

**CITY OF COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
DECEMBER 20, 2011 – 3:00 P.M.
CITY HALL - 1737 MAIN STREET**



The Columbia City Council met for a Work Session on Tuesday, December 20, 2011 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. and the following members of Council were present: The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine, The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, The Honorable Leona K. Plough and The Honorable Brian DeQuincey Newman. The Honorable Sam Davis arrived at 3:06 p.m. and The Honorable Belinda F. Gergel arrived at 3:18 p.m. Also present were Mr. Steven A. Gantt, City Manager and Ms. Niki Daniels, City Clerk Assistant.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

1. Strategic Plan - Ms. Colleen Bozard, CC Bozard Consulting

Ms. Colleen Bozard, CC Bozard Consulting distributed revised copies of the Strategic Plan. Based on the comments I received from Council at the last Work Session, we made the determination that all Council members would take the plan with them, review it carefully and provide me with input by December 2, 2011. I heard from three (3) Council members, modified the plan and added a significant number of measurements. It was then distributed to key staff for input. I sent it to Council members again. One significant change was made to Public Safety after Ms. Plough suggested that we improve the ranking by 5%. I welcome your input, thoughts and comments based on what you've received.

Councilor Plough inquired about the citizen survey that is used by other cities to judge their accomplishments.

Ms. Colleen Bozard, CC Bozard Consulting said that she presented the recommendation to Ms. Caughman and it is the next step. Once this plan is approved, we create processes for how we are going to measure it.

Councilor Rickenmann suggested that incentives be offered to encourage citizens to complete the surveys.

Councilor Davis requested that a plan be drafted for annexations.

Councilor Devine reminded Council that staff will provide an update on annexations at the next Economic and Community Development Committee meeting.

Mayor Benjamin recalled that Council and staff took strides forward a few years ago to strengthen the annexation policy. We need to be more aggressive in a way that encourages people to come into the City.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously

to adopt the City of Columbia Strategic Plan for 2012-2015.

2. Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority Update – Dr. Robert Schneider, Interim Executive Director & General Manager / Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority, Operated by Veolia Transportation Services, Inc.

Dr. Robert Schneider, Interim Executive Director & General Manager / Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority reported that on December 14, 2011, the Board of Directors passed the fiscal year 2012 budget. Two weeks prior to that, they accepted Veolia's offer to allow me to serve as the interim Executive Director of the Authority. The Authority's budget element is a combination of a long history of a lot of different things. I was asked to identify the monthly deficit and fuel is our largest, non-labor expense. With the service reductions that were not implemented on October 1, 2011, we are burning through an additional \$42,000 per month that was not budgeted.

Councilor Rickenmann asked if the compressed natural gas buses are still parked. Would we have seen that kind of deficit if we had kept those in service?

Dr. Robert Schneider, Interim Executive Director & General Manager / Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority said no, there would be substantial savings. We looked at the regional costs and security and there were no major savings there. We've identified opportunities to restructure the custodial and landscaping contracts, but overall, there were no real savings beyond that. Veolia's contract is structured with two elements. The fixed rate encompasses the cost of doing business. Beyond the fixed rate of \$330,000 per month there is a variable rate for service the CMRTA wishes to provide at \$33.90 per hour. This is a fantastic deal as opposed to the rate charged to others. Approximately \$615,000 per month is being spent on Veolia's services, which creates a \$210,000 monthly deficit in addition to the \$42,000 per month for fixed route services. There will be a \$750,000 deficit from now through January. If services are not reduced, the shut down date is June 1, 2012.

Councilor Newman asked that this matter be scheduled for further discussion in January.

3. Canal Water Treatment Plant Phase II Project – Ms. Melisa Gentry, Assistant City Manager and Mr. Joey Jaco, Director of Utilities and Engineering

Mr. Joey Jaco, Director of Utilities and Engineering reported on the Columbia Canal Water Treatment Plant improvements, which will be on the next Council agenda for consideration. The Canal and Lake Murray Water Treatment Plants have a combined capacity of 146 million gallons per day. We average 65 million gallons per day and during peaks we reach up to 100 million gallons per day per year. Approximately 60% of our total capacity comes from the Canal Water Treatment Plant. We have over 375,000 customers from 150,000 services and over 2,400 miles of water main. In 1996 to 1998, we had a large filter rehabilitation project. In 2000 to 2006, we added the chemical feed facility and new laboratory and control facilities. The current construction is the new raw water facility and upgrades to high service pump station one. The project being discussed today is a continuation of the current construction project. It is a \$27 million project, which makes the 15 year total \$94 million. It would cost \$350 million to construct a new 100 million gallon per day plant. This project has two (2) deliverables: Deliverable I includes pumping and

clearwell upgrades in the amount of \$24,081,971 and Deliverable II includes the raw water reservoir and storm drain upgrades in the amount of \$2,600,000. He explained that the concrete structure around the clearwells needs to be relined or rebuilt, but they have to be drained first in order to determine that. The equipment in the pump rooms was installed in the 1940's and the electrical equipment was installed in the 1960's. We will drain our raw water reservoir and dredge it. A bypass line will be used during this process. A large drainage system runs through the Canal Water Treatment Plant and discharges into the river. It dates back to 1906 and we've had a lot of issues with it. As part of this project, we will rehabilitate a portion of that. We will also rebuild the storm drainage tunnels. Deliverable I includes most of the mechanical equipment and concrete related construction and Deliverable II includes dredging and tunnel work in the total amount of \$26,441,971. The engineering is estimated at \$2,789,000 for a total project cost of \$29,230,971.

3a. **Taboo Adult Superstore at 4716 Devine Street – The Honorable Leona Plough, District IV Representative

Councilor Plough thanked Council for having this discussion and for allowing citizens to come in and understand what has taken place. In 1998, City Council basically decided that there needed to be a place for sexually oriented businesses and struggled with where that place might be and the decision at that point was C-3. The result was that those businesses would be congregated through parts of town. I am assuming there are lots of areas in the City that are zoned C-3, because it is a general commercial area. She asked Council to give serious consideration to whether or not C-3 is an appropriate zoning classification for sexually oriented businesses, in general. We need to look at how we beef up planning. All of us realize that we haven't been able to do the level of planning that this City really needs. That would be land use to guide growth through our zoning ordinance. I would ask that you not only look at whether C-3 is appropriate for that type of use, but also to give preference and allocate money very quickly to hire a consultant to work with us to do planning that is necessary for this area.

Councilor Devine said that we also need to think outside of the box. I had conversations with Dean Hildy Teegan and I don't feel that we have utilized the University's resources as much as possible. This may be an opportunity to help us with some of the things Ms. Plough is talking about.

Mayor Benjamin inquired about the thought process behind the C-3 zoning classification.

Ms. Krista Hampton, Director of Planning and Development Services said that they are currently researching the matter.

Councilor Devine asked if the zoning ever went before the Board of Zoning Appeals or Council.

Ms. Krista Hampton, Director of Planning and Development Services said no.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Ms. Plough, Council voted

unanimously to go into Executive Session at 4:45 p.m.

4. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements – *This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.*
 5. **Receipt of legal advice which relates to a matter covered by attorney-client privilege – *This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.*
 6. **Receipt of legal advice which relates to a pending, threatened or potential claim – *This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.*
- **Council adjourned the Work Session at 5:20 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Moore
City Clerk