

REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY, JUNE 11, 2007 AT 5:30 P.M. AT CITY HALL. MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Alton McCollum. COUNCILPERSONS: Buddy Sandifer, Ella Bamberg, Janeth Walker, Buck Fralick, Teresa Hannibal and Nancy Foster. CLERK: Bruce Watson. VISITORS: Gail Ellis, Phyllis Overstreet, Jerry Durgan, Rena Copeland, Franklin Bamberg, Chief George Morris, Officer Stephannie Ransom and Douglas Stokes.

Mayor McCollum called the meeting to order and Councilperson Bamberg gave the invocation.

Clerk Watson took the roll with everyone being present.

Councilperson Foster made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilperson Walker made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Mr. Douglas Stokes, thanking Council for their past support, informed them that he plans to hold a basketball camp at the High School for kids ages ten thru thirteen years of age. He asked Council for any kind of support for the camp.

Councilperson Walker asked when the Camp was going to be held?

Mr. Stokes informed Council the camp would be held from June 18th to the 22nd.

Councilperson Walker asked if there would be any registration fees?

Mr. Stokes explained that a \$30.00 registration fee would be required to cover the costs of lunch, a tee shirt and for the awards for the kids. He said any monies remaining would go to purchase a scoreboard for the Civic Center.

Councilman Sandifer commended Mr. Stokes for his past basketball programs.

Councilperson Foster asked if this summer's program would be the same as the Upward Program?

Mr. Stokes informed Council that this would be a basketball camp to develop the kid's basketball skills.

Councilperson Foster asked how many kids would be participating?

Mr. Stokes said he hoped to have 65 kids participating.

Councilperson Walker asked how many instructors would be involved?

Mr. Stokes said 13 instructors would be involved in the program.

After some discussion, Councilperson Foster made the motion to donate \$200.00 to the Basketball Camp. Councilperson Bamberg made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Mrs. Gail Ellis informed Council that a lot of vandalism and break-ins were occurring in the downtown business district. She said she had noticed that her store had been checked once during the night by an officer but felt the area needed to be patrolled and checked more than once a night. She told Council that during the week of Memorial Day that seven break-ins had occurred.

Councilperson Foster said she noticed the officers were patrolling the area more since they were now able to travel through the construction site.

Chief Morris informed Council the doors of the stores were normally checked twice a night and then patrolled throughout the night. He said the break-ins and vandalism were piling up in June and that they were embarrassing to the Police Department. Chief Morris said he had tightened up on the patrols and ordered his officers to check the area every thirty minutes. He said the officers were also instructed to address anyone roaming in the area at night.

Councilman Sandifer, saying the Chief was doing the best he could, told Council they would be discussing the problem later to try and help him with the problem.

Mrs. Ellis informed Council that she had talked to Chief Morris and that their talk was not pleasant. She said Chief Morris insinuated the problems were her fault due to organizing the downtown group.

Chief Morris told Council he meant it only as a joke and that he was only cutting fool when he said Mrs. Ellis had brought bad luck on them. Chief Morris said with school being out for the summer as well as criminals being released from jail have created the problems.

Mrs. Ellis thanked Council for their work on the parking lot but said they may need lights for the parking lot once daylight savings time ends. She said there was still trash in the alleys and behind the buildings.

Councilman Fralick said he met with the Sanitation Dept. to discuss the problems but that they disagreed with somethings.

Mrs. Ellis asked if public service workers could be utilized to help keep the alleys clean?

Mayor McCollum assured her that Clerk Watson would talk to Mr. Nichols about using the public service workers.

Councilperson Foster mentioned that the areas around the dumpsters needed to be cleaned by the contractor.

Mrs. Ellis asked Council if there were plans for a grand opening of Main Street?

Mayor McCollum informed Council that SCDOT has planned an opening reception at the flagpole once the project is completed.

Mrs. Ellis asked if they could have a grand opening for the businesses downtown?

Mayor McCollum said he would appoint a committee to look into having a grand opening.

Councilperson Foster said she felt Mrs. Ellis could come up with a grand opening program.

Mrs. Ellis informed Council the businesses wanted to stay and improve the downtown area. She said they were here to help Bamberg and not to hurt the City.

Mayor McCollum asked that Mrs. Ellis be placed on the agenda for next month's meeting to discuss the grand opening ceremony.

Mrs. Singleton informed Council that Singleton Printing and Still's Construction offices had also experienced problems with vandalism.

