

**MINUTES  
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2015  
9:00 A.M.**

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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 special council meeting was held on January 26, 2015 at 9:00 A.M. at the City Municipal building with the following present:

**COUNCIL:** Mayor Harold Thompson, Mayor Pro Tem Robert Garner, Tommy Anthony Yates Giles; Pamela Sloss and Jim Wilson. Councilmember Ricky Todd Harris was absent.

**CITY ATTORNEY:** Larry Flynn

**DEPARTMENTAL STAFF:** Gloria Rogers – Municipal Clerk/Personnel Director; Sam White - Public Safety Director; Perry Harmon – Public Service Director; Walker Gallman – Finance Director; Joe Nichols – Utility Director; Mike Petrie – Maintenance Shop Director and Laura Hembree – Accounting Supervisor.

**NEWS MEDIA:** Graham Williams – Union County News and Charles Warner – Union Times

**OTHERS:** Robbie Moody and Louis Jordan

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Thompson called the meeting to order. Invocation was given by Councilmember Giles. The pledge of allegiance was given by all present. The roll was called by Municipal Clerk Gloria Rogers.

**2. BUSINESS**

**A. ORDINANCE - 1ST READING – ALLOW CITY OF UNION TO ENTER INTO AN OPTION AGREEMENT WITH QUAD-STATE DEVELOPMENT & TO ENTER INTO A NON-EXCLUSIVE REAL ESTATE LISTING AGREEMENT BOTH OF WHICH RELATE TO THE UNION MILL PROPERTY SITE**

City Attorney Larry Flynn presented an ordinance to City Council for 1<sup>st</sup> reading to authorize the Mayor to execute a Option Agreement with Quad-State Development for the potential sale of property of the old Union Mill Site containing approximately 11.4 acres, for a price of \$22,000 per acre and also the Mayor be authorized to execute the Non-Exclusive Listing Agreement with New Horizon Reality both of which relate to the Union Mill Property Site.

**MOTION** by Mayor Pro Tem Garner to pass 1<sup>st</sup> reading.

**SECOND** by Councilmember Giles.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## B. DISCUSSION – DOWNTOWN PLAN – ROBBIE MOODY (CRPC)

Robby Moody discussed plans the Downtown Union area. Mr. Moody discussed the accomplishments to date for Downtown such as the Streetscape Project; the Façade Improvements, the Mill site cleanup and entranceways & wayfinding signs. He discussed assets & opportunities in the Downtown area such as the overall appearance of the town; small-town appearance; stable community pillars (City & County Agencies, School District Office/USC-Union, Banks (3); Wallace Thomson Hospital and Medical offices. Museum, churches and recreation such as City Park and the YMCA are also assets. Other assets and opportunities mentioned include: Union Mill redevelopment; Fairforest Apartments; Small Business Development Center, Train Depot, Farmer's Market; Parking Lot. Mr. Moody states that on the other side of the coin, there are some weaknesses and threats in the Downtown area. They are multiple vacant buildings in the Downtown area; limited retail variety, there are no dining options, buildings have faded & worn awnings and a weak tax base. Next Mr. Moody discussed why people would come to a downtown area and how we can bring more people to Union's Downtown. Other Cities areas are doing things such as putting in new park spaces, innovation district designation for downtown and a food truck on Friday's to bring more people Downtown. Short-term planning for potential projects discussed such as renovation of the Super 10 Building with the 1<sup>st</sup> floor used as a meeting space and the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor for rent office or studio space; banners and landscaping. Community Events such as an Easter Hunt and Music in the Park are assets. Long-term planning for potential projects discussed were the acquisition and renovation of the Train Depot and the Super 10 Building as an Events Center. Mr. Moody states that there is funding available to pay for Downtown improvements. Revenue sources are the TIF District, other TIF, High School Fire Insurance proceeds, Hospitality & Accommodation Tax and the Sidewalk Funds. Existing funds today total \$1,845,414. There are also funds available over the next 5 years for Downtown improvements. Lastly Mr. Moody gave the next steps toward the Downtown Development Plan. They are as to agree on key issues and direction setting; identify Stakeholders and secure support; empower Staff and authorize funding and use relationships to build Community support.

Mayor Pro Tem Garner states that he would certainly like to see some emphasis put on doing something with the Super 10 Building. Councilmember Anthony agrees. Also the Mayor Pro Tem states that he will support anything City Council could do in the way of incentives to help any new businesses that would be willing to locate Downtown and existing businesses downtown.

Mayor Thompson states that he attended a meeting in Columbia a few months ago where Lawrence Flynn led a presentation he is doing with the Town of Manning. The Mayor presented Council with the material which is an incentive package. The Mayor want to ask Lawrence Flynn to come up the next time Council meets to review the incentive package. Mayor Thompson also agrees with Mayor Pro Tem Garner that City Council need to take a look at the Super 10 Building on getting ideas in what direction the City is going with the building.

Councilmember Giles suggest getting Main Street Merchants involved with the Super 10 Building plans.

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Louis Jordan addressed Council. He states that he has been in retail business for 50 years and has started up 10 different businesses. Mr. Jordan states that the most important feature of what's being talked about this morning is whether or not a business is viable enough to stay in business. He feels that there has not been any discussion on a business plan that would show business owners how they would be able to survive in the Downtown area. Also he feels that we have lost a lot of our economic base. Mr. Jordon also discussed retail vacancies in Union. He states that

he would like to see a focus group formed to determine what our real major problem is regarding losing businesses and population.

Councilmember Wilson states that we should not overlook the fact that we need to market ourselves as a University town also. USC-Union University has 645 students registered this semester. A lot of students and staff come to Union for the University. If University keeps growing, eventually there will be a need for dorms or up-scale rental property. He feels that this needs to be involved in our Downtown Development Plan.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Councilmember Wilson to adjourn.

**SECOND** by Councilmember Anthony.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Council meeting adjourned at 9:57 A.M.

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Gloria J. Rogers, Municipal Clerk

Minutes approved \_\_\_\_\_ 2015