

**MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2009
6:30 PM**

{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).}

The regular council meeting was held on Tuesday, November 17, 2009 at 6:30 P.M. in the City Municipal building with the following present:

COUNCIL: Mayor Harold Thompson, Mayor Pro Tem Keith Henderson, Councilmembers Tommie Hill, Sr., Robert Garner, Ricky Todd Harris, Orangelow Ruff and Andy Bailey.

CITY ATTORNEY: Billy Whitney

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

NEWS MEDIA: Steve Ramsey-WBCU

OTHERS: Harold Farr, Sr., Menghis Tekie, Avis Cole, Tommy Sinclair, Barbara Jeter, Mary Dunn, Torance Inman, William F. Gault, Anthony Williams, Lillie Benson, James Crosby, Kimberly Crosby, Margie Stewart, Lib Gilliam, Viola Lott, Charles Lott, Johnny Beam and Michael Williams.

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

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

2. **MINUTES**

A. October 20, 2009 - Regular Council Meeting

MOTION by Councilmember Harris to accept minutes as presented.
SECOND by Councilmember Bailey.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Monthly Reports

MOTION by Councilmember Harris to accept monthly reports.
SECOND by Councilmember Ruff.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Retirement Award - William F. Gault

William F. Gault was presented a retirement award for 22 years of service with the City of Union by Chief Sam White.

- C. Union County Supervisor - Tommy Sinclair

Newly appointed Union County Supervisor Tommy Sinclair addressed City Council.

4. **BUSINESS**

- A. RESOLUTION - BUFFALO SEWER IMPROVEMENTS
PROJECTS – PHASE II ESTABLISHMENT OF JUST
COMPENSATION FOR LAND ACQUISITION

The Buffalo Mill Project Phase II design requires that the City acquire easements from property owners to be able to locate the new sewer line. These property owners were contacted and a request was made for them to donate the easements. The property owners have not signed the easements forcing the City to have the property appraised to be able to offer the owners just compensation for the easement. A resolution was presented to Council authorizing the Mayor to offer each owner the amount. The amounts were based on the appraisal performed by a certified appraiser. The recommendation is to authorize the Mayor to sign the resolution for establishment of just compensation.

MOTION by Councilmember Henderson to pass resolution.
SECOND by Councilmember Ruff.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- B. DISCUSSION/MOTION – BROCHURE BOOTH ON MAIN STREET –
TOURISM DIRECTOR – AUVIS COLE

Tourism Director Avis Cole addressed City Council regarding placing Brochure Booths in a stand alone kiosk at three initial locations which are on Main Street (in front of Wachovia), the Union County Drag Way and Timken Sports Complex. These brochures will feature Union County area attractions. This will be 24 hour-7 day a week access to information for visitors and will create added curb appeal. There is no cost to the City of Union. The Tourism Commission is responsible for purchase and labor for setup.

MOTION by Councilmember Ruff to approve Brochure Booth on Main Street.
SECOND by Councilmember Henderson.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- C. DISCUSSION/MOTION – NATURAL GAS EXTENSION INCENTIVE

The natural gas service line is installed by City of Union employees for a cost of \$300.00 which includes 100 linear feet of line. Each additional foot required over 100 feet is installed for a fee of \$1.50 per linear foot. In an effort to better serve our utility customers, the City of Union will offer an incentive to install a natural gas line and meter to a residence: 1) A rebate of \$300.00 will be refunded to the customer if a meter and year round appliance such as a gas hot water heater is installed within 6 months of the service line installation. Gas grills or gas lightning do not qualify. The recommendation is to approve the natural gas incentive.

MOTION by Councilmember Henderson to approve recommendation.
SECOND by Councilmember Harris.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

D. DISCUSSION/MOTION – UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC SERVICE

The City of Union currently charges a fee of \$250.00 to install underground residential electric service up to 100 linear fee and \$2.50 per linear foot for each additional footage. Due to a recent survey most electric utility companies do not charge for underground residential services. Staff is recommending that we adopt this policy and install underground to all residential customers, if practical. The recommendation is to approve the removal of the \$250.00 fee for underground residential electric service. All electric residential services will be underground, if practical. The \$2.50 per linear foot charge over the initial 100 feet still applies.

MOTION by Councilmember Ruff to approve recommendation.
SECOND by Councilmember Bailey.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

E. DISCUSSION/MOTION – ANIMAL SHELTER CONTRACT

A copy of the current Animal Shelter Agreement dated October 18, 2006 and a copy of the proposed contract was presented to City Council. Mayor Thompson made a recommendation to table this item until more background information is reviewed.