Councilperson Foster assured her that Chief Morris would address her problems.

Mrs. Rena Copeland from Niven and Nivens Engineering made Council aware that they could be eligible for a SCDOT Beautification Grant for the Civic Center. She said a grant would address landscaping and lighting for the center but could not be used to touch the building. Mrs. Copeland explained that the grant application would be due in seven weeks and that the grant was a 75/25 grant. She explained that her company would do the conceptual drawing, grant narrative and budget for the grant. Mrs. Copeland showed Council a conceptual drawing for the Civic Center.

Councilperson Foster asked if other grants were available for the Center?

Mrs. Copeland said CDBG grants were available.

Mayor McCollum informed Mrs. Copeland that he had talked to LSCOG who said no funds or grants were available for the building.

Councilperson Walker said she also got the same response from LSCOG.

Councilperson Hannibal asked Mrs. Copeland what her fee would be to apply for the grant?

Mrs. Copeland explained that the town would pay for her services and that they would need to go into executive session to discuss the fees as a contractual matter.

Councilperson Bamberg asked if grants were available to facelift the downtown area?

Mrs. Copeland said streetscape grants were available but not to renovate the buildings.

Mayor McCollum asked that a special called meeting be held next Monday at 5:30 p.m. to discuss the grant application further.

Councilperson Foster made the motion to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2007 meeting as received. Councilperson Hannibal made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilman Fralick made the motion to approve the minutes of the May 29, 2007 meeting as received. Councilman Sandifer made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilman Sandifer made the motion to approve the Budget and Finance Report as presented. Councilman Fralick made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Under Commission Reports.

Councilman Sandifer informed Council that the BCEDC met this morning but that he had no information to report.

Councilman Sandifer, saying the Chief realized the problem downtown, informed Council that a lot of minors were involved with the problems. He informed Council that the Curfew Ordinance needed to be enforced. He proposed enforcing a curfew until the downtown project was completed. He voiced that the parents should be held responsible for the minors who were causing the problems. He told Council the Police Commission would be meeting to give the Chief stipulations to go by.

Councilman Sandifer informed Council that expenses in the Police Department for the detention of inmates and for the cost of fuel was out of their control.

Councilman Sandifer questioned Chief Morris as to why his officers were traveling back to Aiken and spending four hours at a time in court when they helped with the drug task force? He said he had no problem with them participating on the task force but he felt the hometown officers should be writing the tickets.

Chief Morris explained that the officer who wrote the ticket was required to be in court but that he understood and was concerned himself. He said he would see what could be done.

Councilperson Bamberg informed Council that there were no new businesses opening in Bamberg last month. She said business license renewals would be going out in July. She told Council the Skateboarding Committee had discussed a curfew, discussed bringing the parents to court and that they had decided to delete the last article of the proposed ordinance. She explained that the ordinance would come before Council at their next meeting.

Councilperson Walker had no report.

Councilman Fralick said he had no report. He informed Council that the Sanitation Commission would be meeting to discuss some issues in order to make a recommendation to Council.

Councilperson Hannibal informed Council that she had attended a meeting in the Fire Department last Thursday. She said the department discussed with her and schooled her concerning the department's job and responsibilities. She said they also showed her their equipment. She told Council the department was a very good department which was run by a great chief. She informed Council that the department had requested more fire extinguishers to replace some outdated ones.

Councilperson Foster informed Council that the pads for the basketball goals at the Ness Park had arrived. She told Council that the DHEC was pursuing the Foster Park issue and that the City would move forward either way.

Councilperson Foster reported that the All Stars had completed their games and that the Sanitation Dept. had done a great job of cleaning the Ness Complex during the season.

Councilperson Foster informed Council that the planter boxes at the Ness Complex were in need of replanting and painting. She said she had talked to Job Corps and her committee about the problem.

Under Old Business.

Councilperson Foster made the motion to approve on second reading Ordinance 07-1. Councilman Fralick made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilman Fralick made the motion to approve on second reading Ordinance 07-2. Councilman Sandifer made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

After Councilperson Hannibal informed Council that her committee had met to discuss and draft the Panhandling Ordinance with the attorney's approval, Councilperson Walker made the motion to approve on first reading Ordinance 07-3 dealing with panhandling. Councilperson Hannibal made the necessary second. All approved. The motion carried.

After Clerk Watson explained the quotes for the inside painting of the Civic Center and Council discussed the issue, Councilman Sandifer made the motion to have S. & Q.

