

City of West Columbia, SC

Regular Council Meeting

September 6, 2011 at 6 p.m.

Members Present:

Bobby E. Horton, Mayor
Eric L. Fowler
L. Dale Harley
Boyd Jones
Marsha Moore
Tommy Parler
Cathy Shannon
BJ Unthank

Members Absent:

Jack L. Harmon, Mayor Pro-Tem, ill

Others Present:

Jenny Cunningham, City Administrator
Myron Corley, Deputy City Administrator
Mardi Valentino, City Clerk
Brian Carter, Planning and Zoning Director
Sid Varn, Planning & Engineering Director
Members of the Public and Press

Jackie Brothers, Police Major
Stuart Jones, Building Official
Charles Garren, Public Works Director
Ken Ebener, Municipal Judge
Wyatt Coleman, Fire Chief

Agenda Item I – Call to Order

Mayor Horton called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. and noted a quorum was present. *The State, Free Times, Lexington County Chronicle, Cayce-West Columbia News, and The Columbia Star* were notified of the meeting by e-mail on September 2, 2011.

Agenda Item II – Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Council Member Jones gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item III – Requests for Appearance

- A. Mayor Horton recognized Ms. Jennifer Moore, Senior Director with the Financial Stability Council of the United Way of the Midlands. Ms. Moore gave a brief overview of the Midlands Housing Trust Fund (MHTF), which was founded to create and preserve quality, affordable housing in the Midlands. She explained that the trust fund would generate resources to build a higher quality of affordable housing for working families, which would help to attract industry and retain young professional such as teachers and public safety officers. She said housing is considered affordable when people pay no more than 30 percent of monthly income for housing. Paying more than 30 percent is considered housing burdened. In the Midlands, between 35 and 50 percent of renters and between 20 and 35 percent of homeowners are considered housing burdened. Ms. Moore stated that professionals in the Midlands who earn 80 percent or less than the area median income may include bank tellers, nurses and administrative assistants.

Ms. Moore introduced Mr. Kyle G. Michel, a board member with United Way of the Midlands and a local attorney. Mr. Michel explained that the MHTF has distinct accounts with dedicated revenue sources that finance development of quality housing for those most in need. Sources of funding for the housing trust fund include banks, foundations, private donations, the United Way, and local government monies such as general funds and CDBG funds.

Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting
September 6, 2011
Page Two

Agenda Item III – Requests for Appearance (continued)

Mr. Michel stated that the MHTF is valuable as a flexible source of funding to fill gaps that federal programs do not meet. The funding can be awarded as loans or grants depending on the need to subsidize units and the need to generate program income or to recycle funding. He explained that the MHTF is envisioned as a public-private funding partnership to preserve and increase the stock of affordable housing in the Midlands through advocacy, financing, and technical assistance. He said the MHTF is proposed as a regional program to increase access to quality, affordable housing throughout the community. Creating the regional trust fund as an independent nonprofit organization will allow local jurisdictions to adopt and participate in the fund. Mr. Michel said 38 states and over 700 cities and counties use housing trust funds to develop and preserve affordable housing. In South Carolina there are currently three housing trust funds: the SC Housing Trust Fund established in 1992, the Lowcountry Housing Trust (2004) and the Greenville Housing Fund (2008). The Mescher Act of 2007 (H3509) was passed by the SC legislature to allow local governments to join housing trust funds and use public dollars to support the programs.

Mr. Michel said local progress is being made toward establishing a regional housing trust fund. The United Way of the Midlands has advocated a trust fund since 2004 by committing staff resources, committing to contribute dollars and serving as the fiscal agent for the MHTF, which was incorporated in October 2010. Bylaws for the organization have been drafted and initial board members have been recruited. Mr. Michel stated that the City of Columbia has made a financial commitment for startup and taken first reading on an ordinance in April 2011. A 501(c)(3) application was submitted in June 2011 to obtain non-profit status for the Trust Fund.

Mayor Horton asked what specifically would be West Columbia's role. Mr. Michel responded that the Mescher Act allows local governments to become partners in the Trust Fund. He said Council could adopt an ordinance to join the MHTF, but that would not commit the city to provide funds. He said the program would be looking for funding support, but the city can couple local funds with the MHTF to secure suitable housing developments in the West Columbia area. He said the funds will be managed by the amount of funding put into the MHTF.

