

**MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2018
6:30 P.M.**

{Summary minutes of City Council meeting. Audio tapes of the meeting are on file and are included by reference as part of this meeting. An agenda of this meeting has been either mailed or made available to persons, organizations and local news media as per their request. The agenda gives the date, time and place of the meeting as well as the order of business. This disclosure is in compliance with the South Carolina Code of Laws of 1976, Section 30-4-80

The regular meeting of City Council was held on December 18, 2018 at 6:30 P.M. in the City Municipal Building with the following present:

COUNCIL: Mayor Harold Thompson, Mayor Pro Tem Robert Garner, Councilmembers Tommy Anthony, Vicki Morgan, Pamela Sloss, Ricky Harris and Sonja Craig.

CITY ATTORNEY: Not in attendance

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF: Gloria Rogers, Municipal Clerk/Personnel Director; Laura Hembree – Finance Director; Joe Nichols – Utility Director; Sam White – Public Safety Director; Leroy Edwards– Maintenance Shop Director; Rebecca Lance – Accounting Supervisor and DeWayne Hardy - Public Service Supervisor. Kenny Thomas – Public Service Director was absent due to his wife’s surgery.

NEWS MEDIA: None

OTHERS: Alise Asby, David Lance, Jamie Trammell, Sheryl Medders, Amy Belue and Rieta Drinkwine

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Thompson called the meeting to order. He gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was given by all present. The roll was called by Municipal Clerk Gloria Rogers.

2. MINUTES

A. November 20, 2018 Regular Council Meeting

MOTION by Councilmember Harris to approve minutes.

SECOND by Mayor Pro Tem Garner.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. December 5, 2018 City Council Workshop

MOTION by Councilmember Harris to approve minutes.

SECOND by Councilmember Anthony

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. **COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Monthly Reports

MOTION by Councilmember Sloss to accept monthly reports as information.
SECOND by Councilmember Craig.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Fiscal Year 2018 Audit Presentation

Sheryl Medders with McKinley Cooper & Co. LLC presented the Fiscal Year 2018 Audit for the City of Union

MOTION by Councilmember Sloss to accept 2018 Audit for City of Union
SECOND by Councilmember Craig
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. **BUSINESS**

A. ORDINANCE – 1ST READING – RELATING TO THE RECOVERY OF COLLECTION COSTS AS PART OF DELINQUENT DEBTS COLLECTED, PURSUANT TO THE SETOFF DEBT COLLECTION ACT

Finance Director Laura Hembree states that since 1993, the City of Union has participated in the Debt Setoff Program offered by the Municipal Association of South Carolina. Delinquent utility bills have been the primary type of debt that has been submitted to the Municipal Association for Collection taxes through the Debt Setoff Program. In recent years, the City has submitted delinquent property taxes, police fines, and inmate prescription debt as well, and as the collecting agency, the Municipal Association has collected this debt when funds are accessible on the City's behalf. For program year 2018, the Municipal Association is requiring each City to adopt an updated ordinance concerning the collection costs associated with the debt collection. The Municipal Association charges the City a \$25 fee per collection item. The City can pass this fee along to the customer or citizen, per the Debt Setoff Collection Act. Staff recommendation is to pass 1st reading of the ordinance.

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tem Garner to pass 1st reading of the ordinance.
SECOND by Councilmember Sloss
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

B. RESOLUTION – DEBT COLLECTION

Finance Director Laura Hembree states that since 1993, the City of Union has participated in the Debt Setoff Program offered by the Municipal Association of South Carolina. Delinquent utility bills have been the primary type of debt that has been submitted to the Municipal Association for collection through the Debt Setoff Program. In recent years, the City has submitted delinquent property taxes, police fines and inmate prescription debt as well, and as the collecting agency, the Municipal Association has collected this debt when funds are accessible on the City's behalf. For program year 2018, the Municipal Association is requiring each City to adopt an updated resolution authorizing them to act as the Collecting Agency.

MOTION by Councilmember Sloss to pass the resolution
SECOND by Councilmember Morgan

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C. PRE-PRINTED CHECK SIGNATURES

Finance Director Laura Hembree states that since July 2008, all checks that have been printed and remitted to the City's vendors have been physically signed by two signers - one elected official and one appointed official. This was a recommendation by the Municipal Association and was discussed and voted on by City Council at that time. All bank accounts are set up to require two signatures in order for them to be honored. While this has been a good practice, it is sometimes difficult for Finance employees to schedule check disbursements when either of the two elected officials or either of the appointed officials are out of the office. The City's software provider is able to program pre-printed signatures to print onto the checks as they are printed for payment. Two signatures are able to be pre-printed, in accordance with the bank account requirements. In order to put this practice in place, a motion is needed. The recommendation is to begin using pre-printed signatures on Accounts Payable checks in January 2019. After a brief discussion, council agreed to add another council member to sign checks.

