

**MINUTES
COUNCIL WORKSHOP
TUESDAY, JULY 23, 2013
9:00 A.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 (e).}

A council workshop was held on January 23, 2013 at 9:00 A.M. in the City Municipal building with the following present:

COUNCIL: Mayor Harold Thompson, Mayor Pro Tem Robert Garner, Councilmembers Tommie L. Hill, Yates Giles, Ricky Todd Harris, and Jim Wilson. Councilmember Ruff was absent due to illness.

CITY ATTORNEY: Billy Whitney was absent.

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF: Gloria Rogers, Municipal Clerk/Personnel Director; Gregg Pickens, Captain - Public Safety Department; Walker Gallman – Finance Director; Laura Hembree – Accounting Supervisor; Perry Harmon – Public Service Director and Joe Nichols – Utility Director.

NEWS MEDIA: Graham Williams – Union County News and Mike Stevens – WBCU.

OTHERS: Van Broad, Greg McLeer, Ann White, Greg Parker, Bob Love, Torance Inman, Kristi Woodall and Mayor Mary Ferguson-Glenn.

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. Business

A. UNION EVENTS CENTER – INFORMATIONAL

Bob Love, Chairman of the Union Events Center Committee addressed Council. He introduced Van Broad who is the Director of Economic Development & Fountain Inn Center for Visual and Performing Arts and George Patrick McLeer, Administrator for the Office of Cultural Affairs for the City of Mauldin. They are in attendance to address Council with information about their facilities.

Mr. Broad discussed their downtown and why the City chose to invest in their Center. This Center was previously the Fountain Inn High School and was converted to the Center for Visual and Performing Arts in 2007/2008. In the Center's first year of serious productions, the Center saw 6,000 ticketed sales and prior to Center they had zero people come through Fountain Inn. The population at that time was only 6,700. In 2011/2012 they had a little over 20,000 ticketed sales which brought in \$1, 050, 000 to the local economy. The Center has had a positive impact on their downtown. Some of the events held at the Center are orchestra performances and productions produced and performed by people in the community. Also there is a theater company that performs at the Center as well as local schools. Their total budget for this year will be \$630,000 and the Center will bring in between \$450,000 and

\$500,000 in revenues. The total cost for the City of Fountain Inn to operate the facility is anywhere from \$150,000 to \$250,000. Mr. Broad states that last week they signed a 1.5 million dollar pledge from one donor. He feels this has happened because the City invested in itself. There are also other donors that have made pledges to the Center. Also the facility has had a big impact on the downtown area. Their buildings are about 95% occupied over being 60% vacant five years ago. Mr. Broad opened the floor for questions from City Council regarding their Center. Lastly, Mr. Broad states that he is glad that they moved forward with their Center for Visual and Performing Arts instead of waiting on the economy to get better.

Next Mr. McLeer addressed City Council regarding the Mauldin Cultural Center. There was positive and negative feedback before the facility was renovated to the Mauldin Cultural Center. Since 2010 the Cultural Center has grown from about 10,000 visitors to 30,000 over the past five years. The Mauldin Cultural has grown from almost empty to an almost full venue. The Cultural Center has enhanced their community. Recently, the City of Mauldin approved the creation of a new Office of Cultural Affairs. This office is charged with managing and developing the cultural assets of the City such as promoting the arts in Mauldin and provides leadership, guidance and various resources to the cultural community in Mauldin. Mr. McLeer states that their overall job is to leverage the economic impact of the arts to improve the quality of life. Mr. McLeer opened the floor for questions from City Council.

B. HEALTHY LIVING INITIATIVE

Dr. Kristi Woodall, Superintendent of Union County Schools addressed City Council regarding a Healthy Living Initiative Program for Union County School's kindergarten students. This program is to integrate local farmers that are certified to provide locally grown products into schools. By providing the students with locally grown fruits and vegetable through hand-on-learning activities, this will promote healthy eating among kindergarten age students. There are 340 kindergarten students in the Union County School system which would cost a dollar a day to feed students and there is additional cost for sauces, dips and chow-chows and other things that would go with greens. The total cost to implement the Healthy Living Initiative Program is \$12,500. The teachers are all on board with this program. Dr. Woodall also mentioned the Governor has declared August as Farmers Market Month. There was a question and answer discussion. Dr. Woodall is requesting support from the City of Union to initiate program. Mayor Thompson states that he will take request under consideration.

C. GRASS CUTTING/MAINTENANCE

Mayor Thompson discussed the public nuisance regarding care and maintenance of properties. The issue has gotten out of hand and the ordinance needs to be amended as to where the City has more control that will allow the City to better enforce the ordinance. The ordinance presently allows the City to notify the property owner, or person having care or custody of the property to mow grass and maintain property within (10) days of receipt of notice but no other action can be taken against the property owner. The majority of the certified notices sent out to property owners are not picked up due to the fact that the owner knows the notice is from the City of Union.

D. CITY OF UNION – PRIORITY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS LIST

Mayor Thompson discussed an updated list of Capital Improvements to be sent to Catawba Regional. The list was sent to Council prior to the workshop. The Mayor asked Council is there were additions they want to see on list. If so, please let him know by July 31, 2013. Council discussed the list which consisted of economic development issues, community development issues and special projects. Specific items discussed on the list were the old train station property, the farmer's market area and sidewalk repair.

Mayor Thompson asked if there any questions or comments.

Councilmember Harris asked why bars have been installed in the Finance Department and the Building & Zoning Department customer's windows. Mayor Thompson states that they were installed for safety reasons. After a brief discussion, Councilmember Harris suggests that the bars be modified in order for customers to have enough space to conduct business such as writing checks or signing paperwork for permits. Staff will take recommendation under consideration.

3. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Council meeting adjourned at 10:52 A.M.

Gloria J. Rogers, Municipal Clerk

Minutes approved _____ 2013