

MINUTES
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL
Regular Scheduled Meeting
Tuesday, June 11, 2024

The City Council of the City of Westminster met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at 6:00 pm at the Westminster Fire Department with Mayor Brian Ramey presiding. Those in attendance were:

Brian Ramey
 Jimmy Powell

Audrey Reese
 Adam Dunn

Daby Snipes
 Dale Glymph

Ruth May

Assistant to the City Administrator, Reagan Osbon
 City Clerk, Rebecca Overton
 City Attorney, Andrew Holliday
 Police Chief, Fred Miller
 Members of the public and press

Notice of the meeting and the agenda was posted on a window at the Fire Department 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.

Certification of Quorum

Rebecca Overton certified a quorum.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Audrey Reese led the Council in the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

Judy Caywood addressed Council with concerns she had about the PEBA Insurance benefit being offered to Council Members. She stated that she felt like Council Members were volunteers and not employees, so they did not qualify for insurance benefits like employees do. Ms. Caywood also stated that there are senior citizens who are having a tough time with food increases, utility rate increases, etc., but said she feels like there is very little help for them. She added that she felt like the City just simply does not have the funds to support this added benefit and asked Council to consider voting against this benefit for Council Members.

June 11, 2024

Comments from the Mayor and Council

Mrs. Reese thanked Ms. Caywood for her input regarding the PEBA Insurance. She added that the new street signage was great but that she had concerns about the placement of some of the sign. Mr. Osbon informed Council that the signs had to be placed outside of the SCDOT right of way and that he was working with SCDOT and staff to find more suitable spots for some of the signs.

Mrs. Snipes thanked the Senior Outreach for hosting the drop-in for Chief of Police Fred Miller.

Mr. Glymph suggested the crepe myrtle bushes be trimmed in the Oconee Federal area.

Mayor Ramey thanked Ms. Caywood for sharing her concerns about the insurance. He also to please let Council know if there was any way they could help to the Seniors and how they could offer help.

Routine Business

1. Approval of the May 14, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion by Mr. Glymph and seconded by Ms. May, the motion to *approve the May 14, 2024, minutes*, passed unanimously.

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

2. Comments from Utility Director

- a. Mr. Harbin informed Council that the USDA Division I Project had some delays due to a family death withing the construction company. He added the Division II Project had completed pipe installation.
- b. Mr. Harbin informed Council that the electric system recently experienced two city wide outages. He explained that one was caused by squirrel and the other

was caused by a downed line across the railroad tracks during a heavy rainstorm.

Old Business

1. Consideration of allowing members of the Westminster City Council to opt into PEBA insurance benefits.

Mr. Osbon reminded Council that the PEBA Board of Directors voted to amend the definitions of “employee” for the purposes of eligibility to participate in the state insurance benefits program. He added that the change requires Council to exercise a one-time, irrevocable option to exclude councilmembers from employee insurance benefits.

After a lengthy discussion and several council members voicing concerns about the legality of PEBA forcing an irrevocable decision, and about the future possible costs of council insurance benefits, a motion by Mrs. Snipes and seconded by Ms. May *to not be considered active employees of the City of Westminster for purposes of PEBA insurance benefits* failed.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		No
Glymph		No
Powell		Yes
Reese		No
May	Second	Yes
Dunn		No
Snipes	Motion	Yes

2. Second reading of Ordinance 2024-06-11-01; Budget Ordinance, An Ordinance Making Appropriations for Certain Expenses, Capital Improvements and Indebtedness of the City of Westminster, South Carolina for the Year Beginning July 1, 2024, and Ending June 30, 2025

Summary of the FY2024-2025 Annual Operating Budget for all funds is:

