MINUTES
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL
Regular Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, July 13, 2021

The City Council of the City of Westminster met in a regular scheduled meeting at the Westminster Fire Department on Tuesday, July 13, 2021 at 6:00 pm with Mayor Brian Ramey presiding. Those in attendance were:

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

(Mayor Ramey FaceTime into the meeting)

City Administrator, Kevin Bronson
Utility Director, Leigh Baker
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 Pro Tem Duncan called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Rusty Cater led the Council in the invocation and the pledge.

Certification of Quorum

The City Clerk certified a quorum.

Public Comments

1. Bethany Reed with Spinx stated that the Westminster Spinx would like to sponsor an a fundraiser called Together We Can Beat Cancer. All proceeds would go to The American Cancer Society. They would like to hold the event in the downtown area, and have a cancer walk starting at the Depot. The event is scheduled to be held on October 2. Mr. Bronson gave her his contact information and informed her that there is an event application she would need to fill out.

Comments from the Mayor and Council

Mr. Chastain wanted to thank the Police, Fire and EMS for their quick response and professionalism in assisting his sister when she collapsed last week.

Old Business

1. Second Reading of an Ordinance #2021-07-13-02; Lease Agreement with Oconee County First Steps to School Readiness for the Depot.

   Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Cater, the motion ***to approve the second reading and adoption of ordinance #2021-07-13-02 to authorize the City Administrator to execute a lease agreement and MOU with Oconee County First Steps to School Readiness for the Depot office space*** passed unanimously.

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

New Business

2. First Reading of an Ordinance #2021-08-10-01; Capital Lease Purchase of Certain Equipment Not to Exceed an Amount.

   Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Cater, the motion ***to approve the first reading of Ordinance #2021-08-10-01 authorizing an equipment lease purchase agreement in the amount not exceeding $525,000 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		
Cater	Second	Yes
Adams	Motion	Yes
Chastain		Yes
Duncan		Yes
Mefleh		Yes
Powell		Yes

2a. Resolution for Financing

Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Cater, the motion ***to approve the resolution for the financing terms of the lease purchase*** passed unanimously.

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

3. First Reading of an Ordinance #2021-08-10-02; Assigning a Zoning Code to Tax Map #530-06-02-014.

Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Cater, the motion ***to conduct the first reading of Ordinance #2021-08-10 to zone tax map number 530-06-02-014 to Highway Commercial*** passed unanimously.

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

Mayor Ramey asked if he was not going to be called in order to vote virtually. Mr. Bronson stated that Council would need to vote to allow virtual voting. Mr. Adams stated that if Council were to vote to allow virtual voting then it would open a door of members not coming to meetings and staying at home. Mr. Mefleh stated that he did not have a problem letting the Mayor vote. Mayor Ramey stated that if it was a problem that he didn't need to vote and dropped the issue.

Mr. Bronson stated that he will bring rules of procedure back to Council to consider at a later meeting.

4. A Resolution #2021-07-13-RS; Proving a Program Fee for the Municipal Association of SC Retail Recruitment Training Program.

Mr. Bronson informed Council that in order to help cities and towns navigate this world, the Municipal Association of SC is hosting a Retail Recruitment Training course. The course will include six days of training, taking place at the Association's office in Columbia from August to November. Training sessions will cover the principles of retail recruitment, such as market conditions in a defined area and current commercial development trends, as well as how retailers evaluate a market and search for growth opportunities.

The cost to participate is $5,000 and Mr. Bronson would be the one attending the training.

Council discussed the opportunity and as they felt it would be good for the City they did not feel that this was a good time and will reconsider it next year.

5. Consideration of Bid for demolition and disposal of Riley Street Facility.

Mr. Bronson stated that the City received three bids, Carolina Demolition LLC, Townville, SC; $16,500, Allen Farms LLC, Westminster; $19,350, and Upstate Demolition Services LLC, Greenville, SC; 27,050. A fourth bid was received but was disqualified.

Mr. Bronson noted that the City has a Local Preference Purchase clause if they wanted to consider in keeping the work local.

Mr. Adams stated that Mr. Allen's bid used the word "average" and was concerned that the price could increase. Mr. Bronson stated that in the motion, it could be stated "not to exceed" and if it looked like that the cost would exceed the approved amount, City officials could step in to haul the debris away in order to prevent the overage.

Mr. Chastain suggested that we speak with the County to see if they would waive tipping fees.

Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Duncan, the motion ***to approve the bid from Allen Farms in the "not to exceed amount" of $19,350*** passed unanimously.

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

6. Downtown Road Segments Transfer to City Ownership.

   Mr. Bronson stated that at a previous meeting, Council voted to take ownership of Main Street from SCDOT. There are four road segments that were not included in the initial application for Main Street and asked if Council would like to apply for ownership of those. They include S. Isundega St. (S-170), Zimmerman Ave. (S-169), Lucky St. (S-80), and Retreat St. (S-20).

   Taking ownership of these roads from the SCDOT will give the City more control of the use and development of the downtown. The SCDOT will retain the ROW on Hwy 76/123.

   Mr. Chastain asked if the City would be responsible for the street lights. Mr. Bronson stated that SCDOT would retain their 30' ROW which would include the lights.

   Council directed staff to proceed with the application process to obtain the additional streets.

Routine Business

1. Upon a motion by Mr. Adams and seconded by Mr. Chastain, the motion ***to approve the June 15, 2021 as presented*** passed unanimously.

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

Comments from the Utility Director

Mr. Baker updated Council on all the progress his staff has been making over the past month. He stated that the Water Plant is doing well but there is a chlorine shortage but they are requesting a small load and with what they already have in stock should last several months.

The Emergency Response Plan has been turned in and a report should be back by next month.

The Hwy 76 tank has had a SCADA problem but it is being worked on. Also, he has scheduled an inspection of all the clear water tanks.

Mr. Baker stated that he has begun interviews for his open positions and hopes to have at least two filled very soon.

469 vaults have been inspected and recorded and two have been replaced. New copper and lead regulations will be coming out and it will be the responsibility of the provider to identify service lines that could contain either one of those substances. He is beginning to put plans in place to start documenting in order to be in compliance. There are resources in place that may be able to assist in complying with the new regulations.

Mr. Baker stated that he had a reimbursement schedule ready for Council to consider at their next meeting. This will allow the City to get partial reimbursement of supplies when installing new electrical service or modifying an existing one.

Comments from the City Administrator

Mr. Bronson had no further information to share with Council.

Adjourn

Upon a motion by Mr. Cater and seconded by Mr. Chastain, the motion ***to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 pm*** passed unanimously.

(Minutes prepared by Jennifer Adams)

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Mayor Brian Ramey Date