

**MINUTES**  
**BUDGET WORK SESSION**  
**TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2017**  
**5:30 PM**

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{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 (e).}

A budget work session was held on Tuesday, March 20, 2017 at 5:30 pm in the City Municipal building with the following present:

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

**DEPARTMENTAL STAFF:** Gloria Rogers – Municipal Clerk/Personnel Director; Sam White, - Public Safety Director, Perry Harmon – Public Service Director; Joe Nichols – Utility Director; Walker Gallman – Finance Director; Leroy Edwards – Maintenance Shop Director; Laura Hembree – Accounting Supervisor and Melissa Youngblood – Media Technology Coordinator.

**NEWS MEDIA:** Mike Stevens - WBCU

**OTHERS:** James Rice, Reverend James A. Williams, Jim Stepp, Jamie Tramell, Curtiss Hunter, Alise Ashby, Scott Sandor , Letitia Wages, Andrena-Baker Powell , Reita Drinkwine , Bill Rochester, Lewis Jeter, Libby Oliver, Kathy Jo Lancaster, Steven Stone, Brian Gaston. Jane Scarborough, Caroline Barger, Amber Ivey, Frank M. Hart, Paul Winters, Melody Porter and others.

Mayor Thompson called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

Letitia Wages, Coordinator for Youth Leadership Union addressed council. She and the eleven members of the Youth Leadership Union County Class of 2017 thank City Council for their continued support. Ms. Wages gave an update of the projects and programs for Youth Leadership Union. They are requesting the same level of funding as last year in the amount of \$5,000. Youth Leadership Union is also seeking funding from other agencies/organizations.

Scott Sandor, Board President of the Chamber of Commerce addressed council. He presented City Council with a timeline of Chamber activities. They are requesting the City of Union commit to sustaining the funding level from the previous year to allow the new director to initiate a strategic plan to address what they have heard the community desires from their Chamber of Commerce. They are requesting funding in the amount of \$35,720. Jamie Tramell states that they will revamp a new plan for the Chamber of Commerce to assist the downtown merchants.

James Rice, President of the NAACP addressed City Council. Mr. Rice thanked the City for their past support. He presented a breakdown of the amount that was spent on the January 16, 2017 MLK, Jr. Day. They are requesting funding in the amount of \$2,200.

Jim Stepp, Treasurer of the Meals on Wheels made presentation on behalf of the Union County Meals on Wheels Organization. They are dedicated to serving residents in Union and Buffalo area. During 2016, they served 16,919 meals at a cost of more than \$65,000. They are requesting funding in the amount of \$12,000. They are now delivering nearly 1,400 meals per month costing about \$5,500 per month. Midway Barbecue prepares meals for clients.

Scott Sandor, YMCA Director addressed Council. In 2016 they had 40,258 scans at their front desk. They are exploring offering activities in the following areas: fall prevention, healthy brain, enhance fitness-senior strength training and diabetes programming. Plans for 2017 include more strategic approach to membership marketing. The YMCA is requesting Partnership in the amount of \$25,000. Mr. Sandor discussed the pool. In 2016 many new usage policies targeting safety; additional safety measures require more labor hours associated with operating the pool; summer plans include instituting a swim lesson plan using community volunteers. They are requesting \$65,000 for the pool. He discussed the facility which is managed with direct input from City personnel with regard to most efficient method maintaining and improving operation of the facility. Facility request is in the amount of \$25,650. Mayor Thompson states that Councilmember Sonja Craig is representative on YMCA Board for the City of Union.

Lewis Jeter, Business Consultant for Union Small Business Development Center, addressed council. He thanked council for last year's funding. Winthrop Region Small Business Development Center was fortunate enough to open an SBDC office in downtown Union. The SBDC main goal is to help small businesses. The funding from the City of Union is being used for SBDC to offset the cost for small business owners. SBDC is requesting funding in the amount of \$5,000. All of the funds allocated will be used to further the programs previously stated in their request. Mayor Thompson states that he would like Larry Stevens, Director of the Union Small Business Development Center to come to a council meeting to speak on behalf of Michelin Development Center.

Rieta Drinkwine, Director of Union County Carnegie Library addressed council. She thanked council for their continued support. She gave an overview of the activities and programs offered at the library. They are looking at how they can bring in revenue and assisting with tourism. They received \$54,000 in grant funding over the last 12 months for literacy. Bill Rochester, Board Chair of UCCL addressed council. He states that the library improves the quality of life in our community. They are requesting funding in the amount of \$ 3,000 and also requesting funding in the amount of \$25,000 for renovation and \$25,000 for the next budget year as well. They will be going out to bid in the next month for renovation project. Finance Direct Walker Gallman asked if they have kept count on visitors for tourism funding; they have not. Mayor asked UCCL to keep up with a register count of visitors to library.

Kathy Jo Lancaster, Executive Director of the Union County Development Board addressed council. She states that the UCDB is responsible for recruiting new industry, retaining existing industry and creating new jobs and capital investments. She states that their planning efforts and hard work over the past months have been productive. She reviewed a high-level look at the highlights of successes in 2016 such as recruitment, retention and expansion; infrastructure and site development. Also she discussed marketing; workforce development and educational partnerships; professional development and capital investment & job creation. They are requesting funding in the amount of \$15,000.