Appropriation	FY 2024 Budget	FY 2025 Proposed Budget	Difference
General	\$ 2,914,572	\$ 2,699,287	\$ (215,285)
Utility	\$ 8,301,415	\$ 8,727,420	\$ 426,005
Solid Waste	\$ 915,046	\$ 588,791	\$ (326,255)
ATAX	\$ 8,300	\$ 12,500	\$ 4,200
HTAX	\$ 484,314	\$ 202,000	\$ (282,314)
Fire Department 1%	\$ 13,609	\$ 86,150	\$ 72,541
Local Development Corp	\$ 47,031	\$ 53,780	\$ 6,749
Youth Recreation Fund	\$ 579,319	\$ 554,900	\$ (24,419)
Capital Projects Fund	\$ 14,530,684	\$ 28,453,480	\$ 13,922,796
County ARP	\$ 682,324	\$ -	\$ (682,324)
			\$ -
Grand Total	\$ 28,476,614	\$ 41,378,308	\$ 12,901,694
Less Interfund Transfer	\$ 1,405,869	\$ 717,946	\$ (687,923)
			\$ -
Net Appropriations	\$ 27,070,745	\$ 40,660,362	\$ 13,589,617

The Clerk's Record is incorporated.

Upon a motion by Mr. Dunn and seconded by Mr. Glymph, the motion to ***approve second reading of Ordinance 2024-06-11-01; Budget Ordinance, An Ordinance Making Appropriations for Certain Expenses, Capital Improvements and Indebtedness of the City of Westminster, South Carolina for the Year Beginning July 1, 2024, and Ending June 30, 2025***, passed unanimously.

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

3. Second reading of Ordinance 2024-06-11-02: An Ordinance to Rezone a Certain Parcel In The City Of Westminster From R-15 (One-Family Residential) To Gr (General Residential).

Mr. Osbon reminded Council that the City of Westminster received a zoning amendment request to rezone 101 John St (TMS# 510-22-10-010) from R-15 (Residential-15) to GR (General Residential) and that the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the property at its April 15, 2024, meeting, where two owners of a nearby property spoke in favor of the rezoning application, and the Commission voted to recommend rezoning.

Upon a motion by Mr. Dunn and seconded by Mr. Glymph, the motion to *approve second reading of Ordinance 2024-06-11-02: An Ordinance to Rezone a Certain Parcel In The City Of Westminster From R-15 (One-Family Residential) To Gr (General Residential)* passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph	Second	Yes
Powell		Yes
Reese		Yes
May		Yes
Dunn	Motion	Yes
Snipes		No

4. Second Reading of Ordinance 2024-06-11-03: An Ordinance Authorizing an Equipment Lease Purchase Agreement in the Amount of Not Exceeding \$360,000 Between the City of Westminster, South Carolina, and First-Citizens Bank & Trust Company, to Defray the Cost of Acquiring Certain Equipment; and Other Matters Relating Thereto.

Mr. Osbon reminded Council that the proposed City’s FY2024-2025 Annual Budget includes the equipment listed below to be purchased using lease-purchase financing and that First Citizens Bank offers a competitive lease-purchase financing product that meets the requirements of South Carolina law for municipal financing. Mr. Osbon added that the city’s bond Counsel, Mike Burns and Brandon Norris with the Burr Foreman law firm have reviewed and approved of the financing documents, they also wrote the ordinance.

Equipment Estimated Cost

Two (2) Police Vehicles	\$104,000
One (1) Fire Admin Vehicle	\$ 57,000
One (1) Water Pickup	\$ 75,000
One (1) Valve Maintenance Skid	\$ 92,000
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST	\$328,000

The not-to-exceed lease-purchase financing of \$360,000 includes closing costs. The final amount will be determined at closing. The interest rate is estimated to be fixed and is bank-qualified at ~~4.48% for 5 years~~ 5.06% for 3 years (red text indicates updated information from first reading of the ordinance). There are no fees for pre-payment.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Reese, and seconded by Mr. Dunn, the motion to *approve second reading of Ordinance 2024-06-11-03: An Ordinance Authorizing an Equipment Lease Purchase Agreement in the Amount of Not Exceeding \$360,000 Between the City of Westminster, South Carolina, and First-Citizens Bank & Trust Company, to Defray the Cost of Acquiring Certain Equipment; and Other Matters Relating Thereto* passed unanimously.

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

5. Consideration of Ordinance 2024-06-11-04: An Ordinance to Execute Real Property Sale Agreement.

Mr. Osbon reminded Council that staff was directed to solicit sealed bids for the purchase and development of city owned property located at 115 Riley Street (TMS 530-21-06-015) and that the City received 3 bids for the property, and at the May 14, 2024 City Council Meeting City Council awarded the bid to Jonnor Investments for the amount of \$25,000. Adoption of this ordinance authorizes the City Administrator to enter negotiations and execute the contract.

