

MINUTES
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL
Called Meeting
Tuesday, August 16, 2022 4:00 pm

The City Council of the City of Westminster met in a called meeting on Tuesday August 16, 2022 at 4:00pm at the Westminster Depot with Mayor Brian Ramey presiding. Those in attendance were:

Brian Ramey	Dale Glymph	Daby Snipes
Jimmy Powell	Audrey Reese	

City Administrator, Kevin Bronson
City Clerk, Rebecca Overton
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.

Certification of Quorum

Rebecca Overton certified a quorum.

New Business

1. Second Reading of ORDINANCE NO. 2022-08-16-01 (*re-numbered from 2022-09-13-02*) AUTHORIZING AN EQUIPMENT LEASE PURCHASE AGREEMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF NOT EXCEEDING \$174,406 BETWEEN THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER, SOUTH CAROLINA, AND COMMUNITY FIRST NATIONAL BANK, TO DEFRAY THE COST OF ACQUIRING CERTAIN EQUIPMENT; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO.

Mr. Bronson reminded Council that the current FY 22/23 Budget included the equipment listed in this Ordinance. He informed Council that they must authorize the financing with the Community First National Bank by Ordinance in order to purchase the equipment.

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Upon a motion by Mrs. Reese and seconded by Mr. Powell, the motion to **approve second reading of Ordinance No. 2022-08-16-01 – authorizing an equipment lease purchase agreement in the amount of not exceeding \$174,406 between the City of Westminster, South Carolina, and Community First National Bank, to defray the cost of acquiring certain equipment and other matters relating thereto** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph		Yes
Mefleh		Absent
Powell	Second	Yes
Reese	Motion	Yes
Dunn		Absent
Snipes		Yes

2. Second Reading ORDINANCE NO. ORDINANCE NO. 2022-08-16-02 (re-numbered from 2022-09-13-04), AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A POLE ATTACHMENT LICENSE AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER, SOUTH CAROLINA AND BLUE RIDGE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Bronson informed Council that City staff and Blue Ridge Electric have developed a Pole Attachment License Agreement that will allow Blue Ridge Electric to attach fiber optic lines to City poles.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Snipes and seconded by Mrs. Reese the motion **to approve second reading of Ordinance 2022-08-16-02_– an Ordinance approving the execution and delivery of a Pole Attachment License Agreement by and between the City of Westminster, South Carolina and Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative, Inc. and other matters related thereto** passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph		Yes
Mefleh		Absent
Powell		Yes
Reese	Second	Yes
Dunn		Absent
Snipes	Motion	Yes

3. Presentation by City Legal Counsel, Lawrence Flynn from Pope Flynn, regarding a draft economic development ordinance entitled:

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND ESTABLISHING AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO ENCOURAGE PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN THE INCENTIVE AREA OF THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER, SOUTH CAROLINA; AUTHORIZING AND ESTABLISHING A PROGRAM TO GRANT SPECIAL PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS TO CERTAIN REHABILITATED HISTORIC PROPERTIES; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Bronson informed Council that Attorney Lawrence Flynn was present to discuss consideration of an economic development ordinance.

Mr. Flynn went over various incentives an economic development ordinance could offer. He advised Council on different types of incentives and some of the eligibility criteria that would be in such an ordinance.

Council, along with Mr. Flynn, reviewed and discussed the draft ordinance that was available and noted some changes and asked for an updated version to reflect the desires of Council.

There was no action taken.

4. Presentation by the City Administrator, regarding modifications to the Hospitality Tax Guidelines, beginning FY2024

Mr. Bronson addressed Council for input for additions to the guidelines that of the HTAX Grant application process. He stated to Council that he felt like there was room to improve the process of application and receipt of monies awarded. Mr. Bronson explained to Council that there needs to be some accountability from the applicants and suggested that the HTAX Grant awards become a reimbursable program. He reminded Council that currently HTAX Grant recipients could request the awarded monies beginning July 1st, before the planned event.

Mayor Ramey added that he was concerned that they could be awarded the money and then the event be canceled for unforeseen reasons. Mr. Glymph added that he felt like it would hurt certain events, specifically Big Foot Festival if the program becomes reimbursable. Mrs. Snipes added that she is curious as to how other local areas distribute HTAX Grants.

Mr. Bronson added that changing the application process and procedures would make applicants accountable for providing the required information and then staff would review the application.

Council agreed for Mr. Bronson to draft a final version of the HTAX application and requirement process and incorporate modifications to it. This will be reviewed and presented at a later meeting.

5. Presentation by the City Administrator regarding a raft resolution to adopt fees for off-duty city employees for special events.

Mr. Bronson informed Council that currently the City pays for police, fire and utility staff overtime for special events that occur within the City. He stated that event overtime cost is factored into the departmental budgets. Mr. Bronson added that adopting a Resolution would allow the City to establish a practice for the special event organizers to pay City staff overtime, thereby lessening the stain on the departmental budgets. He added that currently the budget includes about 25% in overtime costs related to special events.

Mr. Bronson added that the City could adopt a Resolution that could potentially set a flat fee for staff to provide services for the event or charge back the overtime costs to the event applicant. He added that the City could continue as it has been doing by absorbing the overtime costs with the departmental budgets, or build a fee schedule.

Mr. Glymph and Mrs. Reese stated that they would like to bring in the festival committees and get their feedback.

Mr. Bronson added that currently the City absorbs costs for event functions that other cities do pass on to the event applicants. He also stated that if it were the continued desire of Council to fund the Hall Street Park project, other HTAX expenses would need to go down. Mr. Bronson asked Council to consider all things that the City is currently absorbing costs on that could potentially be passed on, therefore somewhat reducing city costs. He added that any level of cost recovery would be beneficial to the City's budget.

No action was taken on this item.

Adjourn

Upon a motion by Mayor Ramey and seconded by Mrs. Reese, the motion ***to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 pm*** passed unanimously.

(Minutes submitted by Rebecca Overton)

Mayor Brian Ramey

Date

August 16, 2022