Curtiss Hunter, Director of the Union County Tourism addressed council. She gave an update on requests for funding for 2017/2018 projects & projected events. On February 17, 2017, the Uniquely Union Festival committee met and voted to: (1) change the date of the festival ; (2) separate the BBQ portion of the festival and give it to Meals on Wheels for a fund raiser; (3) reorganize festival . They are planning to have at least two major functions a year. The Union County Tourism Summit is in the planning Process for spring 2017 and plans are underway for a fact- finding trip to Brevard, NC. Projects also include advertising (motor sports, events, billboards, etc.). The Union County Drag Way/Indro Races are planned for 2017 Spring/Summer. The Union County Coon Hunter's Association & Union County Tourism Commission will host Coon Hunt Event December 1, 2 & 3, 2017 and February 22, 23 & 24, 2018. Equestrianism/Chuck Wagon Event and Concert is planned for 2017. Councilmember Craig is Ex-Officio member of Union County Tourism Board.

Steven Stone of Union County Coon Hunter's Association addressed council regarding the Palmetto Jamboree. Mr. Sone states that the United Kennel Club agreed to

bring the Southeastern Treeing Walker Days event to Union County beginning in January 2016. An agreement was signed to bring the event to Union County each year for the next five years with the Union County Fair Board. He discussed getting more local vendors involved in the event. Mr. Stone also discussed the accommodations at the Union County Fair Grounds and the fees charged by the Fair Board for use of the facility. There is a cost increase.

Jane Scarborough of the Olde English District Tourism Commission addressed council. Their goal is to provide Union County with national and regional exposure they would not receive otherwise. The Olde English District promotes a total of 7 counties. OED works closely with the Union County Tourism Commission to ensure that the City of Union is marketed strongly by the OED. The OED is located on I-77 at Exit 65 and has a Visitors Center very accessible to both northbound and southbound traffic as well as Highway 9 traffic and can direct visitors to Union. The OED Tourism Commission is requesting funding in the amount of \$7,291.00. Their marketing program benefits the economy of the City of Union through generating revenue. This year's OED Attraction of the Year was awarded to the Palmetto State Jamboree & Southeastern Treeing Walker Days in Union. They recently held an OED Forum in Union to feature Main Street Junction which was one of the best attended events and exposed many people from surrounding counties to this great venue.

Elise Ashby, Union County Tour Chair for AG & Art addressed council. She states that AG & Art is the largest free tour in the county. Last year nearly 1,300 people, 1,100 of those were tourists, visited eight sites. The tourists spend money on fresh produce and homemade goods, meats and sweets. In addition, tourists had the opportunity to visit historic sites, museum, farm sites and the Carnegie Library. Funding request in the amount of \$1,500 will be used for advertising. Ag & Art tour will be held the last weekend in June 2017.

Caroline Barger, President of the Union Arts Council addressed council. She thanked council for their past support and funding. UCAC has weekly and monthly programs. UCAC partners with USC-Union every year to host the Annual Art Exhibition. Amber Ivey, Coordinator of the Union County Arts who oversees the day-to day operation addressed council. She states that they will host a chalk walk this year (April 15, 2017) which they want to turn into a large event on Main Street. Other events planned are summer art program; adult water color class; Mommy & Me Tea and a Women's Conference. The Arts Council is requesting funding in the amount of \$15,000.

Frank M. Hart, Union County Historical Society President addressed council. He states that on behalf of the Union County Historical Society and specifically for the Museum located at 127 West Main Street thanked council for their support. Mr. Hart states that the museum attracts many people to Union and over the year's citizens from every state have visited the Museum and also persons from foreign countries. They are working on an African-American section in the museum. Funding is requested in the amount of \$40,000 for 2017-2018.

Paul Winters, Executive Director of the Union County Agricultural Fair addressed council. He thanked council for their past support. Last year's funding was used for marketing. New carnival events this year include: Banana Derby; Lew-E's Comedy Circus; Red Dragon Lazar Tag and Marquee Event – The Fearless Flores Thrill Show. Church night has been held at the Fair since 2006 (plans are to ask church for love offering/donations as a sponsorship campaign). The Fair is booking National acclaimed group call "The Crab Family" for Church Night. He states that small financial support from the churches that participate will help accomplish this event. Mr. Winter's states that approximately 10,000 tickets are given each year for church night. Councilmember Craig asked/suggest Fair charge .50 cent per ticket to help offset cost. The Fair is also bringing back the automobile give away from years past. They have a commitment from a local sponsor for this event. A drawing will be held Saturday night for a late model car that will come from a local used car dealership. The support the City provide for the annual fair event will allow the financial support to continue to make the necessary improvements to the facility. The Union County facility is used for other events such as the Palmetto Jamboree and Relay for Life. The Fair is requesting funding in the amount

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of \$10,000 to fund the attractions and musical entertainment. Anticipated dates for the 2017 Union County Fair is October 17-21, 2017.

Councilmember Morgan asked Mr. Winters if there is a set fee for renting fairground. Mr. Winter states that there is not. Councilmember Morgan also asked if there will be bathroom upgrades. Mr. Winters states that he does not foresee any upgrades.

Council discussed the Palmetto Jamboree that is held at the Fairgrounds. They have concerns and issues in regards to the Palmetto Jamboree contract with the Fair Board Councilmember Morgan states that the Palmetto Jamboree came to Union because other towns kept going up with their cost. City Council states that they do not want to lose the Palmetto Jamboree event. Mr. Winters will take this back to Fair Board.

Curtiss Hunter addressed council regarding the Union County Antique Farm Show on behalf of Farm Show Committee Secretary Raymond Sligh. She states that in years past the show has attracted some 2000 people as spectators and 75 exhibitors from South Carolina, Georgia and North Carolina. The Farm Show Committee is requesting funding in the amount of \$2,000.

Budget work session adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

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Gloria J. Rogers, Municipal Clerk

Minutes approved \_\_\_\_\_ 2017