Painting perform the work at a cost of \$9,000 to come from reserve funds. Councilperson Walker made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

After Clerk Watson explained the Memorandum of Agreement with the SC Emergency Management Division for the use of the Statewide Alert System, Councilperson Foster made the motion to approve the MOA. Councilperson Bamberg made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

During the discussion of the Memorandum of Agreement with the SCDHEC for use of the Civic Center during emergencies, Council agreed to table the discussion until County Emergency Preparedness Director Sharon Hammond could be contacted to discuss some issues.

Councilman Sandifer informed Council that there were still problems with the junked cars in neighborhood areas and on Mr. Wayne Hughes' property on Calhoun Street.

Mr. Wayne Hughes informed Council that he had hauled off ten cars this year. He explained that a junkyard was a place that buys and sells used parts. He said it took time to write letters to the owners of the towed vehicles. He assured Council that he was not operating a junkyard.

Councilman Sandifer told Mr. Hughes when cars were left on his property month after month that it created a junkyard.

Mr. Hughes said once he had ten or twelve cars towed he would go to the SCDMV to receive the names of the owners. He emphasized that he was not running a junkyard.

Councilperson Walker informed Council that she had talked to Mr. Hughes. She asked Council to allow her to work with Mr. Hughes and to give him additional time to move the vehicles. She assured Council that Mr. Hughes was aware of Council's concerns.

Councilperson Hannibal informed Council that Premier Motor Company had wrecked cars stored behind his place of business which was next to her home.

Chief Morris told Council the owner was moving the wrecked vehicles out of town and said he also intended to move his whole business out of town if the City would just bare with him.

Councilperson Hannibal voiced that junked cars were in her front door. She said she didn't want the kind of people and animals that junkyards bring and said her yard needed to look beautiful also.

Chief Morris explained the removal process.

Councilperson Walker said she would be working with Mr. Hughes concerning his cars, unkept lot as well as the birm on his property.

During the announcements, Councilman Sandifer commended Councilperson Foster for the reception she organized honoring Mrs. Betty Mack and Mrs. Frances Johnson for their years of service on Council.

Councilperson Walker informed Council that she had talked to developer Richard Kemp who was willing to donate a 80 foot by 100 foot lot on Cricketbrook Drive to the city to be used as a park. She told Council that they would need the neighborhood's support for the park. Councilperson Walker said she had also talked to Representative Sellers who felt he could get some funding for the park.

Councilman Sandifer told Council that before they go to Representative Sellers that the property needed to be deeded to the City. He reminded Council that once before they discussed a park in the same area but were told by the neighbors they did not want a park next to their homes.

Councilperson Walker assured Council that her constituents were in favor of the park and said the Police Department would just have to enforce the ordinances when it came to dealing with any problems at the park.

Councilperson Foster said it was a wonderful idea. She asked if they were talking about a park with benches or one with basketball goals?

Councilperson Walker informed Council that she was considering a park not necessarily a basketball court but one with benches, a picnic area and a playground area.

Councilperson Walker made the motion to contact Mr. Kemp to have him deed the property to the City of Bamberg to check to be sure the property was clear of any liens and then to ask Representative Sellers for help with funding for the park. Councilperson Hannibal made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Councilperson Walker informed Council that she had constituents who owned large trucks who were asking if the City had any property they could park on due to the ordinance not allowing trucks in the neighborhoods.

Councilman Fralick said they would have to be talking about a very large area.

Councilman Sandifer said the city would have to be willing to assume the liability that would come with a truck parking lot.

Mayor McCollum informed Council that Mr. Bob McCully had told Council once before that trucks could utilize his parking lot at the E-Z Shop on the Cope Road.

Councilperson Walker said she would talk to her constituents more about their concerns.

During Questions from the audience and press, Mrs. Betty Mack asked if the City would be holding a July 4th Celebration and fireworks display this year?

Mayor McCollum explained that The Tams were coming this year and that Kathy Rhoad was serving as chairperson once again.

Mrs. Mack thanked Council and everyone for the reception that was held on Sunday honoring her and Mrs. Johnson. She told Council a formal thank you would be forthcoming. Mrs. Mack told Council she was still ready to serve the City if needed.

Mayor McCollum informed Council that they have been invited to tour the hospital following the meeting on June 21st.

Councilperson Foster informed Mr. Pam Barnwell that officers were now patrolling the downtown area every thirty minutes.

With no further business, Councilman Sandifer made the motion to adjourn. Councilperson Walker made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk

Mayor