

**MINUTES
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL
Regular Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, April 5, 2022**

The City Council of the City of Westminster met in a regular scheduled meeting on Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 6:00 pm at the Westminster Depot with Mayor Brian Ramey presiding. Those in attendance were:

Brian Ramey
Jimmy Powell

Dale Glymph
Yousef Mefleh

City Administrator, Kevin Bronson
City Clerk, Rebecca Overton
Utility Director, Leigh Baker
Police Chief, Matt Patterson
Fire Chief, Michael Smith
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 pledge.

Certification of Quorum

Rebecca Overton certified a quorum.

Special Recognition of the 2022 10 & Under Westminster Recreation State Basketball Champions

Mayor Ramey recognized members of the 10 & Under Westminster Recreation Basketball Team for their recent State Championship 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 10 & Under State Basketball Champions. Team members and Coaches received a loud round of applause from Council Members and members of the audience.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.
April 5, 2022

Comments from the Mayor and Council

Mayor Ramey reminded everyone that Crossroads Baptist Church would be having an Easter Program and hot dog supper at the Retreat Street Park on Friday, April 15. He encouraged all to try to attend. Mayor Ramey also read a letter from Seneca Council Member Dana Moore thanking Westminster Council Members for their support as he served on the Appalachian Council of Government Committee. Mayor Ramey then thanked the Senior Outreach for hosting a public forum for potential Council candidates.

Presentation of Hospitality Tax Grant Requests

Mr. Bronson reminded Council that the purpose of this was to hear the requests and Council would be making a decision later to award amounts. Mr. Glymph stated that he would be recusing himself from any vote on money awarded to the Bigfoot Committee. The following organizations presented requests:

- Oconee Heritage Fair – Melinda Harbin spoke on behalf of the Farm Center, which hosts the fairgrounds and stated that the fair draws people from all over.
- Art Center – Melody Davis stated that the Art Center was open all year round and promotes the City with multiple events throughout the year.
- Apple Festival – Anna Rose thanked the City for past support and stated that the monies received from HTAX funds go towards Apple Festival expenses such as advertising.
- Oconee History Museum – Leslie Hagerty stated that the Museum is a permanent tourism destination and that any HTAX fund awarded would help with basic operating costs like utility bills.
- Fall/Spring Rodeo – Michelle Sanford stated that the Rodeos were family run and that they award scholarships from money generated to agriculture/construction students.
- Skyla Strong Barrel Race – Michelle Sanford stated to Council that this event is held in honor/memory of a pediatric leukemia patient and the money generated goes to the charity fund to help families like hers.
- Senior Outreach – Judy Caywood expressed to Council that the seniors have the desire to host more events including a Corn hole Toss Tournament that could potentially bring in Associations from all over.
- Bigfoot Committee – Jessica Glymph shared with Council that they have hopes of making the event a two-day festival this year and bring in bands.
- Main Street Westminster – Zach Sharpe told Council they were trying to put together a concert series and wanted better bands and wanted to be able to advertise better. He informed Council they were currently working on a nonprofit status.
- Gunderson Outreach – Jason Gunderson shared with Council their hopes of sponsoring a new festival of Christmas in July and wanted to be able to advertise more.
- Community Tree – no one was present to speak.

Old Business

1. Second Reading of Ordinance #2022-04-05-01 – An Ordinance authorizing modifications to Westminster Code of Ordinances, Title V: Public Works, Chapter 51: Garbage and Refuse

Mr. Bronson informed Council that the definition of brown goods had been expanded. Mr. Baker informed Council that adding customer responsibility to the ordinance was to help reduce unnecessary replacements and defer costs associated with that.

Upon a motion by Mr. Mefleh and seconded by Mr. Glymph, the motion **to approve second reading of Ordinance #2022-04-05-01** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph	Second	Yes
Mefleh	Motion	Yes
Powell		Yes

New Business

1. Bid Award for Road Resurfacing and Sidewalk Renovations

Mr. Bronson reminded Council that the City had been approved for approximately \$200,000.00 in April 2021 however; the bid process was delayed due to SCDOT procurement regulations. Since then the bid process has been completed but the bid amount came in at over \$900,000.00 leaving a definitive funding gap. Mr. Bronson suggested to Council that they go ahead and approve the unit pricing and the City can proceed with work up to \$200,000.00, then return to the C-Fund Committee and ask for additional funding. Mayor Ramey asked about the discrepancy in the bid. Mr. Bronson explained that when the original bid went out that local contractors bid on it with local prices but with C-Fund monies certain guidelines have to be met plus inflation in labor and materials. Mr. Baker added that it was a very complex process to obtain the money and contractors based on the strict guidelines.

