY HALL– 3RD FLOOR
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**



The Columbia City Council met for a Work Session on Wednesday, May 24, 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 9:07 a.m. The following City Council members were present: The Honorable Anne M. Sinclair, The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine and The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann. The Honorable E.W. Cromartie, II was absent. Also present were Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Salley, City Clerk.

Mayor Coble led the members of Council and attendees in a moment of silent meditation in support of Lieutenant Governor Andre Bauer and Mr. John Leonhardt, whose plane crashed yesterday.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., told the members of Council that the City has responded to Richland County's letter about the Vista Tax Increment Fund. He noted that the article written by The State Newspaper was inaccurate.

PRESENTATIONS

- A. 2006 First Robotics Competition – Mr. Archie Maddox, Director of the Commission on Children and Youth

Mr. Archie Maddox, Director of the Commission on Children and Youth, stated that the City of Columbia partnered with several other organizations to sponsor the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Robotics Competition. He said that the City invested \$25,000 into this nationally recognized program. Bell South has committed \$1 million to this and the Lead the Way Program. Four (4) City employees volunteered during the event.

Ms. Martha Scott Smith of BellSouth thanked the members of Council for their financial investment, which allowed them to do things beyond their wildest imagination. The funding was used to advertise the project through a partnership with the South Carolina Broadcasters Association. She said that the advertising dollars had a direct impact on attendance, which was up from 3,000 to 10,000 to include participants and spectators. This has become a signature event for South Carolina.

Mr. Chip Land, Annexation Coordinator, noted that the students' enthusiasm and commitment was outstanding. He stated that Keenan High School has gone on to win national and international awards. He said that it means a lot to have our youth excited about science and math.

Mr. Jim Gambrell, Director of Economic Development, stated that the electricity generated by these young people was incredible. He said that there was an approximate \$500,000 economic impact with 2,000 daily hotel rooms and \$100,000 spent on meals. The event was truly diversified and it is a tremendous economic development opportunity for Columbia.

B. Capitol Senior Center Update – Mr. Larry Jordan, Executive Director of the Capital Senior Center

Mr. Larry Jordan, Executive Director of the Capital Senior Center, thanked the members of Council for supporting their efforts to become the premiere service provider for senior citizens in the State of South Carolina. The Capital Senior Center's mission is to help active adults aged fifty and older to stay independent, physically fit and socially engaged. He explained that their challenges are becoming more proactive, focusing on prevention versus crisis, and funding. He explained that the City provides 9% of funding with 46% of its citizens utilizing the Capital Senior Center. Mr. Jordan explained that there is a need to expand the center to accommodate the growth they are experiencing.

C. Commerce and Development Strategic Plan – Ms. Dana Turner, Assistant City Manager for Commerce and Development

Ms. Dana D. Turner, Assistant City Manager for Commerce and Development, stated that every economic development effort needs a strategic plan. She stated that they began working on this plan a long time ago. The mission of the Commerce and Development Team is to support and promote a strong business community resulting in new jobs and economic growth while maintaining an excellent quality of life.

Ms. Deborah Livingston, Director of the Columbia Housing Development Corporation, outlined the following goal: To establish a coordinated program to market the attributes of Columbia as a vibrant place to invest and enjoy a well-rounded lifestyle. We need to market Columbia as a place to work and live not just a place to hold a convention or visit for the weekend. The plan proposes a comprehensive signature-marketing message that communicates the mission of the City. The message must be delivered with professional materials that provide adequate information to new businesses and residents.

Mr. Rick Semon, Director of the Community Development Department, outlined the following goal: To foster economic vitality by supporting an inclusive environment of livability and opportunity that encourages innovation and creativity. Columbia must strengthen its creative economy if we are to have a knowledge-based economy. We need to review existing plans, Ordinances and regulations to identify and correct any inconsistencies. We must encourage broad participation and include all diverse neighborhoods in the strategy. We must expand programs to ensure economically diverse housing throughout the City.

Mr. Mike Manis, Director of the Eau Claire Development Corporation outlined the following goal: To enhance individual lives through partnerships with workforce development agencies and economic development allies in order to raise the per capita income and meet the employment needs of local businesses. People choose where they want to live and then worry about their jobs and companies choose to locate where they can be successful. Part of being successful is having the talent pool needed to produce the goods and services for the market place.

Mr. Jim Gambrell, Director of Economic Development outlined the following goal: To promote and strengthen a business friendly environment that supports existing business success and attracts new, diverse and innovative business opportunities. He said that they hope for and ask for a top down, citywide commitment to these goals. They want to increase communication between staff and citizens in an effort to foster a better understanding between the business community and the city. There is a need to coordinate existing programs and resources for business start-ups companies and an appropriate system to respond to businesses in distress. We should develop incentives and a program for new and expanding business development to include policies that make doing business in the City more user friendly. We need to update our business recruitment plan, continue to collaborate with our economic development allies, local colleges and universities, review existing physical infrastructure, and identify opportunity sites

for commercial and residential development and review and promote our quality of life.

