

REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL
ON MARCH 11, 2002 AT 5:30 P.M. AT CITY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Alton McCollum

COUNCILPERSONS: Buddy Sandifer, Frances Johnson, David Walker,
Betty Wells, Betty Mack and Nancy Foster

CLERK: Bruce Watson

VISITORS: Cindy Nichols, Phyllis Overstreet, Chief George
Morris, Bob McCully, Inspector Charles Kirkland and
Mr. & Mrs. Culberth

Mayor McCollum called the meeting to order and Mr. Wells gave the invocation.

Clerk Watson took the roll with everyone being present.

Mrs. Johnson made the motion to approve the agenda to include an amendment to the executive session to discuss a personnel matter. Mrs. Mack made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Building Inspector Kirkland reported that one zoning permit was approved for a new children's store in Bamberg along with the issuing of permits for one new home, nine repairs and for two mobile homes last month. Inspector Kirkland informed the Council that the Bamberg Zoning Board of Appeals allowed a variance for a kindergarten on Sanders Street.

Mr. Walker made the motion to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2002 and February 21, 2002 meetings as received. Mrs. Mack made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Mrs. Johnson made the motion to approve the Budget and Finance Reports as received. During the discussion, Clerk Watson explained that the budget was on line for this time period. Mr. Sandifer asked if the County was current in sending the collected tax revenues. Clerk Watson explained that the City had received all collected tax revenues up to date. All approved the motion. The motion carried.

Under Commission Reports.

Mr. Sandifer reported that sign up for the summer recreation program began last week and said they expect 400 kids to be involved in the program this year. Mr. Sandifer informed the Council that coaches and teams would be picked within the next four weeks.

Mrs. Mack asked if the summer program included all programs.

Mr. Sandifer explained that the summer program included all baseball programs in which a \$20.00 fee is charged for participation. Mr. Sandifer said they had considered charging an extra \$10.00 for out of town participants but didn't see where this was necessary.

Mrs. Johnson reported that she had attended the Governor's Rural Summit on March 4th and 5th. She informed Council that the meeting was educational and inspirational. She explained that Senator Mathews had been the planner and that Coach Jefferies had talked about the need for change. She urged every member to attend next year.

Mr. Walker presented Council with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of Boy Scout Troop 24 thanking the City for their support.

Mrs. Wells informed Council that the Sanitation Department had been performing work as usual. She told Council that Business After Hours would be held at 6:30 p.m. at the office of Johnny Haralson on Highway 78.

Mrs. Foster asked Chief Morris if license monies were still coming in from coin operated machine owners. Chief Morris informed Council that machines were still being found and Clerk Watson reported that monies were still being collected.

Under Old Business.

Mr. Sandifer reported that the renovation of the Barber Shop had been completed at a cost of \$32,825.40 which he said was \$825.00 over the original estimate. Mr. Sandifer informed Council that the City purchased the building for \$9,000.00 which brought the total project cost to \$41,825.40. He said the building was ready to be put on the market.

Mr. Sandifer said he felt the property needed to be sold and not rented.

Mr. Sandifer then made the motion to sell the Barber Shop building by means of sealed bids with the minimum price to be accepted at \$40,000.00. Mr. Walker made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Mayor McCollum reported to Council that Manager Ellis had estimated the cost for 680 feet of drainage pipe and one drainage inlet for the railroad brim to cost approximately \$25,000.00. Mayor McCollum explained that the BPW would be doing the work but that he was not sure whether the pipe would be concrete or corrugated.

Mrs. Johnson made the motion to approve the \$25,000.00 for the piping of the ditch. Mr. Walker made the second.

During the discussion, Mr. Sandifer voiced that Council had already dipped into the reserves for the \$32,000.00 to renovate the Barber Shop. He felt they should put the piping off until the Barber Shop could be sold. He said that three months would not make a difference.

Mrs. Johnson voiced that the building would be sold and that they needed to move forward to pipe the ditch.

All approved of the motion except Mr. Sandifer who abstained. The motion carried.

Under New Business.

