

CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
229 MAIN STREET
CONWAY, SOUTH CAROLINA
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2015 – 5:30 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Alys C. Lawson, Mayor Pro Tem Barbara Blain-Olds, and Council Members Randle L. Alford, Thomas J. Anderson II, William M. Goldfinch IV, Jean M. Timbes, and Larry A. White

STAFF: Bill Graham, City Administrator; Vicky Lefler, Deputy City Administrator; Michael Hardee, Finance Director; Foster Hughes, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Director; Kevin Chestnut, Public Works Director; James Friday, Public Utilities Director; Adam Emrick, Planning Director; Billy Joe Sawyer, Building Official; Cindi Howard, Human Resources Director; Reggie Gosnell, Police Chief; Le Hendrick, Fire Chief; Jeremy Carter, Assistant Fire Chief; and Debbie F. Smith, City Clerk

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Kathy Ropp, Chaplain Mike Belue, Kristi Falk, Jessica Piezzo, Brian O'Neil, Lynne Delph, Frank Delfino, Dwaine Koscielniak, Greg Kintz, Michael Berg, Dan O'Neil, Cherer Royce, Leslie O'Neil, Ina Falk, Blake Lanford, and others

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Lawson called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Lawson recognized Chaplain Mike Belue of the Waccamaw Baptist Association who gave the invocation. City Council and those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion: Anderson made a motion, seconded by White, to approve the agenda contents. Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: **City Council Minutes – January 20, 2015.** Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Alford, to approve the consent agenda. Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT: The following persons addressed Council in regard to the proposed smoke-free ordinance:

Shere Royce – requested Council to consider passing the smoke-free ordinance and commented that Council should take a leadership position and pass an ordinance that would protect the health of citizens and their children and promote economic viability.

Brian O'Neil – commented that, by not passing this ordinance, Council is almost condoning exposure of workers to hazardous chemicals; he is mandated in his business to protect employees from exposure to carcinogens and cigarettes are no different.

Kristi Falk – presented additional petitions in favor of the proposed smoke-free ordinance and read aloud an email from a young lady (who asked for anonymity) employed in the Downtown area describing how second-hand smoke affects her in her workplace. Falk also commented that the ordinance is needed to protect the public, regardless of the argument that most businesses are voluntarily smoke-free.

Leslie O'Neil – remarked that there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke and that persons are having to choose between making a living and their health; changing the environment could help encourage healthier lifestyles and lower healthcare costs.

Greg Kintz – stated his full support of this ordinance and remarked on his first-hand experience of growing up in a home with a parent who was a heavy smoker. He remarked that his research has shown there does not appear to be any negative economic impact from smoke-free ordinances and that he believes the number of businesses in the City that actually have smoke-free policies is probably much lower than the number of businesses mentioned in these discussions as being smoke-free.

Ina Falk – commented that all employees should have the right to a smoke-free workplace, not just most of them, and asked Council to vote in favor of the original ordinance.

Jessica Piezzo, Pee Dee Regional Coordinator for the South Carolina Tobacco Free Collaborative – read a statement on behalf of the Tobacco Free Collaborative encouraging City Council to consider measures which would give protection to citizens from second-hand smoke exposure in the workplace.

The following persons addressed Council in regard to a proposed pathway/walkway in the Rivertown Row Subdivision:

Lynne Delph – shared her concerns regarding the mulching of sidewalks and common area in Rivertown Row, which would render them inaccessible by the handicapped. She presented a petition to Council from residents of the subdivision that included each person's choice of sidewalk surface (gravel, grass or cement). Delph asked for Council's help to see that the walkway, if it must be put in, be a cement sidewalk, the same as the sidewalks in neighboring Tiger Grand Subdivision, and that it be ADA-compliant.

Dwaine Koscielniak – advised that he has been appointed by Beverly Homes as the current Rivertown Row HOA representative and presented Council with a petition from the residents in Rivertown Row requesting the elimination of any proposed pathway/walkway around the pond in the subdivision. He shared concerns regarding the danger of the retention pond to children and the handicapped, unsanitary goose droppings, loss of privacy, and the increased cost to the HOA members for additional liability insurance cost. Koscielniak noted that there currently exists a handicapped-accessible sidewalk that encompasses the entire area.

