



CITY OF COLUMBIA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27, 2007
9:00 A.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1737 MAIN STREET

The City of Columbia City Council conducted a Meeting on Wednesday, June 27, 2007 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 9:04 a.m. The following members of Council were present. The Honorable E.W. Cromartie, II, The Honorable Anne M. Sinclair, The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine, The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann and The Honorable Kirkman Finlay III. Also present were Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager and Ms. Gladys Brown, Assistant City Manager for Administrative Services. The Honorable Sam Davis left the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

PRESENTATIONS

- A. ****Recognition of Fire Personnel – Mr. Bradley Anderson, Fire Chief / Columbia Fire Department**

Mayor Robert D. Coble explained that he attended the Memorial Service and has since received countless comments and calls from the family members of the Charleston Firefighters thanking all of the members of the Columbia Fire Department that helped with the ceremony and everything that occurred there. While it is what the Firefighters do, he felt it was appropriate to recognize and thank all of them for their contributions.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department, thanked Council for their support. He recognized thirty-(30) Columbia Firefighters for responding to Charleston, South Carolina to meet varying needs. He noted that many needs instantly occurred and a myriad of needs still remain. Columbia Firefighters escorted families, served on the Color Guard at the Memorial Service and at Funeral Homes and some even staffed Charleston fire stations on Saturday and Sunday.

Councilor Devine commended the Columbia Fire Department for always going above and beyond their duties here in the City of Columbia as well.

- B. ****Fast Forward Update – Ms. Dee Albritton, Executive Director**

Ms. Dee Albritton, Executive Director, explained that Columbia is in a unique position by having five (5) military bases within thirty-(30) minutes of the city. The City of Columbia is a central service site and by September 2007 there will be 34,238 Veterans in Richland County. She sought Council's support to create a group of agencies to help serve Veterans. She requested that the City of Columbia select a representative to serve on the committee to help actively pursue resources to include funding from the Department of Defense.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager endorsed the project and requested approval to continue working with Ms. Albritton to make provisions for our Veterans that have become disenfranchised.

Councilor Sinclair said that this is a great way for the coalition to help with the challenges of the Veterans returning to our community. This is an opportunity for us to serve our returning military.

C. **Presentation by the Mayor Coble, Councilmen Daniel Rickenmann & Kirkman Finlay

Councilors Daniel Rickenmann and Kirkman Finlay III presented two (2) checks to The Mayor's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities in the total amount of \$1,000.00.

1. Safe Routes to School Program – Mr. John F. Myrick, Rosewood Steering Committee Member

Mr. John F. Myrick, Rosewood Steering Committee Member, explained that Safe Routes to School is a federal program that encourages and enables children to walk and ride to school. The Federal Government has allotted millions of dollars nationwide for this cause. In South Carolina, kindergartens through eighth grade schools are eligible for up to \$200,000. This a comprehensive program bringing together education, enforcement, engineering, encouragement and evaluation. These routes will help promote safe routes for students to walk to school and ride bikes. It promotes a healthy lifestyle for children, leads to fewer cars on the roads during peak hours and decrease emissions. They are in need of an Infrastructure Responsibility Person and a letter of support from the City Manager. Rosewood Elementary was chosen as a pilot school for this program.

Upon motion by Ms. Sinclair, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to direct Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager to provide a letter in support of Safe Routes to School and to select a staff representative to serve as the Infrastructure Responsibility person to help oversee the Safe Routes to School Program.

2. Update on the Village at River's Edge – Ms. Dana D. Turner, Assistant City Manager for Commerce and Development

Ms. Dana Turner, Assistant City Manager for Commerce and Development, explained that they recently received approval from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Washington Office to use Section 108 Economic Development Initiative (EDI) funds for the project known as the Village at River's Edge. We must ensure that the project complies with all federal regulations and that the project meets HUD's definition of an Area Benefit Activity, meaning that 51% of the occupants must meet the 80% and below median income category requiring significant cooperation between the City of Columbia, the Developer and those seeking to reside in the neighborhood. The City needs to commit to a method of repayment by returning the funds to the pool administered by the Community Development Department as Program Income. She recommended that this be done from the fund balance in 2008 at a rate of \$400,000 per year for four (4) years. Staff is working with the Developer to commit our agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding and they are moving forward with the design of Phase I of the infrastructure. The \$1.6 million from EDI Funds and \$200,000 from the Water and Sewer Fund (for a total of \$1.8 million) will be utilized for Phase I of the infrastructure at the project.

