

**MINUTES  
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL  
Regular Scheduled Meeting  
Tuesday, January 10, 2023**

The City Council of the City of Westminster met in a regular scheduled meeting on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 6:00 pm at the Westminster Fire Department with Mayor Brian Ramey presiding. Those in attendance were:

Brian Ramey  
Jimmy Powell

Dale Glymph  
Audrey Reese

Daby Snipes  
Adam Dunn

Ruth May

City Administrator, Kevin Bronson  
City Clerk, Rebecca Overton  
Police Chief, Matt Patterson  
Fire Chief, Michael Smith  
Interim Utility Director, Kevin Harbin  
City Attorney, Andrew Holliday  
Members of the public and press

*Notice of the meeting and the agenda was posted on a window at the Fire Department and at westminstersc.org twenty-four hours prior to the meeting and all persons, organizations and local media requesting notification and the agenda were notified by email.*

**Call to Order**

Mayor Ramey called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Mrs. Audrey Reese led the Council in the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Certification of Quorum**

Rebecca Overton certified a quorum.

**Public Comments**

Leslie Hagerty of the Oconee History Museum addressed Council with some concerns she had about changes to the HTAX application process. She stated the Museum used the HTAX Grant to cover the cost of utilities and she was concerned about fund being available under the guidelines of having to prove 50 % tourism.

**Comments from the Mayor and Council**

January 10, 2023

Mayor Ramey reminded Council of The Municipal Association Hometown Legislative Action Day in February. He also informed Council that We Care was having issues with their building and codes and he was helping them look at solutions.

### **Routine Business**

1. Approval of the December 13, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion by Mrs. Reese and seconded by Mr. Glymph, the motion to **approve the December 13, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes** passed unanimously.

<b>Member</b>	<b>Motion</b>	<b>Vote</b>
Ramey		Yes
Glymph	Second	Yes
Powell		Yes
Reese	Motion	Yes
Dunn		Yes
Snipes		Yes

2. Comments from the Interim Utility Director

- a. Mr. Harbin informed Council that crews has met with Norfolk Southern to finish the 12kV project.
- b. Mr. Harbin informed Council that the reconstruction of the Welcome Sign in front of Walgreens had been halted due to weather conditions and a delay in receiving materials.
- c. Mr. Harbin informed Council that the recent extremely cold weather had brought on low or no water pressure issues. He added that some of this was due to multiple busted water lines in the Foxwood Hills area and ice forming in the exposed lines.
- d. Mr. Harbin informed Council that located had been secured for the Park Place business building so that the sewer line there could be replaced.

3. Comments from City Administrator

- a. Mr. Bronson informed Council that during the recent extremely cold weather there had been an issue with the on call answering service. He added that due to staffing issues on their end, the amount of calls coming in for weather related issues could not be handled and the service had issued a blanket message. Mr. Bronson added that going forward staff plans to bring someone in to City Hall in situations like this to answer the City Hall phones and help direct crews to outages or problems.

## Old Business

1. Consideration of second reading of Ordinance No. 2023-01-10-01, Authorizing an Equipment Lease Purchase Agreement in the amount of not exceeding \$310,000 between The City Of Westminster, South Carolina, and Truist Bank, A North Carolina Banking Corporation, to defray the cost of acquiring certain Equipment; and other matters relating thereto.

Mr. Bronson reminded Council that this ordinance includes financing for a garbage truck, closing costs and terms of the financing from Truist Bank. He added that the purchase price for the garbage truck is \$294,946.20, financed at 4.01% for 8 years with annual payments between \$33,000-\$44,500. The total financing is for \$310,000, which includes the purchase price of the truck and all closing costs.

Upon a motion by Mr. Powell and seconded by Mr. Dunn, the motion to **approve second reading of Ordinance No. 2023-01-10-01, Authorizing an Equipment Lease Purchase Agreement in the amount of not exceeding \$310,000 between The City Of Westminster, South Carolina, and Truist Bank, A North Carolina Banking Corporation, to defray the cost of acquiring certain equipment; and other matters relating thereto** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph		Yes
Powell	Motion	Yes
May		Yes
Reese		Yes
Dunn	Second	Yes
Snipes		Yes

2. Consideration of second reading of Ordinance No. 2023-01-10-02, Authorizing and Providing for the Issuance of one or more series of Combined Utility System Revenue Bond Anticipation Notes, of The City Of Westminster, South Carolina, in the Aggregate Principal Amount of not exceeding \$8,705,000; Providing for the Form and Details of The Notes; Providing for the Payment of the Principal of and Interest on the Notes; Providing for the Disposition of the Proceeds of the Notes; and Other Matters Relating Thereto.

Mr. Bronson reminded Council that a requirement of the USDA-RD loan is to obtain interim financing for the loan amount and that a Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) is the mechanism by which the City may secure the interim financing.

Mr. Bronson added that with final approval of this ordinance, referred to as the "BAN Ordinance," staff and the city's bond counsel, Burr & Forman, would

solicit financial institutions for BAN funding proposals. The planned schedule is as follows.