Ms. Dana D. Turner, Assistant City Manager for Commerce and Development, stated that the plan would help the City to take on a leadership role in economic development in our community.

Upon motion by Ms. Sinclair, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to officially adopt the Commerce and Development Strategic Plan for the City of Columbia.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

- D. City / County Matters of Interest – Mr. Jonathan Marcy, Columbia Chamber of Commerce City / County Taskforce and Mr. Earl McLeod, Executive Director of the Homebuilders Association

Upon motion by Ms. Sinclair, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to endorse the City of Columbia / Richland County Steering Committee and its proposed charter of working on operational planning issues that better serve citizens and the development community. The Steering Committee will consist of seven (7) members to carry out the missions as proposed.

- E. Accommodations Tax Review – Ms. Libby Gober, Ombudsman

There was a consensus of Council to direct staff to determine the implications (based on prior experiences) of defining a tourist as someone traveling from outside a 50-mile radius of the City and advancing 50% of funding instead of 100% to organizations.

CONSIDERATION OF BIDS, AGREEMENTS AND CHANGE ORDERS

- F. Council is asked to approve Contracts for the Design Team of the Columbia Canal Front Project, as requested by the Special Projects Administrator. Contracts will be awarded as follows in the total amount of \$256,445.00. These firms are located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: Columbia Canal Front Project Account funded by proceeds from the Tax Increment Fund and the Hospitality Tax Bond Issue*

Upon motion by Ms. Sinclair, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve Contracts for the Design Team of the Columbia Canal Front Project, as requested by the Special Projects Administrator. Contracts will be awarded as follows in the total amount of \$256,445.00.

Firm	Discipline	Contract Amount
Grimball Cotterill & Associates	Landscape Architect	\$117,925
Cox & Dinkins	Civil Engineer	\$64,900
Case Consulting	Structural Engineer	\$29,270
GWA, Inc.	Electrical Engineer	\$9,600
LCK	Contract Administration	\$34,750

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

- F1. **Ordinance No.: 2006-037 – Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 24, Vehicles for Hire, to add Article V, Pedicabs

Upon motion by Mr. Rickenmann, seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to give second reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2006-037 – Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 24, Vehicles for Hire, to add Article V, Pedicabs.

RESOLUTIONS

- G. Resolution No.: 2006-022 – Authorizing a Public Hearing for the Improvement Plan for the City Center Improvement District

Upon motion by Ms. Sinclair, seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: 2006-022 – Authorizing a Public Hearing for the Improvement Plan for the City Center Improvement District. The Public Hearing is scheduled for June 21, 2006.

APPOINTMENTS

- G1. **Affordable Housing Taskforce

There was a consensus of Council to direct staff to identify a Hispanic representative to serve on the Affordable Housing Taskforce and to review the Resolution on Boards and Commissions to determine if there are concerns with dual service. This matter will be reconsidered on June 7, 2006.

FISCAL YEAR 2006 / 2007 PROPOSED BUDGETS

- H. Proposed Budgets for the Storm Water Fund, Parking Fund, and Hospitality Tax Fund – Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget Administrator

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget Administrator, presented the proposed budgets for the Storm Water Fund, Parking Fund and Hospitality Tax Fund. A Public Hearing related to the adoption of the annual budget is scheduled for June 7, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. A Public Hearing to consider a vote to override the statutory limitation to increase the millage rate for fiscal year 2006/2007 is scheduled for June 7, 2006 at 6:00 p.m.

APPEARANCE OF THE PUBLIC HAVING BUSINESS WITH CITY COUNCIL

Ms. April Heyward appeared before the members of Council on behalf of the Columbia Small Business Regulatory Review Committee to offer assistance in modifying the billboard Ordinance as requested by Lamar Advertising. She noted that they are already familiar with the Ordinance and would welcome the opportunity to meet with City staff and Lamar Advertising.

Mr. Bill Manley asked for clarification on the Public Hearing schedule for the Budget and Water and Sewer Rates.

Ms. Cathy Novinger, Resident of Governors Hill, explained that the residents of Governors Hill are confused about the future ownership and maintenance of the drainage system and roads. She said that they were not aware of this provision when they purchased their homes. The roads currently belong to the Columbia Development Corporation. Ms. Novinger said that they should not be penalized for being early investors in downtown Columbia. She requested that the roads be transferred from the Columbia Development Corporation to the City of Columbia. She said that some residents might want to lock the gate to the park if they have to maintain the roads.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion by Ms. Sinclair, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 11:46 a.m. for the discussion of **Items I.** through **L.** as amended.

- I. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements
 - Governor's Hill

This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.
 - J. Receipt of legal advice, which relates to a matter covered by attorney-client privilege
Items were discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.
 - K. **Discussion of negotiations incident to the sale of property
This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.
 - L. **Receipt of legal advice relating to potential, pending or threatened claim
This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.
- **Councilwoman Anne M. Sinclair left the meeting at 1:00 p.m.**
 - **Council adjourned the meeting at 1:25 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Salley
City Clerk