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

3. Ordinance No.: 2007-044 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 23, Utilities and Engineering, Article V, Water and Sewer Rates, Sec. 23-143 Water service rates and Sec. 23-149 Sewer service rates, (a) Generally *First reading approval was given on June 20, 2007. – Approved on second reading.*

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Ms. Sinclair, Council voted five (5) to two (2) to give second reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2007-044 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 23, Utilities and Engineering, Article V, Water and Sewer Rates, Sec. 23-143 Water service rates and Sec. 23-149 Sewer service rates, (a) Generally. Voting aye were Mr. Cromartie, Ms. Sinclair, Mr. Davis, Ms. Devine and Mayor Coble. Voting nay were Mr. Rickenmann and Mr. Finlay.

4. Ordinance No.: 2007-048 - To Raise Revenue and Adopt the Budget for the City of Columbia, South Carolina for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2008 *First reading approval was given on June 20, 2007.*

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Ms. Sinclair, Council voted five (5) to two (2) to give second reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2007-048 - To Raise Revenue and Adopt the Budget for the City of Columbia, South Carolina for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2008. Voting aye were Mr. Cromartie, Ms. Sinclair, Mr. Davis, Ms. Devine and Mayor Coble. Voting nay were Mr. Rickenmann and Mr. Finlay.

Councilor Finlay stated that during the budget debates and discussions numbers were used from various sources so he took the time to review the financial statements from the 1998 and 2005 audits. He noted that during that time Fire Department personnel decreased by fifty four (54) employees; the Police Department added seventeen (17) sworn fulltime officers; registered voters has fallen by 6,600 people; and the number of City employees has grown by 250. He said that it would be instructive for us to understand where the growth has been, since general government has grown by 200% and Public Safety has grown by a third. He suggested that they look at the last ten (10) years and project those same growth rates out over the next ten (10) years to see where that leaves us, especially with the revenue caps that are in place.

Councilor Sinclair concurred with Mr. Finlay's assessment. She noted that ten (10) years ago we did not have Community Safety Officers, which were designed to relieve the burden of routine tasks from the Police Officers. We have added Park Rangers, which play a role in the security of our parks. She added that in 2008 we will be in the Performance Based Budgeting mode and suggested that the Council take time to understand what's going on. Another key factor will be the City's Strategic Plan.

Mayor Coble requested a presentation on the City's Public Safety Retention Plan by October 2007. This plan should include the Police Department, Fire Department and possibly Parks and Recreation and Public Works.

Councilor Davis urged his peers to consider annexations as it relates to the distribution and responsiveness of Public Safety workers. He noted that commercial properties have been annexed the most, but doughnut holes greatly impact this as well.

Councilor Rickenmann stated that items should not be moved around in the budget and suggested that they decide where things should be funded from and then leave them there. He suggested that Performance Base Budgeting and Strategic Planning be used on future projects to determine return on investment and to avoid excessive costs.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager, announced plans to proceed with an operational audit and an organizational audit. He would like to evaluate the structure to ensure that functions are properly aligned and to evaluate the organizational structure at the executive and senior management level to determine if any adjustments need to be made. He will determine which departments were added by way of Ordinance and which were never intended to be departments.

Councilor Devine requested that they all work together to set the agenda for the upcoming Retreat and to plan to spend as much time as needed to get it done.

Councilor Cromartie suggested that they plan a two-day Retreat with advance notice.