MOTION to table the Animal Shelter Contract was made by Councilmember Garner.
SECOND by Councilmember Harris.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

F. DISCUSSION/MOTION – RENEWAL OF WINTER HEATING BILL ASSISTANCE FOR 2009/2010

City Council is concerned about the impact heating bills have upon our elderly and low-income customers. City Council and staff have heard many hardship stories. Community change funds are the product of rounding up a customer's utility bill to the next dollar. The change is transferred monthly to a stand-alone account. For the past several years, \$1,750.00 per month has been paid to the Salvation Army to assist in the operation of the Shelter on Green Street. The agreement terminated June 16, 2009. Any excess funds have been used to fund the heating assistance program. City Council may wish to make \$7,000 available Community Change funds to supplement the Salvation Army FEMA Funds and Carolina Community Action funds. Currently the fund has a balance of \$10,380 and generates approximately \$1,800 per month. The funds may be used to assist City utility customers who qualify or as the City Council may otherwise direct. Ordinarily, these funds will be available for bills received January 1, 2010 thru April 30, 2010. Last year 97 customers were assisted with a total of \$6,621. Use of these funds to help with heating bills is in keeping with what we have always said funds will be used for. The Salvation Army and Carolina Community Actions have indicated that they are willing to qualify applications for the assistance as appropriate. In the event Community Change funds are exhausted prior to winter's end, \$20,000 in Utility Funds Retained Earnings is budgeted as a supplement for this use as well. Should council agree the release of

Community Change funds to assist City Utility customers, a motion is required.

MOTION by Councilmember Ruff to approve the renewal of community change funds.

SECOND by Councilmember Hill.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

G. DISCUSSION – 49 WEST APARTMENTS – MR. MENGHIS TEKIE

Mr. Menghis Tekie addressed City Council. Mr. Tekie is the owner of 49 West Apartments. He is requesting that the City of Union take over the sewer system.

Mayor Thompson states that the City will take Mr. Tekie request under advisement and get back with him.

H. AWARD BID – DEMOLITION OF BUILDING & CONCRETE PADS AT 211 AND 213 THOMPSON BLVD.

Bids were received at Union City Hall on November 3, 2009 at 2:00 pm. Three bids were received: Ray Lemons Bulldozing - \$35,005.00; Carolina Wrecking, Inc. - \$36,995.00; Smith Backhoe & Construction - \$86,700.00. A letter of recommendation from the City's engineer was presented. The recommendation is to accept bid from Ray Lemons Bulldozing in the amount of \$35,005.00.

MOTION by Councilmember Ruff to accept recommendation.

SECOND by Councilmember Hill.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

I. AWARD BID - ABESTOS REMOVAL TERITEX BUILDING AT 200 NORTH PINCKNEY STREET

Bids were received at Union City Hall on November 3, 2009 at 2:30 pm. Three bids were received: JBR Environmental Services - \$33,800.00; Asbestos & Demolition, Inc. - \$34,500.00 and Containment Control - \$57,227.00. A letter of recommendation from our engineer was presented.

MOTION by Councilmember Henderson to accept recommendation from JBR Environmental Services in the amount of \$33,800.00 pending the signed agreement between the City of Union and Boogaloo.

SECOND by Councilmember Harris.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

J. AWARD BID – DIGITAL VIDEO SYSTEMS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY VEHICLES

Chief Sam White discussed the purchase of 13 digital in-car video cameras – installed in Public Safety patrol vehicles. This is a single source quote from L3 Communications Mobil. Other vendor's not compatible with the two systems that are already in place. Quote: L3 Communications Mobil: \$68,900.00, Grant funding in the amount of \$65,000. The recommendation is to accept quote from L3 Communications Mobil in the amount of \$68,900.00. The total amount due is \$3,900.00.

MOTION by Councilmember Harris to accept quote from L3 Communications Mobil.
SECOND by Councilmember Bailey.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. **ANNOUNCEMENT BY MAYOR & COUNCIL**

None

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- A. Please address the Mayor and Council from the lectern and state your name and address for the record. (Please limit your comments to 3-5 minutes)

Anthony Williams of Lakewood Drive addressed City Council. He states that there was a fire in Lakewood area this past weekend on Forest Circle. Mr. Williams is concerned about whether or not fire trucks have water when they come to a fire or do they depend on fire hydrants because the fire hydrant was about a mile away and the family's entire house was destroyed. Chief Sam White explained the situation. Mayor Thompson states that he met with residents in that area and fire hydrants were one of their concerns.

Barbara Jeter, 137 Forest Circle, addressed City Council. She expressed a concern about the home being burned down this past weekend and fire hydrants in the area. She presented a drawing of the houses and fire hydrants in the subdivision stating that there are 86 homes with only 4 fire hydrants.

Charles Lott, 107 Forest Circle, addressed City Council. Mr. Lott states that he is concerned about the community and he does support the community. He states that Chief White has always addressed concerns in the community whenever he is made of aware of them.

Sara Fant Jones, East Main Street, addressed City Council regarding the Aetna Street Property.

7. **EXECUTIVE SESSION: TO DISCUSS LEGAL MATTERS**

MOTION by Councilmember Garner to go out of regular session into executive session to discuss a contractual issue.

SECOND by Councilmember Bailey.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

SECOND by Councilmember Harris.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

No action taken.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Councilmember Bailey to adjourn.
SECOND by Councilmember Ruff.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Council meeting adjourned at 8:25 P.M.

Gloria J. Rogers, Municipal Clerk

Minutes approved _____ 2009