Mayor Horton thanked Ms. Moore and Mr. Michel for their presentation. He stated that Council will take their request under consideration.

- B. Mayor Horton recognized Mr. Milton Zanders, owner of True B-B-Q Restaurant on D Avenue. Mr. Zanders said he was appearing before Council to ask permission to hold a gospel fest on October 8, 2011 to celebrate the one-year anniversary of his restaurant. He said the event would be held from 1 to 6 p.m. and would provide an opportunity for local church choirs to participate. Mr. Zanders said the format would be similar to the Spring Fest held in April 2011. Mayor Horton asked if the event arrangements had been discussed with the Police Department. Mr. Zanders said he planned to meet with city officials to make sure the event met all city codes. Mr. Zanders said the gospel fest would not violate the city's noise ordinance and any litter will be picked up after the event. He said most businesses on that portion of D Avenue are closed on Saturday so merchants would not be negatively affected. Mayor Horton recognized Council Member Harley who made a motion to approve the gospel fest on Saturday, October 8, 2011. Council Member Unthank seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting
September 6, 2011
Page Three

Agenda Item IV – Announcements by the Mayor

- A. Mayor Horton recognized Public Works Director Charles Garren who introduced Larry Hall, the new equipment services manager for the Public Works Department. Mr. Garren said Mr. Hall previously worked for Newberry County where he was equipment manager over 30 fire stations. Mr. Hall began his employment with the city in early August and currently is working on updating computer programs in the Public Works Department to improve fleet efficiency.
- B. Mayor Horton announced that the City of West Columbia has been awarded the Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its comprehensive financial report (CAFR) covering fiscal year 2009-2010. He said the city has earned the award from the GFOA for 20 consecutive years. Mayor Horton noted that the Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting and represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management staff. Mayor Horton congratulated City Treasurer Rick Hodge for his efforts as the city official primarily responsible for the preparation and publication of the City's award-winning CAFR.
- C. Mayor Horton asked Council to consider cancelling the Council Work Session scheduled for September 19, 2011 due to the anticipated absence of a number of city staff and council members. Council agreed by consensus to cancel the work session in September. Mayor Horton said the Mayor's Round Table meeting usually held before the work session also would be cancelled. He announced that the Zoning Board of Appeals will meet on September 20, 2011 at 6 p.m. and the Planning Commission will meet on September 26, 2011 at 6 p.m.

Agenda Item V – Minutes

- A. Mayor Horton entertained a motion to approve the minutes for the Regular Council Meeting held August 2, 2011. Council Member Unthank so moved and Council Member Shannon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- B. Mayor Horton entertained a motion to approve the minutes for the Special Council Meeting held August 15, 2011. Council Member Unthank so moved and Council Member Parler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- C. Mayor Horton entertained a motion to approve the minutes for the Council Work Session held August 15, 2011. Council Member Fowler so moved and Council Member Parler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item VI – Old Business

- A. Mayor Horton entertained a motion for second reading consideration of an ordinance to annex .48 acres of property located at 1604 Riviera Drive (TMS # 003630-02-012). Council Member Unthank so moved and Council Member Parler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting
September 6, 2011
Page Four

Agenda Item VII – New Business

- A. Mayor Horton entertained a motion for consideration of a proclamation to join in the National Moment of Remembrance of the 10th anniversary of September 11, 2001. Council Member Fowler so moved and Council Member Parler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- B. Mayor Horton entertained a motion for consideration of a proclamation to designate the week of September 5 through 9, 2011 as National Payroll Week. Council Member Parler so moved and Council Member Unthank seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- C. Mayor Horton entertained a motion for consideration to approve a letter of promulgation adopting the City of West Columbia Emergency Operations Plan as amended. Council Member Unthank so moved and Council Member Fowler seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item VIII – Adjourn

Mayor Horton entertained a motion to adjourn. Council Member Harley so moved and Council Member Parler seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Council adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marta M. Valentino, CMC
City Clerk