Proposer	Offer Price	Proposed Timeline	Expected New Value
Rory Jones (Jonnor Investments)	\$25,000	24 months (pending market conditions)	\$600,000

Upon a motion by Mr. Dunn and seconded by Mr. Glymph, the motion to *approve second reading of Ordinance 2024-06-11-04: An Ordinance to Execute Real Property Sale Agreement* passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph	Second	Yes
Powell		Yes
Reese		No
May		Yes
Dunn	Motion	Yes
Snipes		Yes

New Business

1. First Reading of Ordinance 2024-07-09-01; An Ordinance to Amend the City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Osbon informed Council that each municipality in the state is required by state law to complete their Comprehensive Plan every 10 years, with 5-year updates. He added that the city most recently updated the Comprehensive Plan at City Council's June 16, 2022, Council Meeting and that one component of the Comprehensive Plan is the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), which paints how the City envisions long-term change outside of its corporate limits.

Mr. Osbon also added that city staff identified the need to amend the FLUM since the current FLUM is nearly entirely residential, with little consideration for varying degrees of density. He stated that the proposed FLUM allows for low, medium, and high-density designations and that the Planning Commission met for several months to host workshop style meetings where they consistently and intentionally relied on a combination of the following factors and guidelines (in no order of importance): (1) Current and expected growth patterns; (2) Natural topography and drainage basins; (3) Traffic Considerations; and (4) Higher density development is more likely on major corridors.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Reese and seconded by Mr. Dunn, the motion *to approve First Reading of Ordinance 2024-07-09-01; An Ordinance to Amend the City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan* passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph		Yes
Powell		Yes
Reese	Motion	Yes
May		Yes

Dunn	Second	Yes
Snipes		Yes

2. Consideration of Bid Awards for Construction Services of a new pre-engineered building and demolition of the existing structure at the check-valve at the Chauga River raw-water intake

Mr. Osbon informed Council that the City of Westminster received bids on Friday, June 7, 2024, to construct a pre-engineered building over the new water intake check valve. He added that the City will fund the project with the ARPA funding provided by Oconee County, which is designated for water plant improvements and that of the \$1,300,000 allocation the balance of funds available for use is \$156,040.30

Upon a motion by Mr. Dunn and seconded by Mr. Glymph, the motion to *award the bid in the amount of - not exceeding \$198,000, to JDI Construction for construction services of a new pre-engineered building and demolition of the existing structure at the check-valve at the Chauga River raw-water intake*, passed unanimously.

Member	Motion	Vote
Ramey		Yes
Glymph		Yes
Powell		Yes
Reese		Yes
May		Yes
Dunn	Motion	Yes
Snipes		No

3. Consideration of a Motion to recognize a scrivener’s error in the Westminster Zoning Ordinance (151 Appendix A: Requirements by District; RR, R-1 Acre, R-25, R-20, R-15, and R-6

Mr. Osbon informed Council that staff had found an error in the zoning ordinance most recently passed by the City Council in late 2023. He added that R-15 was approved at requiring an 1800 square foot minimum home size and that this is inconsistent with other districts proportionately. Mr. Osbon stated that staff believes this should reflect an 800 square foot minimum.

Mr. Osbon also informed Council that the Code of Ordinances allows for correction of these errors without an Ordinance to amend the Zoning Code and that staff was asking Council to recognize the error for clarification of the record.

Upon a motion by Mr. Dunn and seconded by Mrs. Reese, the motion to *recognize the described 1800 square foot home minimum in R-15 as a scrivener's error, corrected to 800 square feet* passed unanimously.

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

4. Consideration to cancel the July 15, 2024, City Council Meeting

Upon a motion by Mrs. Reese and seconded by Mr. Glymph, the motion to *cancel the July 15, 2024, City Council meeting* passed unanimously.

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

Adjourn

Upon a motion by Mayor Ramey and seconded by Mr. Powell, the motion *to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 pm* passed unanimously.

(Minutes submitted by Rebecca Overton)

Mayor Brian Ramey

Date