

**CITY OF COLUMBIA
WORK SESSION MINUTES
AUGUST 26, 2009 – 9:00AM
CITY HALL - 1737 MAIN STREET**



The Columbia City Council met for a Work Session on Wednesday, August 26, 2009 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 Sam Davis, The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann and The Honorable Belinda F. Gergel. The Honorable Kirkman Finlay III arrived at 9:06 a.m. and The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine arrived at 9:08 a.m. Also present were Mr. Steven A. Gantt, Interim City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Salley, City Clerk.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

1. Funding for Organizations outside the Committee Process

The following individuals appeared before the Council in support of funding allocations to organizations that are funded outside of the committee process:

Ms. Claire Fort, Cultural Council of Richland and Lexington Counties
Mr. Andrew Witt, Executive Director / Cultural Council of Richland and Lexington Counties
An unidentified representative of the Columbia City Ballet
Ms. Tracey Johnson, Project Pet
Ms. Mary Skinner Jones, The Renaissance Foundation
Dr. Lorraine Fowler, The Renaissance Foundation
Mr. Scott Powers, Columbia Regional Sports Council
Mr. Ric Lubber, Columbia Regional Sports Council
Mr. George Devlin, Benedict College's Harambee Festival
Mr. Myron Davis, Benedict College's Harambee Festival
Mr. Marvin Chernoff, Columbia Festival of the Arts
Ms. Tracy Young, Carolina Carillon Parade
Ms. Tammy Johnson, Carolina Carillon Parade
Mr. James Sonefeld, The Animal Mission
Ms. Becky Bailey, Eau Claire Community Council's Ribs & Renaissance Festival
Mr. Henry Hopkins, Eau Claire Community Council's Ribs & Renaissance Festival
Mr. Richard Burts, Chair of the Hospitality Tax Committee
Mr. Darrin Thomas, Black Expo
Mr. John Whitehead, Columbia Music Festival Association

There was a consensus of Council to ask Ms. Libby Gober, City Council Liaison to draft and distribute a notice to all organizations that receive funding from the City of Columbia reminding them to be cautious with their funding / budgets because revenues are based on collections that are currently below projections.

2. Holiday Pay Policy – Mr. Steven Gantt, Interim City Manager

Mr. Steven A. Gantt, City Manager said that holiday pay is not required; it is something that is offered through the generosity of City Council. In April, we modified the holiday pay where an 80 hour employee receives 80 hours of holiday pay per year; a 12-hour employee receives 85 hours of holiday pay per year; and a 24-hour employee receives 120 hours of holiday pay per year. We surveyed other municipalities and we feel that our numbers are in line.

Councilor Finlay said that the Fire Department runs on a calendar year and not a fiscal year. They've scheduled holidays in November of the previous year for the entire upcoming calendar year. Long-term, this process makes no sense to me. We are totally out of sync with everything that happens in the City budget wise.

Councilor Devine said that this discussion came up in light of budget cuts. This proposal isn't to cut the budget but in looking at our practices, this is out of line and it costs us a lot of money. Since it's not budget driven is there a way to make a change to affect the next year.

Councilor Finlay suggested that in November they do a short holiday schedule from January to June and again in April for the next twelve months. As we begin to change the hours, we have firefighters who had scheduled holidays in November that are over their hours through no fault of their own. I think that Mr. King is better able to address this, but I do think it has gone from an issue of bringing things inline to a budgetary issue. I realize that there are mitigating circumstances on our budget, but we need to look at holiday pay and make another significant step. We were \$7 million over budget during the first month of the year; I hope that will change in August. If we wait until October or November to make cuts, there is no where for us to go.

Mr. Mike King, Assistant City Manager for Public Safety said that the holiday schedule for 2009 was set in November 2008; therefore, when the hours were cut to 120, we already had several firefighters whose leave hours are in a significant deficit. In other words, they took hours that they haven't physically accrued and they won't catch those up by the end of the year, because the accrual rate has been cut. We will have to correct that next year.

Mayor Coble asked Mr. King to put this in writing to include any options or matters already discussed.

Councilor Finlay said that due to our cost structure, we will have to go below the hours that we've already discussed on holiday pay.

Councilor Rickenmann said that he doesn't agree with some of the numbers and he would like to see this on paper as well. How will we fix the scheduling for the future? How are we going to handle holiday pay? What recommendations are coming from staff to handle possible short falls? We will have to make some real decisions at the end of September.

There was a consensus of Council to request additional information as it relates to alternatives and suggestions on holiday pay for various shifts and how holidays are scheduled for the Fire Department.

2a. **Perspectives on a Ride through the South Region – The Honorable Belinda F. Gergel – *This item was deferred.*

**Mr. S. Allison Baker, Assistant City Manager for Public Services said that they have been working on the development and funding of a new skate park at Owens Field; the contracts have been signed; and the contractor is ready to go to work. The ground breaking ceremony is scheduled for August 31, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

3. Council is asked to approve a Professional Services Contract for Lobbying Services, as requested by the Office of Governmental Affairs. Award to McLeod Butler Communications, LLC in the monthly amount of \$1,491.00 for a total annual amount of \$17,892.00. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: 1011103-638300 - This item was deferred.*

4. Council is asked to approve a Professional Services Contract for Lobbying Services, as requested by the Office of Governmental Affairs. Award to The Grant Group, Inc. in the monthly amount of \$1,491.00 for a total annual amount of \$17,892.00. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: 1011103-638300 – This item was deferred.*
5. Council is asked to approve a Professional Services Contract for Lobbying Services, as requested by the Office of Governmental Affairs. Award to the State Capitol Group, LLC in the monthly amount of \$2,982.00 for a total annual amount of \$35,784.00. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: 1011103-638300 – This item was deferred.*
6. Council is asked to approve an Agreement for Professional Financial Consulting Services for a one (1) year Service Extension period. Award to JB & Associates in the amount of \$30,000. *Funding Source: 1011101 – This item was deferred.*
7. Council is asked to approve the Scope of Work to provide services to clients in accordance with the Master Consulting Services Agreement dated December 18, 2008, as requested by the Employee Insurance Committee. Award to Towers Perrin in the amount of \$85,000. This vendor is located in Charlotte, NC. *Funding Source: 6048933 **Note:** The fixed fee is payable in installments with 30% of the fee due upon executions of Scope of Work; 40% of fee due October 1, 2009 and the remaining 20% of the fee is due upon completion of services. The fixed fee has three phases and it's broken down as follows: \$5,000 for the Planning / Educational Session; \$40,000 for the medical RFP; and \$40,000 for the prescription drug RFP - This item was deferred.*

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion by Dr. Gergel, seconded by Mr. Finlay, Council voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 12:18 p.m. for the discussion of **Item 8.** as amended.

8. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements
 - Village at Rivers' Edge Project – *Mayor Coble abstained from discussions due to a conflict of interest.*
 - YMCA
 - ****Columbia Renaissance Redevelopment District**

These items were discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.

 - **Council adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Salley
City Clerk