Upon a motion by Mr. Mefleh and seconded by Mr. Powell, the motion **to approve the HDH Construction Group Bid and authorize the City Administrator to negotiate a final project scope within the approved unit pricing and available funds from the C-Fund Committee** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph		Yes
Mefleh	Motion	Yes
Powell	Second	Yes

2. Resolution Authorizing Employee Appreciation Bonuses

Mr. Bronson reminded Council that they had previously agreed to set aside \$40,000.00 for Employee Appreciation Bonuses. This amount would be distributed to current employees based on hours worked during the period of March 24, 2020 through February 24, 2022.

Upon a motion by Mr. Glymph and seconded by Mr. Powell the motion **to approve a Resolution Providing for One-Time Employee Appreciation Bonus** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph	Motion	Yes
Mefleh		Yes
Powell	Second	Yes

3. Law Enforcement Assistance and Support Agreement between the Walhalla Police Department and the Westminster Police Department

Mr. Bronson informed Council that any time there is a change in the Chief position, it is necessary to reaffirm the agreement between the agencies so Officers can assist between agencies when needed.

Upon a motion by Mr. Glymph and seconded by Mr. Mefleh, the motion **to approve the Walhalla and Westminster Police Department Law Enforcement Assistance and Support Agreement** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph	Motion	Yes
Mefleh	Second	Yes
Powell		Yes

4. First Reading of Ordinance 2022-05-17-01 – An Ordinance to amend the Business License Ordinance 2021-11-09-01, Its Appendix A and Appendix B

Mr. Bronson informed Council that in November 2021, the City Council adopted the Business License Ordinance and rate schedule to comply with new South Carolina laws. He reminded Council that the Municipal Association provided assistance to cities that included a restructure of rate tables that would account for classification changes. In the passing of the Ordinance and the Appendix A and B, which outline the rates and classifications, the updated Appendixes were not passed as part of the Ordinance. Mr. Bronson informed Council that for the City to be in full compliance with the Business License Laws and for the City to calculate fees with the new rate structure, City Council would need to amend the appendixes.

Upon a motion by Mr. Powell and seconded by Mr. Glymph, the motion **to approve first reading of Ordinance 2022-05-17-01 – An Ordinance to amend the Business License Ordinance 2021-11-09-01, Its Appendix A and B** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph	Second	Yes
Mefleh		Yes
Powell	Motion	Yes

5. Discuss the Independent Accountant's Report on Applying Agreed-Upon Procedures for the Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) revenues and expenses

Mr. Bronson reminded Council that City Council had directed him to contract with the City's external auditor, McKinley, Cooper & Co., LLC to conduct an audit of the revenue and expenses associated with the City's water/electric utility meter fee (AMI fee). Mr. Bronson advised Council that staff had submitted records of invoices/expenses and the revenue reports. He stated that some data on invoices paid relating to the AMI expenses were not available as they exceeded the SC State retention schedule that the City follows. Mr. Bronson explained to Council that even though there was some missing expense data, there was sufficient data to confirm that the AMI fee was cost-justified in that the aggregate revenues derived from the AMI fee were less than the aggregate expenses related to the implantation and maintenance of the AMI system.

Mayor Ramey and Mr. Mefleh both suggested waiting until the June meeting when Council would be at full staff and then discussing what, if any, refund was to be given to customers.

Upon a motion by Mr. Glymph and seconded by Mr. Mefleh, the motion **to accept the AMI Accountant Report** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph	Motion	Yes
Mefleh	Second	Yes
Powell		Yes

Routine Business

1. Approval of the March 8, 2022 Budget Workshop and Regular Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion by Mr. Mefleh and seconded by Mr. Glymph the motion to ***approve the March 8, 2022 Budget Workshop and Regular Meeting Minutes*** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph	Second	Yes
Mefleh	Motion	Yes
Powell		Yes

2. Comments from the Utility Director

Mr. Baker informed Council that the water plant was still waiting on parts and materials for the new pumps and motors. He also stated that crews were working on Anderson Park updates and clean-up efforts. Mr. Baker reported that the parking lot beside the Police Department would soon be resurfaced and that water and sewer crews had replaced a two-inch main line at Highway 76 and Myers Street. Mr. Baker also reported that the Hall Street water line project had been awarded to Arrowood Construction and that they were waiting on pipe and were anticipating a mid-August start date and that crews are still waiting on delivery of the seven flow meters.

3. Comments from City Administrator

Mr. Bronson informed Council that Walhalla City Council had approved Tally Grant as a representative to the OJRSA Board and Walhalla agreed to allow Mr. Grant to represent both Walhalla and Westminster on the Board. Council was in agreement to allow the co-representation. Mr. Bronson added that he would present Council with a Resolution at the May meeting to approve Mr. Grant as representative on the OJRSA Board

Adjourn

Upon a motion by Mayor Ramey and seconded by Mr. Glymph, the motion ***to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm*** passed unanimously.

April 5, 2022

(Minutes submitted by Rebecca Overton)

Mayor Brian Ramey

Date

April 5, 2022