Frank Delfino – remarked that he had walked the proposed walkway area and noted the dangers the walkway would present to the handicapped and children. He spoke in opposition to the walkway because of the increased cost that would be incurred due to the liability.

In response to Mayor Lawson, Graham reported that staff would look into all avenues available in order to work with the HOA and the developer to find a solution to the situation and report back to City Council and those persons who spoke regarding this matter during public input.

There was no further input from the public.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

A. Employee Longevity Awards were presented to Jamie L. Givens, Public Utilities, 10 years; Jeannie Quilimaco and Justin Strickland, Police Department, 15 years; and Billy Joe Sawyer, Building Department, 20 years. The presentations were made by Council Member Goldfinch and the City Administrator.

B. Introduction of new City Planning Director Adam Emrick and Assistant Fire Chief Jeremy Carter. Bill Graham, City Administrator, recognized Adam Emrick, the City's new Planning Director, and Jeremy Carter, who was recently promoted to the position of Assistant Fire Chief. On behalf of Council, Mayor Lawson welcomed Emrick to the City staff and congratulated Carter on his promotion.

PUBLIC HEARING AND ITEM FOR CONSIDERATION: Proposed projects for Year 8 of the HUD/CDBG Entitlement Grant (2015-16). Council reviewed staff's recommendations for the FY 2015-16 projects for the HUD/CDBG Entitlement Grant at its January 5th meeting. Those projects total \$304,365 and are as follows: Public Service – Horry County Sheriff's Jail Diversion and Reentry Program (JDRP) - \$13,000; Drainage Project- Whittemore Park: Maple Avenue, Magnolia Avenue, and Wright Boulevard - \$150,000; Infrastructure Project Potential Overrun Costs - \$39,365; Home Repair Program - \$100,000; Administrative Costs - \$2,000. Staff recommended approval of the proposed projects and their respective allocations. **Public Hearing:** There was no comment from the public. **Motion:** White made a motion, seconded by Timbes, to approve staff's recommendations regarding the 2015-16 HUD / CDBG Entitlement Grant as presented. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

ORDINANCE FOR FIRST READING: Ordinance #2015-02-16 (A) Amending the Salary Pay Grades and Positions Schedule of the City of Conway. Graham informed City Council that one of the two FY 2014-15 Battalion Chief positions was eliminated with the final reading approval of Ordinance #2015-01-20 (A) at the January 20, 2015 Council meeting. The remaining Battalion Chief position is vacant due to Jeremy Carter's promotion to Assistant Fire Chief. The Fire Chief has recommended, and staff supports, the elimination of the vacant Battalion Chief position and the addition of a new position of Fire Training Coordinator at Pay Grade 14. Council received a copy of the proposed updated Schedule of Salary Pay Grades and positions as part of this item. Staff recommended first reading approval. **Motion:** Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Anderson, to approve first reading of Ordinance #2015-02-16 (A). **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

ITEM FOR INFORMATION: Update on recent criminal activities and law enforcement efforts. Chief Gosnell reported on the efforts of a recently-organized Task Force consisting of personnel from the Conway Police Department, Horry County Police Department, and SLED and announced that arrests are expected soon. He also advised that shift personnel are performing business checks and escorting business employees to their vehicles and to banks for night deposits upon request. Gosnell continued to encourage residents to report all suspicious activity they witness and to take the necessary steps to secure personal property. He noted that, in addition to an officer who is assigned full-time to the downtown area, overlapping patrols are also providing coverage downtown.

The Council meeting recessed after this item of business and reconvened in the Conference Room for the remainder of the meeting.

WORKSHOP SESSION:

A. Discussion on plans for proposed Farmers Market growth. Blake Lanford, Regional Lead Agent with Clemson Extension Services, reviewed with Council a grant proposal being submitted to USDA for funds to expand the existing Farmers Market program. The two-year grant application requests funding to expand the existing physical market, hire an executive director for two years, establish a virtual market, and a mobile market for communities with no access to the virtual or physical markets. The grant, if funded, would be used to pay half of the executive director's salary for two years, buy a truck for the mobile market and software for the virtual market. He asked Council to consider increasing its annual funding for the market; these funds would be added to allocations from other local jurisdictions to make a match for the grant to increase the odds that the application will be funded. Lanford noted another grant proposal has been submitted for a mobile commercial kitchen unit that allows programs for lightly processed foods which can be used to service a food pantry. If the grant is approved, he would need a place to house the unit. **Outcome:** Council was in agreement with the direction this program is taking as reviewed by Lanford and agreed to discuss an increase in funding for the market program at the Budget Retreat.

