

**MINUTES
COUNCIL WORKSHOP
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2014
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 September 18, 2014 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: Larry Flynn

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF: Gloria Rogers, Municipal Clerk/Personnel Director; Sam White - Public Safety Director and Laura Hembree – Accounting Supervisor.

NEWS MEDIA: Graham Williams – Union County News; Charles Warner – Union Times and Mike Stevens – WBCU.

OTHERS: Bob Love, Nanette Jenkins, Bryan Stone, Mary Anne Miller, Don O’Shields, George Bruce, Curtis Hunter, Andrena Powell-Baker, Brooks Carwile, Carlise Oxner, Louis Jordon, Marsha Jordon, Ann White, Torance Inman, Barbara Rippy, Robert Small, B.F Kennedy , Ray Treadway and others.

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

Bob Love, Chairman of the Union Events Center Committee addressed City Council. Mr. Love gave an update on the proposed Events Center. He presented a handout with the Events Center Timeline. The Union Downtown Redevelopment Plan was approved December 14, 1993 and the amendment to the Redevelopment Plan authorizing the TIF Bond was approved on March 16, 2004. A Steering Committee was formed in 2010 with the purpose of hiring an architect to design appropriate facility, collect cost estimates and create the Union Events Center Board. Mr. Love recognized the Union Events Center Board of Directors in attendance. The Board was formed in January 2011. First Community Development was hired on January 1, 2013, based on City Council’s approval, to spear-head funding raising efforts for the Union Events Center. He also introduced Mary Anne Miller who was hired as Interim Director in June 2014 to keep things on track for the Union Events Center. Mr. Love states that the Union Events Center Board has raised \$1.44M toward the project. Next he gave contributions update which totals \$3,005,076. The total construction estimate cost is \$3,154,612 as of July 15, 2014. Mr. Love states that Bob Hart, Manager of the Timken Company states that when the Board gets the project going, he will ask the Timken Foundation

for \$226,000 more for a seating grant. He next gave an update on his contact with County Council. Mr. Love states that the committee had originally asked the County for a percentage of their hospitality tax in the amount of \$80,000 for three years but is now requesting a one time commitment in the amount of \$250,000. He states that the County has more than \$800,000 in unapportioned hospitality and accommodations tax funds and the law establishes that this money must be spent on tourism related activities. Mr. Love reminded City Council that the Board is continuing their fund raising efforts full speed ahead. He states that Arthur State Bank has agreed to provide a short term bridge loan to the City of Union to cover temporary shortfall between construction completion and pledges. Next he reviewed the UEC Sources and Uses Proforma handout in detail. This included the total funds on hand and pledges. A handout of the Events Center rental and ticket sales revenue projections was also discussed in detail. Mr. Love recommends that the City and County have a joint workshop. He requests that the meeting be held October 2nd or 3rd because he will be out of town for about twelve days after those dates. Lastly, Mr. Love states that as recently as last night, one of the Events Center supporters has come forward and is making preparations to leave an endowment where the interest from it will be used to operate the Events Center. It is a substantial amount and would be a significant endowment.

Mayor Thompson added that a portion of the City's hospitality tax can be used for the Events Center. TIF District money, in a few years, will be available for operating expenses for the Events Center which is a little over \$100,000.

Mr. Love assured Council that with the support of the City of Union and the support of the benefactor, the Board will not for a second stop asking for grants, seeking new members and asking for pledges. They will continue to seek partnership with corporations and individuals so they will impose on the City of Union as little as possible.

Mayor Thompson, spoke on behalf of himself and City Council that the citizens taxes will not be raised to pay for the Union Events Center.

Mr. Love states that the last issue at hand is whether they will need a bridge loan to cover the pledges. He states that when First Community was hired, the Board was told that this is how these campaigns normally work.

Mayor Thompson states that the he will ask the County to meet in a workshop with the City to discuss the Events Center.

Mayor Thompson closed the workshop with a prayer.

3. ADJOURNMENT:

Council meeting adjourned at 10:15 A.M.

Gloria J. Rogers, Municipal Clerk

Minutes approved _____ 2014