- **Mr. Davis left the meeting at 9:50 a.m.**

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

- 4a. **Council is asked to approve the Final Installment Payment of the Fuel Cell Collaborative Membership Dues, as requested by the Commerce and Development Group. Award to the South Carolina Research Authority / Trident Research Center in the amount of \$75,000.00. This firm is located in Charleston, S.C. *Funding Source: Economic Development Special Account - Approved*

Upon motion by Ms. Sinclair, seconded by Mr. Cromartie, Council voted unanimously to approve the Final Installment Payment of the Fuel Cell Collaborative Membership Dues, as requested by the Commerce and Development Group. Award to the South Carolina Research Authority / Trident Research Center in the amount of \$75,000.00. The South Carolina Research Authority is located in Columbia, SC. This is the final payment towards the City's \$150,000 commitment.

- 4b. **The Township Auditorium – Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager

Upon motion by Mr. Finlay, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to approve a request from The Township Auditorium to have the hospitality taxes generated by The Township Auditorium be designated back to The Township Auditorium for hospitality purposes. A Hospitality Tax Funding Application was submitted and the amount is approximately \$2,000.

- 4c. **Traffic Signal Request at the Intersection of Columbiana Drive and Columbia Avenue

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Mr. Cromartie, Council voted unanimously to approve the installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of Columbiana Drive and Columbia Avenue.

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to give second reading approval on a single motion to the **Consent Agenda Items 5.** through **8.** as presented.

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

5. Ordinance No.: 2007-038 – Granting encroachment to Chris LaCaruba for installation and maintenance of a wood fence at 425 South Ravenel Street *First reading approval was given on June 20, 2007. – Approved on second reading.*

6. Ordinance No.: 2007-041 – Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 14, Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions, Article IX, Graffiti Sec. 14-269, Ease of removal provisions to delete Sec. 14-271, Exempt property in its entirety *First reading approval was given on June 20, 2007. – Approved on second reading.*
7. Ordinance No.: 2007-051 – Authorizing execution of a Lease Agreement between the City of Columbia and Columbia Carriage Works, LLC for the Washington Street Tunnel and adjoining unpaved area *First reading approval was given on June 20, 2007. – Approved on second reading.*

MAP AMENDMENTS / REZONINGS - SECOND READING

8. 3005 Devine Street and 3000, 3004, 3012 and 3020 Kirkwood (Incarnation Lutheran Church), TMS# 13804-13-01, -02, -03 and -04; rezone from C-1 and RS-2 to PUD-C. *The Zoning Public Hearing was conducted on May 16, 2007. First reading approval was given on June 20, 2007. – Approved on second reading; subject to conformance with (1) the 2-page letter with 1-page attachment from the Boudreaux Group dated May 13, 2007 and stamped RECEIVED DEVELOPMENT SERVICES June 13, 2007, provided that the access drive to the current 3101 Devine Street parking lot is a double-lane access (24-feet wide) rather than a single-lane access as described within item no. 1, and (2) the 5-page letter dated June 13, 2007 from Robert F. Fuller. – Approved on second reading.*

RESOLUTIONS

9. Resolution No.: R-2007-035 – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine at Columbia Action Council's "Dancing in the Street" - *Approved*

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2007-035 – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine at Columbia Action Council's "Dancing in the Street".

Councilor Sinclair requested that staff provide an update on July 11, 2007 relating to the implementation of the Climate Protection Action Committee's recommendations on what the City can do to reduce its emissions and those related to procurement. She suggested that the impacted areas review the recommendations and provide a response.

APPEARANCE OF PUBLIC HAVING BUSINESS WITH CITY COUNCIL

Mr. John Temple Ligon, The Columbia Star, announced that he would like to run a profile of the members of Council as business leaders from a business prospective. He won't perpetrate political posturing, but would like to interview them for the business profile.

Councilor Devine invited everyone to participate in the 5th Annual Celebration at Earlewood Park. It is free and open to the public, but donations will be accepted for the Fan the Heat initiative sponsored by the Police Department.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Mr. Finlay, Council voted unanimously to go into Executive Session for the discussion of **Items 10.** and **11.** as amended.

10. **Discussion of the employment of an employee
 This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action taken.

 11. Receipt of legal advice, which relates to matters covered by attorney-privilege
 - Hotel Litigation
 - Franchise Fees These items were discussed in Executive Session. No action taken.
- **Council adjourned the meeting at 10:05 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Salley
City Clerk