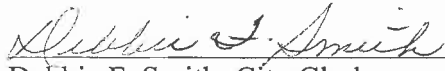
B. Discussion on proposed use of space at the corner of Laurel Street and Second Avenue (former Law Enforcement Center location). The former Law Enforcement Center at the corner of Laurel Street and Second Avenue has been vacant since the Police Department moved into the new Public Safety Facility. Lanford shared his ideas for re-use of this space and noted the needs of a downtown Farmers Market location—parking, restrooms, and a great deal of covered space. He described ideas to use this site for a multi-purpose open-air pavilion that could be used for the Farmers Market and other activities, additional parking, an entertainment venue, a park, etc. Hughes presented a slide show of the Farmers Market in Asheboro, North Carolina, in which he had played a role in design and development. Graham commented on the viability of the Farmers Market in its current location but remarked that this space could be an opportunity for expansion and other uses; however, no decisions have been made at this time. During discussion, ideas mentioned included the use of this space as a City square, having live music on weekends, the feasibility of purchasing the small private parking area behind the Planning Department, using low walls (that could double for seating) and/or landscaping as protection from traffic; a need for a four-way stop at Laurel Street/2nd Avenue. Graham advised Council that \$100,000 is in this fiscal year’s budget for the demolition of the building and transition of the space and that City crews could do the work. Transition efforts would address improvements in the existing traffic pattern in that area while accommodating traffic to and from the Finance Department. He also commented that, if Council was favorable to moving forward with this work and proposed plans for re-use of the site, staff will work on the details and present them to City Council. Mayor Lawson inquired about the use of a commercial kitchen in the food hub portion of the Farmers Market venture if such kitchen facilities were to be installed during renovations of the Old Post Office Building. Lanford remarked on the expense of a commercial kitchen, comparing it to a demonstration kitchen and an incubator kitchen, and noted that the cost to use a kitchen had to be affordable to be of assistance for the Farmers Market. **Outcome:** Council appeared receptive to the proposal for reuse of this site for an open air multi-purpose structure. There was a consensus for the City Administrator to move forward with demolition of the old Law Enforcement Center building and transition of the property as proposed. Council agreed to discuss this project in more detail during the upcoming Budget Retreat.

C. Discussion on proposed smoke-free ordinance. At its January 20th meeting, Council approved the tabling of final reading of Ordinance #2015-01-20 (B), which, as presented, focused mainly on regulations for smoke-free enclosed workplaces within the City. Graham distributed copies of the ordinance in its original form with sections identified for possible deletion based on discussion at the January 20th meeting to omit all regulations pertaining to the workplace. Graham asked for input on the changes that should be made in the proposed ordinance before it is brought to Council for consideration of second reading, and a review and discussion on the terms in original proposed ordinance, by section, followed. In response to an inquiry from Goldfinch, Graham noted that the proposed ordinance did not address smokeless tobacco products, only smoking devices and lighted smoking materials. There was discussion on prohibiting smoking in parking lots for City parks and athletic fields and omitting streets and sidewalks. There was also discussion on the prohibition of smoking in other City-owned parking lots; however, Chief Gosnell commented that enforcement would be problematic in areas where City-owned property lines are not clearly delineated and he recommended that regulations be kept as simple as possible. Graham clarified tobacco use policies as currently stated in the Employee Handbook. Discussion indicated support for adopting tobacco-free regulations (smoking and smokeless products) for all City-owned buildings, vehicles, parks/recreation areas and their associated parking lots and to align the policies in the Employee Handbook when the handbook is updated. Given the sweeping changes being proposed in the document, there was discussion on how to schedule readings for the original “workplace” ordinance and a revised “city property” ordinance. **Outcome:** Second reading of the original proposed smoke-free ordinance and first reading of a revised ordinance drafted according to Council’s input will be listed

on the agenda for the next Council meeting. First reading of the revised ordinance will be dependent upon action taken on second reading of the original document.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion: White made a motion, seconded by Anderson, to adjourn the meeting.
Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes approved by City Council this 16th day of February, 2015.



Debbie F. Smith, City Clerk