Chief Morris informed Council that four businesses are presently on the City's wrecker rotation list and that he was concerned with the outrageous towing and storage fees that they are charging. He explained that they are charging \$100.00 to tow a vehicle just in the city. Chief Morris said this makes the City look like a bad guy when the officers call to have a vehicle towed. Chief Morris said the City needed to look at setting fees that could be charged for towing and storage within the city and he said other cities are doing this. Chief Morris also informed Council that once the vehicles are stored that they are being ransacked and then the businesses don't want to pay for the items that are stolen.

Mr. Sandifer mentioned that the City could store the vehicles at the City lot if needed.

After some discussion, Mayor McCollum asked the Police Commission to study the problem and then make a recommendation to Council at the next meeting.

Chief Morris explained to Council the problem he was having with some officers unlocking cars with slim jims and some refusing to unlock them. He explained that if he ordered all officers to unlock cars then the City could become liable for any damages. Council felt that all officers should be equipped with slim jims and told to use them only if they thought they could unlock a vehicle without causing any damages. Chief Morris explained that most cities don't unlock vehicles.

Mrs. Johnson felt the City didn't need the liability associated with unlocking vehicles and said that Jeff Black would unlock cars for \$5.00.

Mr. Sandifer voiced that it was good public relations for the police officers to be involved in helping citizens unlock their cars.

Mrs. Foster said we need to be in the business to serve the citizens.

Mr. Sandifer then made the motion to have the Police Department unlock vehicles when they can. Mrs. Foster made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Chief Morris informed Council that Clerk Watson had solved most of the problem with the drug testing by locating a doctor to pull the samples. Chief Morris told Council that if we drug test the police officers at random then we should drug test all city employees at random. He said that all the officers felt the same way.

After some discussion, Council instructed Clerk Watson to check to see if all City employees could be randomly tested.

Mrs. Johnson made the motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 02-02 to deed land to Bamberg County. Mrs. Wells made the necessary second.

During the discussion, Mr. Sandifer voiced that he was concerned that the land should be reverted back to the City if it is not used as intended. Clerk Watson explained that the City attorney would place a reversion statement in the deed.

All approved the first reading of Ordinance 02-02. The motion carried.

Mrs. Foster made the motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 02-03 to amend Section 6-2-5 dealing with commercial and industrial containers in order to prohibit illegal dumping. Mrs. Johnson made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Mrs. Johnson asked how the City would enforce the amended ordinance. Mayor McCollum informed her that stickers would be placed on the dumpsters stating the fine that will be imposed.

Mrs. Foster stating that the merchants pay for the use of their dumpsters, said the City must deter illegal dumping.

During the discussion of building code enforcement for downtown, Mrs. Foster made the motion to hold a separate workshop to discuss this. Mrs. Johnson made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Mrs. Johnson made the motion to reappoint Mrs. Joan Cooper to the Board of Adjustments and Appeals. Mr. Walker made the second. All approved.

Mayor McCollum appointed Mr. Sandifer, Mrs. Johnson and Mr. Walker to the 2002-2003 Budget Committee and asked Mr. Sandifer to chair the committee.

Mrs. Johnson made the motion to go into executive session to receive legal advice, to discuss negotiations incident to a contractual arrangement and to

discuss a personnel matter. Mr. Walker made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Mrs. Wells made the motion to come out of the executive session. Mrs. Johnson made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Mayor McCollum announced that Council had been invited to a drop in at the old shopping center in Orangeburg at 5:30 p.m. tomorrow.

Mrs. Foster announced that on March 20th a day of events will be planned to honor Black History Week.

Mr. Henry Maynard informed Council that the National Summer Youth Program has been moved to Voorhees College this year. He told Council the program has grown to over 350 kids. He asked Council to support the program again this year.

Mrs. Johnson voiced that the City needed to double its support and donate \$500.00 to the National Youth Program this year.

Mrs. Foster felt the City needed to support the program and asked that the request be put on next month's agenda.

Council agreed to place Mr. Maynard's request on next month's agenda.

Mrs. Tammie Culberth invited Council to the ribbon cutting for her new business called Earth Mothers which will be held on Wednesday at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Bob McCully saying that he endorsed the National Summer Youth Program informed Council that Mr. Maynard may need an answer tonight in order to plan for this summer's program. He urged Council to agree to support him with at least the same amount of funding as last year.

Mayor McCollum assured Mr. Maynard that Council would support him.

With no further business, Mr. Walker made the motion to adjourn. Mrs. Johnson made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.