MINUTES
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL
Regular Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, May 11, 2021

The City Council of the City of Westminster met in a regular scheduled meeting at the Westminster Fire Department on Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 6:00 pm with Mayor Brian Ramey presiding. Those in attendance were:

Brian Ramey	Reid Adams	Rusty Cater
Danny Duncan	Yousef Mefleh	Brad Chastain
Jimmy Powell		

City Administrator, Kevin Bronson
Rebecca Overton
Utility Director, Leigh Baker
City Attorney, Andrew Holliday
Members of the public and press

Notice of the meeting and the agenda was posted on 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

Mr. David Walker led the Council in the invocation and the pledge.

Certification of Quorum

The City Clerk certified a quorum.

Mayor Ramey recognized the City of Westminster Police Department in honor of National Police Week May 9-15, 2021.
Mayor Ramey read a letter of Appreciation for our Police Dept. from our Westminster Senior Outreach Organization

Public Comments

1. Suzette Snedigar asked Council to consider proceeding with the conceptual drawings for the recreation complex on Hall Rd.
2. Gail Reobenacker was concerned about the sewer rate increase and wanted to know what was done with the money that was refunded to the city used for last year.

Public Hearing

Mayor Ramey opened the public hearing on the proposed FY2021-2022 Budget for the City of Westminster.

Mr. Bronson addressed Ms. Reobenacker's questions concerning the sewer rate increase and the use of the rebate from OJRSA. Mr. Bronson also reviewed other increases that are currently budgeted in the proposed FY2022 budget.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Ramey closed the public hearing.

Comments from the Mayor and Council

1. Mayor Ramey asked staff if Retreat Street was part of the request to SCDOT for the ownership of Main Street. Mr. Bronson stated that he has filed the request for Main Street but did not include Retreat Street.

Old Business

1. Consideration of proceeding with conceptual drawings for the Hall Road recreation facilities.

   City Council requested that staff make contact with SeamonWhiteside planning consultants to see if the company will honor the terms of the proposal submitted to the City on February 3, 2020 for "professional recreation planning services associated with a park master plan" for Hall Street Community Park.

   Representatives from SeamonWhiteside confirmed the company will honor the terms of the February 3, 2020 proposal.

   It was recommended that the current Recreation Committee be dissolved and a new committee be appointed that would consist of Kevin Bronson, Steve Grogan, Herb Poole, Suzette Snedigar and Chester Lee. The new committee would have the authority to appoint others as needed to the committee or create sub-committees as needed during the process. Mr. Bronson was asked to keep the Council informed when additional members were added.

   Upon a motion by Mr. Duncan and seconded by Mr. Mefleh, the motion ***to proceed with the conceptual drawing for the Hall Road recreation project with SeamonWhiteside*** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Cater		Yes
Adams		Yes
Chastain		Yes
Duncan	Motion	Yes
Mefleh	Second	Yes
Powell		Yes

2. Second Reading of an Ordinance 2021-05-11-01; Amending Provisions of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Westminster Requiring the Execution of an Annexation Covenant in Order for Properties located outside of the City to connect to the City's Utility Services, and other matters related thereto. Council directed staff to use the Seneca, one page, model.

   Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Duncan, the motion ***to approve the ordinance amending provisions of the code of ordinances of the City of Westminster requiring the execution of an annexation covenant in order for properties located outside of the city to connect to the City's utility services, and other matters related thereto*** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Cater		Yes
Adams	Motion	Yes
Chastain		Yes
Duncan	Second	Yes
Mefleh		Yes
Powell		Yes

3. Consideration of the Public Defender Agreement

   Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Duncan, the motion ***to authorize the City Administrator to sign an agreement with the 10th Circuit Public Defender's Office for the terms provided in the attached proposal*** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Cater		Yes
Adams	Motion	Yes
Chastain		Yes
Duncan	Second	Yes
Mefleh		Yes
Powell		Yes

4. Resolution to appoint an Alternate Board Member to Piedmont Municipal Power Agency (PMPA)

   Mr. Bronson stated that the he was unable to get a second on his motion at the PMPA board meeting in order to appoint Danny Duncan as the alternate board member, therefore, Mayor Ramey still remains the alternate.

   Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Cater, the motion ***to nominate Brad Chastain as the Alternate Board Member to PMPA*** passed with a 5 to 2 vote with Mayor Ramey and Mr. Powell voting no.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		No
Cater	Second	Yes
Adams	Motion	Yes
Chastain		Yes
Duncan		Yes
Mefleh		Yes
Powell		No

New Business

1. First Reading of Ordinance #201-06-15-01; Making appropriations for certain expenses, capital improvements and indebtedness, establishing rates and fees for services and utilities and levying a property tax within the City of Westminster for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022.

   Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Duncan, the motion ***to approve Ordinance #2021-06-15-01 Budget Ordinance, and ordinance making appropriations for certain expenses, capital improvements and indebtedness of the City of Westminster, South Carolina for the year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022*** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Cater		Yes
Adams	Motion	Yes
Chastain		Yes
Duncan	Second	Yes
Mefleh		Yes
Powell		Yes

2. Consideration of awards of Hospitality Grants

   Upon a motion by Mr. Duncan and seconded by Mr. Adams, the motion ***to award the following Hospitality Grant Funds;***

   Mnt. Lakes CVB - $1500
   SC Heritage Fair - $1500
   Gateway Arts Center - $3000
   SC Apple Festival - $10,000
   Oconee History Museum - $3600
   Fall/Spring Rodeo - $2700
   Community Tree Center - $5,000
   Westminster Senior Outreach - $0
   Bigfoot Festival - $4700
   Special Events Committee - $8000

   Mayor Ramey asked if Council would consider increasing these allotments due to the services each contribute, at no cost to the city, and the amount of visitors each organization brings into the city. Councilmen Powell and Mefleh were the only two to agree.

