

**MINUTES
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL
Regular Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, March 7, 2023**

The City Council of the City of Westminster met in a regular scheduled meeting on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at 6:00 pm at the Westminster Depot 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
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 Depot 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.

Special Recognition – West-Oak High School Wrestling Team

Mayor Ramey recognized members of the West-Oak High School Wrestling Team for their recent Division win. He presented members of the Team and their Coaches with recognition certificates and announced that the City wanted to celebrate with them as they were recently named the SC Division 3A State Wrestling Champions. Team members and Coaches received a loud round of applause from Council Members and members of the audience.

Public Comments

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Mildred Spearman addressed Council with her support of the need for the Hope ComeUnity project homes. She added that as a former employee of Tamassee DAR School, she had worked with the kind of families that could potentially benefit from a program like the one Hope ComeUnity hopes to establish. Mrs. Spearman added that Westminster has an opportunity to offer help and make a difference in the lives of the families this program will offer help to.

Juanita McMillan addressed Council with her support of Hope ComeUnity as well. She added that she had been an educator for over 29 years and has seen many families that could benefit from a program geared toward homelessness and struggles. Mrs. McMillan added that she believed Westminster has a prime opportunity to give hope to families in need.

Comments from the Mayor and Council

Mrs. Snipes recognized fellow Council Member Ms. Ruth May for recently being recognized by the NAACP for being elected to City Council. Mrs. Snipes also recognized fellow Council Member Mrs. Reese and her upcoming birthday.

Mayor Ramey stated that Mr. Bronson had located a few different places that may work for the West-Oak Championship sign and that Mr. Bronson will be checking with the Booster Club for agreement on a location. Mayor Ramey also reminded Council of the following upcoming dates: March 18th Citywide clean-up beginning at 8:30 am, and April 6th Main Street Master Plan Public Meeting.

Routine Business

1. Approval of the February 16, 2023 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion by Mrs. Reese and seconded by Mr. Glymph, the motion to ***approve the February 16, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes as amended*** passed unanimously.

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

2. Approval of the February 16, 2023 Budget Workshop Minutes

Upon a motion by Mrs. Reese and seconded by Mr. Powell, the motion to ***approve the February 16, 2023 Budget Workshop Minutes*** passed unanimously.

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

3. Comments from the Utility Director

- a. Mr. Harbin informed Council that the restrooms at Anderson Park were now open.
- b. Mr. Harbin informed Council that crews are in the process of using a camera in some locations of the sewer system and that some roads may be blocked, while this takes place.

4. Comments from City Administrator

- a. Mr. Bronson informed Council that the Local Development Board had recently met and discussed expanding the Commercial Building Improvement Grant amount from \$5,000 to \$7500 but decided not to expand the amount at this time and instead opted to send notices to qualifying businesses owners to inform them about the program.
- b. Mr. Bronson reminded Council that the PMPA Scholarship was being offered again to qualifying High School Seniors and that this would offer two \$1,000 Scholarships that are paid by PMPA.
- c. Mr. Bronson informed Council that United Healthcare was offering a “U Card” to its customers that could be used to pay for the utility bill. He added that there had been some confusion to those customers since the Utility office is not capable of the processing the card for payment since it is not the same as a debit or credit card. Mrs. Overton added that staff has been instructing the United Healthcare customers to contact a United representative and request a check be mailed to the Utility office on behalf of the customer’s account.

Old Business

1. Consideration of Second Reading of Ordinance No. 2023-03-07-01; An Ordinance Amending the City of Westminster’s Budget Ordinance, An Ordinance Making Appropriations For Certain Expenses, Capital Improvements and Indebtedness of The City of Westminster, South Carolina for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2022 and Ending June 30, 2023

Upon a motion by Mr. Dunn and seconded by Mr. Powell, the motion to ***approve second reading of Ordinance No. 2023-03-0-01; An Ordinance Amending the City of Westminster’s Budget Ordinance, An Ordinance Making***

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Appropriations For Certain Expenses, Capital Improvements and Indebtedness of The City of Westminster, South Carolina for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2022 and Ending June 30, 2023 passed unanimously.

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

New Business

1. Consider bid award for website design and hosting

Mr. Bronson informed Council he had received bids for website design, development, and hosting. He added that several of the bids were from companies from various states and that he had hoped to keep the work local. Council directed Mr. Bronson to use his knowledge of what was needed in a website and to select the firm he felt best suited the needs of Westminster.

2. Discussion of City Councilmember Pay (Mayor Ramey)

Current Pay:

- Mayor* \$2,300
- Councilmember* \$2,000

Mayor Ramey stated he understood a pay increase for Council could be controversial but wanted to be as transparent as possible. He added that Council Members put in a lot of time and work and that an increase in pay may encourage long-term service to Council. He also added that it had been quite some time since an increase had been reviewed. Mayor Ramey also added that the increase would not be effective until January 2024, after the 2023 election.

Mr. Glymph stated that he had researched the Council salaries of other similar cities and towns the same size as Westminster. He added that this type of information is available on the website of the Municipal Association and that Westminster is far below the pay scale for other Municipalities of its size.

Mrs. Reese stated that she felt like Council pay was a difficult subject but that showing appreciation with compensation is certainly welcoming to any employee or public servant. She also added that while she was in agreement with an

increase she would like to see the increase be kept in line with other Municipalities the size of Westminster. Mr. Dunn added that he agreed with this.

3. Discussion of the request by Westminster Hope ComeUnity for Riley Street

Ms. May asked that members of the Westminster Hope ComeUnity reach out to surrounding neighbors of the Riley Street area or their input on the project. Mrs. Snipes stated that she felt like the project was not a “homeless shelter” as much as it was going to be a place for families in need of assistance with basic needs but also long term needs as well.

Mayor Ramey stated that it has been a long-term goal of the City to grow tax base and by giving away the Riley Street property, the City could be losing some tax base. Mayor Ramey suggested the Westminster Hope ComeUnity Board get with Mr. Bronson and come up with a proposal for Council to consider.

Adjourn

Upon a motion by Mrs. Reese and seconded by Mr. Glymph, the motion ***to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 pm*** passed unanimously.

(Minutes submitted by Rebecca Overton)

Mayor Brian Ramey

Date