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tem Garner to add a third elected official to sign checks in the event that Mayor Thompson and Councilmember Harris are not available

SECOND by Councilmember Craig

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tem Garner to add Councilmember Anthony be the third elected official check signer

SECOND by Councilmember Morgan

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D. DISCUSSION/MOTION – HEATING & COOLING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM RENEWAL PROGRAM

Finance Director Laura Hembree states that the City of Union has been involved in a Heating and Cooling Assistance Program since 2011. This program generated from the original Community Change Program from 1993. Heating assistance (Electric & Gas) runs from January 1, thru April 30 and cooling assistance runs July 1 thru October 31. Each City of Union customer who qualifies can receive \$100 per season. (No customer is to receive more than \$200 per year). In fiscal year 2018, the "Community Change Program" generated \$19,117.15 and assisted 311 customers in the amount of \$30,191.67. In keeping with the guide lines already in place, the program will continue on the availability of funds. The Salvation Army and Carolina Community Actions have been notified of the program and are requested to respond to the City by letter of their willingness to qualify applicants for the assistance as appropriated. Customers are required to participate in the "Community Change Program" to qualify to receive assistance. Staff recommends the release of Community Change funds to qualifying City Utility Customers for the next calendar year. Mayor Pro Tem Garner asked if the City has any input regarding qualifications for a customer. Finance Director Laura Hembree states that the funding qualifications are set by Carolina Community Action. Councilmember Morgan suggests sending out letters to customers who are not on the "Community Change Program" to solicit participation to increase funds since there is only a 30% participation in the program. Councilmember Harris asked why are the months of November, December, May and June left out of the months for assistant. Finance Laura Hembree states the program was set up to assist customers during the coldest months and the hottest months. This keeps customers from coming in for assistance more often than they should. Councilmember Morgan suggests changing the heating and cooling assistance to

12 months since the customer can only get assistant twice a year anyway.

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tem Garner to continue participation in the
“Community Change Program”

SECOND by Councilmember Harris

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ABSTAIN: Councilmember Sloss is on the Carolina Community Action Board

E. **DISCUSSION/MOTION – UNION COUNTY LADY JACKETS BASKETBALL**

Mayor Harold Thompson states that Coach Richard of the Union County Lady Jackets varsity basketball team is asking for support. The Lady Jackets budget is not adequate enough to cover the full amount of the team expenses for the 2018-2019 seasons. Even with fundraisers, parents and coaches still had to contribute money out of their pockets to cover expenses. Some of the expenses are training apparel, tournaments, pre-game meals, end of year awards and gifts for senior athletes. They are asking City Council to consider a donation in any amount to help off-set these expenses. Any amount will be greatly appreciated and they want to thank council in advance for their consideration and support.

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tem Garner not to assist the Union County Jackets
varsity

basketball team at this time

SECOND by Councilmember Sloss

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

F. **APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS**

Mayor Thompson states that City Council must fill (1) vacancy on the Board of Zoning Appeals for an expired term. This position is a three-year term to expire December 31, 2021 and is appointed by the Mayor and City Council. The Board of Zoning Appeals works closely with the City of Union Planning Department. This board hears and makes decisions dealing with the City Zoning Ordinance Regulations. This position was solicited by public record in the local newspaper November 19, 2018. Request to serve letter, voting ballots and public notice were presented. City staff recommends that Council appoint qualified candidates to fill this most important vacancy. There was only (1) one applicant, George Ashmore. Council voted unanimously by ballot to re-appoint Mr. Ashmore

5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Rieta Drinkwine, Director of Union County Carnegie Library announced that the library has AmeriCorps Financial Stability Navigator. This will help people gain more access for the services they need.

Mayor Thompson asked for a motion to strike the executive session from the agenda.

MOTION by Councilmember Sloss to strike the executive session from the
agenda

SECOND by Councilmember Morgan

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. **ANNOUNCEMENT BY MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

Mayor Pro Tem Garner states council will go forward and send Jeff Shacker of MASC a copy of the City Administrator’s ad for review. Also he would like for council to review job description and let Gloria know if there are any changes. The

Personnel Committee will review the job description after the first of the year.

Mayor Thompson wished everyone a Merry Christmas and to be safe.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tem Garner to adjourn

SECOND by Councilmember Craig

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Gloria J. Rogers, Municipal Clerk

Minutes approved _____ 2019