Passed with a 5 to 2 vote with Mayor Ramey and Mr. Mefleh voting no.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		No
Cater		Yes
Adams	Second	Yes
Chastain		Yes
Duncan	Motion	Yes
Mefleh		No
Powell		Yes

3. Resolution #2021-05-11-A; To Adopt the Emergency Operation Plan

At the April 11, 2021 City Council Meeting staff notified City Council of a FEMA Grant available for backup power generators.

Staff is working with Alliance Engineering to submit a grant for backup generators for key locations critical to the City's provision of water service. This is a hazard mitigation grant funded through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The grant is a 75/25 match. It will fund the purchase of five backup generators at critical locations for the city water system. Award of the grant will allow water operations to continue uninterrupted during major storm events or unplanned power outages.

The locations for the backup generators are:

- Apple Tower water pumping station
- Highway 76 water pumping station
- South Bibb Street – the Utility Shop
- City Hall

The total request for the grant is $300,000. The City will be responsible for $75,000 match. FEMA $225,000/City $75,000. Funds for the grant match will be through either the American Rescue Plan funds or, in the event those funds are un-allowed for match, the OJRSA funds. There is an uncommitted balance of $159,049 in OJRSA funds.

Installing permanent generators would maintain the critical power supply, allowing the services to continue their standard operations to mitigate the possibility of a lapse of service during emergencies. The City of Westminster is eligible under the 4542 Severe Storms, Tornadoes, and Straight-Line Winds. The Hazard Mitigation Grant is typically awarded within six (6) months to one (1) year following submittal.

In order to apply for the grant, City Council consideration of adoption of the attached:

1- Anderson County and Oconee County Hazard Mitigation Plan
2- The City of Westminster Emergency Operation Disaster Plan & Emergency Preparedness Guidelines, revised 4/21

3- Resolution Adopting the Anderson County and Oconee County Hazard Mitigation Plan and The City of Westminster Emergency Operation Disaster Plan & Emergency Preparedness Guidelines, revised 4/21

Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Duncan, the motion ***to adopt Resolution #2021-05-11-A the Anderson County and Oconee County Hazard Mitigation Plan*** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Cater		Yes
Adams	Motion	Yes
Chastain		Yes
Duncan	Second	Yes
Mefleh		Yes
Powell		Yes

4. Resolution #2021-05-11-B; To Authorize staff to proceed with applying for the FEMA Generator Grant

Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Duncan, the motion to ***adopt Resolution #2021-05-11-B the City of Westminster Emergency Operation Disaster Plan & Emergency Preparedness Guidelines*** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Cater		Yes
Adams	Motion	Yes
Chastain		Yes
Duncan	Second	Yes
Mefleh		Yes
Powell		Yes

Routine Business

1. Approval of the March 16, 2021 Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes, the March 16, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes, the April 20, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes, and the April 29, 2021 Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion by Mr. Duncan and seconded by Mr. Adams, the motion ***to approve the March 16, 2021 budget workshop meeting minutes, the March 16, 2021 regular meeting minutes, April 20, 2021 regular meeting minutes, and the April 29, 2021 budget workshop meeting minutes*** passed unanimously.

2. Comments from the Utility Director
    a. Mr. Baker updated Council on each department.

b. Mr. Baker provided Council with a cost analysis for materials to provide electricity to one house. He had a price on underground and overhead. Mr. Baker stated that he is putting together a price list for Council and will be providing that at a later meeting. Mr. Baker stated that with the growth the City is experience, they need to start recouping some of the materials cost back in order to expand our services.

3. Comments for the City Administrator

a. Mr. Bronson stated that he will bring back to Council a new FMLA policy for them to consider.
b. Mr. Bronson asked Council if they would be willing to consider a Leave Sharing policy that will allow employees to share their PTO in emergency situations. There will be limits placed on how much leave can be donated.
c. Mr. Bronson asked if Council would consider a policy that would not penalize employees on their overtime if there is a holiday within the same week.
d. Mr. Bronson stated that the City is expecting the requests for the use of the stage to increase as summer approaches. He stated that he would like to draft a policy for Council to consider for organizations and individuals requesting use of the stage.
e. Mr. Bronson stated that the construction of the stage cover at Retreat Street park should begin in mid-June.
f. Mr. Bronson asked Council if they would have any objections to him proceeding with a proposal of a sewer system for the new subdivisions that our scheduled to be built. There were no objections.
g. Mr. Bronson stated that the City received 5 applications for the PMPA Scholarship. The committee selected the two that qualified for the scholarship and they will be presented with it on Friday at West Oak High School.
h. Mr. Bronson stated that with the conceptual design moving forward, he recommends to survey the property on Hall Rd. Mr. Bronson would like to move forward with soliciting bids and bring those bids back to Council at a later meeting to consider.
i. Mr. Cater wanted to thank Oconee County Council for their vote on proceeding with the construction of the Magistrate Court.

Executive Session

Upon a motion by Mayor Ramey and seconded by Mr. Cater, the motion ***to enter into an executive session for the purpose of section 30-4-70(a)(1) a discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body (Fire Department)*** passed unanimously.

Upon a motion by Mayor Ramey and seconded by Mr. Cater, the motion ***to adjourn from executive session and return to regular session*** passed unanimously.

Adjourn

Upon a motion by Mayor Ramey and seconded by Mr. Mefleh, the motion ***to adjourn the meeting at 8:11pm*** passed unanimously.

(Minutes prepared by Jennifer Adams)

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Mayor Brian Ramey Date