

MINUTES
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING/WORKSHOP
MONDAY, MAY 21, 2018
5:00 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 (e).}

A special council meeting /workshop were held on May 21, 2018 at 5:00 P.M. at 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.

CITY ATTORNEY: Larry Flynn

DEPARTMENTAL STAFF: Gloria Rogers – Municipal Clerk/Personnel Director; Laura Hembree – Finance Director; Joe Nichols – Utility Director, Perry Harmon – Public Service Director; Leroy Edwards – Maintenance Shop Director, Sam White – Public Safety Director and Adam Harris – Assistant Utility Director and Rebecca Lance – Accounting Supervisor

NEWS MEDIA: Mike Stevens – WBCU Radio

OTHERS: C.D. Rhodes and Kathy Teague

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

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

2. **BUSINESS**

A. **ORDINANCE – 2ND READING – AUTHORIZING MAYOR TO EXECUTE DOCUMENTS INCLUDING A CORRECTIVE QUIT CLAIM DEED FOR A TRACT OF LAND PREVIOUSLY CONVEYED TO BASS PROPERTIES**

Attorney Larry Flynn states that when the deed was done back in 2005 for Bass Properties, L.P., the deed and grantee was identified as Bass Properties, when in fact the correct name of the Grantee is Bass Properties, L.P. There is no money involved for either party. The recommendation is to pass 2nd reading.

MOTION by Councilmember Anthony to pass 2nd reading authorizing the Mayor to execute the documents.

SECOND by Mayor Pro Tem Garner.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. **ORDINANCE – 1ST READING – APPROPRIATE FISCAL 2017-2018 MONIES FROM GENERAL FUND**

Finance Director Laura Hembree states that during the December 19, 2017 regular City Council meeting, Tim Teague with Gregory Pest Solutions spoke to City Council about a mosquito treatment contract. The contract includes several treatments over a seven-month period, to include the placement of briquettes and the spraying of larvicide throughout the City. At that time, the Mayor was authorized to contract with Gregory Pest Solutions to begin the process. They began their treatments in April, 2018 and to date; the cost for the first 3 treatments

has been \$16,012.00. The cost for the treatments for fiscal year 2017-2018 total \$20,693, with 1 more treatment scheduled in June. The ordinance provides authorization from the General Fund an appropriation of \$20,700 to fund the cost of mosquito spraying contract.

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tem Garner to pass 1st reading of the ordinance to appropriate \$20,700 for pest control.

SECOND by Councilmember Morgan

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. **ORDINANCE – 1ST READING – ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF UNION AMENDING, RESTATING AND ADDING PROVISIONS**

Mayor Thompson states that this is an ordinance amending, restating and adding provisions to the City's Code of Ordinances pertaining to the City's Form of Government and other matters related thereto. The Mayor asked for a motion to table item.

MOTION by Councilmember Morgan to table.

SECOND by Councilmember Sloss.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

D. **DISCUSSION/MOTION – DATA MAX-REVENUE ENHANCEMENT**

Mayor Thompson states that on May 15, 2018, Bobby Monroe made a presentation to City Council on DataMax. He states that City Council needs to make a decision on whether or not the City want to use his service. Mayor Pro Tem Garner asked Mayor Thompson to confirm that if DataMax does not find any revenue then there is no cost for the City. The Mayor states that is correct. Mayor Pro Tem Garner then asked if the City will be under a contract. Mayor Thompson states the City will have a contract agreement for the service and he would like for City Council to see the details. Councilmember Anthony asked if Kathy Teague, Business License Coordinator, in the Planning Department is alright with DataMax coming in to collect revenue. Kathy Teague states that she has talked to other people at the Municipal Association and they all have positive feedback regarding DataMax and how much revenue they had generated. City Attorney Larry Flynn added that he had some experience with DataMax through the City of Inman; it seems that DataMax is performing well. Mayor Thompson asked for a motion to start the process to bring contract agreement back to Council at the June regular council meeting for approval.

MOTION by Councilmember Sloss to start process to retain DataMax to collect undiscovered revenue.

SECOND by Councilmember Craig.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

E. **DISCUSSION/MOTION – ALLOCATE UP TO \$150,000 FOR WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE TO THE UNION COUNTY STADIUM**