- (i) January 10      Second Reading of BAN Ordinance                      City Council
- (ii) January 11      Distribute BAN Request for Proposals                      City; Burr & Forman
- (iii) February 8      Receipt of BAN Bids; Acceptance                      City; Burr & Forman
- (iv) [Prior to March 1]      Receipt of letter from Rural Development authorizing the City to incur interim financing Rural Development; City
- (v) February 23      BAN Pre-Closing                      Certain City Officials; City Attorney; Burr & Forman; Bank
- (vi) March 1              BAN Closing                      Burr & Forman; Bank

Upon a motion by Mr. Powell and seconded by Mrs. Reese, the motion to ***approve second reading of Ordinance No. 2023-01-10-02, Authorizing and Providing for the Issuance of one or more series of Combined Utility System Revenue Bond Anticipation Notes, of The City Of Westminster, South Carolina, in the Aggregate Principal Amount of not exceeding \$8,705,000; Providing for the Form and Details of The Notes; Providing for the Payment of the Principal of and Interest on the Notes; Providing for the Disposition of the Proceeds of the Notes; and Other Matters Relating Thereto*** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph		Yes
Powell	Motion	Yes
May		Yes
Reese	Second	Yes
Dunn		Yes
Snipes		Yes

3. Consideration of Appointment of Commissioner to Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority Board

Mr. Bronson informed Council that the Inter-Municipal Agreement and Joint Resolution, effective June 2, 2007, between the cities of Seneca, Walhalla and Westminster creating the OJRSA calls for the appointment of nine (9) Commissioners.

Mr. Bronson added that Article 4, Section (a) reads, in part, “Walhalla and Westminster shall jointly appoint (1) Commissioner who shall reside outside any of the member-municipalities and who is not an employee of any member.”

Mr. Bronson informed Council that Mr. Talley Grant resigned from the Board, effective December 31, 2022.

Upon a motion by Mayor Ramey and seconded by Mrs. Reese, the motion to **appoint David Dial to the OJRSA Board** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey	Motion	Yes
Glymph		Yes
Powell		Yes
May		Yes
Reese	Second	Yes
Dunn		Yes
Snipes		Yes

### **New Business**

1. Consideration of Hospitality Tax Grant Process and Application for FY 23/24

Mr. Bronson informed Council that staff had revised the Hospitality Tax Grant policy and application. He also added that this application and policy closely follows Oconee County’s Accommodations Tax Grant process and application and that by utilizing similar forms, the hope is to make applying for both easier since the forms and documentation are similar.

Upon a motion by Mr. Powell and seconded by Mrs. Snipes, the motion to **approve the revised Hospitality Tax Grant Process and Application for FY 23/24** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph		Yes
Powell	Motion	Yes
May		Yes
Reese		Yes
Dunn		Yes
Snipes	Second	Yes

2. Presentation and Consideration of Annual Audited Statements Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2022

Marcy Loucks of McKinley Cooper & Co., LLC presented the Audited Statements for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022. Ms. Loucks pointed out to Council that the City overall was in good standings at the close of the fiscal year with a positive net balance of 13.6 million and that the firm has issued an unmodified opinion, or as also known, a clean opinion.

3. Consideration of Motion to provide a Letter of Commitment for the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant with the City of Westminster to provide the grant match of \$28,626.00, or 10%, of the \$286,260.00 grant total

Mr. Bronson informed Council that Staff is in the process of applying to the South Carolina Emergency Management Department (SCEMD) for Federal Emergency Manager Agency (FEMA) funding for four back-up generators. He added that the generators are planned to be located at City Hall; the Apple Tower water tank; the highway 76 water pump and the Utility Shop. The budget for the grant is \$286,260.00 with a required City match of 10% or \$28,626.00.

Mr. Bronson added that SCEMD requires the governing body commit the matching funds as part of the application.

Upon a motion by Mr. Dunn and seconded by Mrs. Reese, the motion to **approve a Letter of Commitment for the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant with the City of Westminster to provide the grant match of \$28,626.00 or 10% of the \$286,260.00 grant total** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph		Yes
Powell		Yes
May		Yes
Reese	Second	Yes
Dunn	Motion	Yes
Snipes		Yes

4. Consideration of Resolution No. 01-10-2023-01; A Resolution Supporting the Local Match for the CDBG Community Development Block Grant Program

Mr. Bronson informed Council that on December 7, 2022, Governor Henry McMaster notified Mayor Brian Ramey that the City of Westminster was selected to receive \$250,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the State of South Carolina's Special Projects Program. He added that the grant will fund renovations and an expansion of W. P. Anderson Park located on W. North Avenue in Westminster that will include

new playground equipment that is handicap accessible as well as play components designed for children on the Autistic spectrum. The plans also call for incorporating shade structures and passive sitting areas for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the park. The City will match the \$250,000 CDBG grant with \$46,300 from local funds. The total project cost is \$296,300.

Mr. Bronson concluded that the grant requires a resolution passed by the City Council committing the funds to the project.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Reese and seconded by Ms. May, the motion to **approve Resolution Resolution No. 01-10-2023-01; A Resolution Supporting the Local Match for the CDBG Community Development Block Grant Program** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph		Yes
Powell		Yes
May	Second	Yes
Reese	Motion	Yes
Dunn		Yes
Snipes		Yes

### Executive Session

1. Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property, the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. 34-4-70 (2).
  - (a) Contractual agreements between the City of Westminster and Oconee County regarding Fire Service
  - (b) Possible contractual agreement with a health care provider
  - (c) Receive information related to two (2) personnel matters

Upon motion by Mayor Ramey and seconded by Mr. Dunn, the motion to **enter into executive session** passed unanimously.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Snipes and seconded by Mrs. Snipes, the motion to **exit executive session** passed unanimously.

There was no action following executive session.

**Adjourn**

Upon a motion by Mayor Ramey and seconded by Mrs. Reese, the motion ***to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 pm*** passed unanimously.

(Minutes submitted by Rebecca Overton)

---

Mayor Brian Ramey

---

Date

*January 10, 2023*