Utility Director Joe Nichols states that at the May City Council meeting, County Supervisor Frank Hart spoke to Council and asked about some infrastructure needs for the new fieldhouse. The Utility Director states that there is going to be new ticket booths and also a new concession stand at the stadium. They are working on this right now; however, the new fieldhouse is actually being built over top of the sewer line. It was the only place to put it and now the City will have to put in new manholes and re-route the sewer line toward the fairground. This actual line takes care of all the restaurants on that road. It goes underneath some of the buildings at the fairground also. A smoke test was done on the sewer line and everything there was tied to it. Mr. Nichols further states that the City

will put in a sewer line, a new waterline to feed the fieldhouse and also put in a new waterline to feed the irrigation. He also states that over the years, the galvanized line has been leaking and the water they always got for the football teams had a kind of bad smell and some discoloration because that line was not being utilized that much. This should relieve that issue. The City will have to make a new tap and also run new power to the buildings, as well as, run natural gas to the new fieldhouse. The City will bid out manhole project. Mr. Nichols states that the funding can come out of the Hospitality Funds. The recommendation is to allocate up to \$150,000 for water and sewer infrastructure to the Union County Stadium. Mayor Pro Tem Garner asked if the City had enough Hospitality Funds in that account this year. The Finance Director states that it does. Councilmember Morgan asked if the City ever used the stadium, and if so, does the County charge the City. The Mayor states that the City has not used the stadium. Councilmember Morgan states that she is trying to figure out how the City could recoup some of the funding. The Utility Director states that by the stadium staying where it is; it does generate a lot of income for the nearby restaurants instead of being moved out to the high school, as County Supervisor Frank Hart mentioned. Utility Director Joe Nichols agrees that the stadium needs to stay where it is and it does need upgrading.

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tem Garner to go forward to allocate from the Hospitality Funds up to \$150,000 for water and sewer infrastructure at the Union County Stadium.

SECOND by Councilmember Morgan.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

F. DISCUSSION – “TAMPER FEES AND DECEASED UTILITY CUSTOMERS”

Finance Director Laura Hembree states that between 2010 and 2017 we have had 828 tampers. These tampers include all three utility services. She states that Accounting Supervisor Rebecca Lance went through the list serve and did some research with other cities to find out what kind of tamper fees or what kind of procedures other cities follow to handle a situation when there is meter tampering. Two policies for tamper fees were collected for review; Mt. Pleasant and the City of Clinton. The City of Clinton’s policy is in line with more of what the City would like to see going forward. Their tamper fee is \$250.00. The Finance Director states that they talked with Chief White about the fine for tampering with a meter. The Chief states that this would be a misdemeanor charge and that they would not be able to go above what the fine would be for a misdemeanor. She states that staff would like to put something in place when the budget ordinance is adopted. Also they have repeat offenders and if they are able to establish a tampering fee, it will deter customers from tampering with a meter in the future. The Finance Director also discussed deceased customer’s account. The City currently has 338 accounts that are in a deceased person’s name. There is not a policy in place to have someone come in and change the name over to a family member or some other name. This creates a problem because what happens when someone continues to live in the home, but the account stays in the deceased person’s name, that person leaves town and leaves the City with two or three months of utility bills. The City has no way to collect this, so it is written off as a bad debt. Research was done to see what other cities are doing to encourage people to come in and change the name on a deceased customer’s account. The City is looking at giving a family member 30 days to have the utilities changed over or be turned off. The Finance Director states that the department checks the newspapers and funeral home websites to determine if any customers with accounts are deceased. The Finance Director states further that the City of Union wants to send out a letter of condolence along with information that the utilities will have to be put in another name because of policy. Currently the City does not have a policy establishing responsibility for payments on a deceased person’s account. The City would like to be able to have a policy in place so there will not be a lot of accounts in a deceased person’s name that they can’t collect on. Councilmember Morgan asked what kind of fine will they pay if they do not

change it over. Is it \$250.00 again, the same as tamper fee. The Finance Director states that they will cut the utilities off until someone comes in and changes the name on the account. Mayor Thompson made a suggestion to streamline Council's suggestions and get them all down and City Council will call back at the next meeting to pass with the budget. Mayor Pro Tem Garner asked if customers tamper with a meter, are they being prosecuted in Judge Hampton's court or what is happening. The Finance Director states that they are not, but if they can figure out how much to bill them for, they send out a bill for what power is stolen. Councilmember Harris asked if there are repeat offenders. The Finance Director states that there are. Councilmember Harris asked if the City could put a meter 15 ft. or 20 ft. on a top of a pole for repeat offenders to make them stay honest. This was briefly discussed. Councilmember Morgan suggests the fine for 1st offense be \$250.00 and 2nd and 3rd offense be much higher. Accounting Supervisor Rebecca Lance states that the City of Mount Pleasant goes up on their fine and for 3rd offense; the customer has to actually go in front of their government body and give a speech as to why they should give them a meter back. Attorney Larry Flynn states that there are so some state statues dealing with that and we need to make sure we get them. Mayor Thompson states that he will get the attorneys to check the legality of what we want to put in place. Councilmember Anthony states that he is in favor of changing the tamper fee policy.

3. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT/INSPECTION FEES

MOTION by Mayor Pro Tem Garner to go out of regular session into executive session to discuss contractual agreement/inspection fees.

SECOND by Councilmember Harris.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOTION by Councilmember Sloss to go out of executive session back into regular session.

SECOND by Councilmember Harris

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

No action taken.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Councilmember Sloss to adjourn.

SECOND by Councilmember Craig.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Council meeting adjourned at 5:45 P.M.

Gloria J. Rogers, Municipal Clerk

Minutes approved _____ 2018