

Aiken City Council MinutesREGULAR MEETING

May 13, 2019

Present: Mayor Osbon, Councilmembers Diggs, Girardeau, Gregory, Price, and Woltz.

Absent: Councilman Dewar.

Others Present: Stuart Bedenbaugh, Gary Smith, Kim Abney, Jessica Campbell, Tim Coakley Charles Barranco, Sara Ridout, Kymberley Wheat, Mike Przybylowicz, Ryan Bland, Gary Meadows, Angela Hales, Tim O'Briant, Tracy Lott, Colin Demarest, of the Aiken Standard, and about 30 citizens.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Osbon called the regular meeting of May 13, 2019, to order at 7:03 P.M. Mayor Osbon, led in prayer. The pledge of allegiance to the flag was led by Chief Barranco.

GUIDELINES

Mayor Osbon reviewed the guidelines for speaking at the Council meeting.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Mayor Osbon recognized Mayor Pro Tem Diggs for any additions or deletions to the agenda. There being no changes to the agenda, Councilwoman Diggs moved that the agenda be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Gregory and unanimously approved.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Work Session and Regular Meeting of April 15, 2019, the Work Session and Regular Meeting of April 22, 2019, and the Work Session of April 30, 2019, were considered for approval. Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilman Woltz, that the minutes for the meetings of April 15, April 22, and April 30, 2019, be approved as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

EQUINE COMMITTEE – ORDINANCE 05132019Appointments

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to amend the City Code to increase the number of appointments to the Equine Committee.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 2-142 OF THE AIKEN CITY CODE TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE EQUINE COMMITTEE.

Councilman Woltz moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to amend the City Code to increase the number of appointments to the Equine Committee.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated at the March 11, 2019, meeting Councilman Woltz discussed with Council his feeling that the number of appointees to the Equine Committee needed to be increased to 14 members to reflect the wide variety of equestrian disciplines and interests. With 14 members each Councilmember would appoint 2 members to the committee. He also noted that many members of the ad hoc Equine Committee, which has been in existence since the 1990s, would like to serve on the formal Equine Committee established by Council.

After discussion, Council asked that an ordinance be prepared to amend the City Code to increase the number of members of the Equine Committee from 7 members to 14 members with each Councilmember having 2 appointments to the committee.

At the March 25, 2019, meeting Council considered first reading of an ordinance to increase the membership of the Equine Committee from 7 to 14 members. In the discussion of the matter, Council requested that they be provided a listing of the present members of the Equine Ad Hoc Committee along with their discipline/expertise regarding horses. That listing was provided to Council for information as well as an email from Lucy Knowles noting the discipline/expertise of the ad hoc members.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the March 25, 2019, meeting. For City Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to amend the City Code to increase the number of members of the Equine Committee to 14 members with each Councilmember having 2 appointments to the committee.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilman Woltz, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to amend the City Code to increase the number of appointments to the Equine Committee to 14 members. The motion was approved unanimously.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Appointments

Arts Commission

Rose O. Hayes

Mayor Osbon stated Council needed to consider appointments to various city boards, commissions, and committees.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Council has 45 pending appointments to fill vacancies on different City boards, commissions, and committees. One appointment is presented for Council's consideration and vote at the meeting tonight.

Councilman Dewar has recommended the reappointment of Rose O. Hayes to the Arts Commission. If reappointed Ms. Hayes' term would expire April 11, 2021.

For City Council consideration is the reappointment of Rose O. Hayes to the Arts Commission.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Woltz, that Council approve reappointment of Rose O. Hayes to the Arts Commission. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Osbon asked if there were any nominations for the next meeting of Council.

Councilman Girardeau stated he would like to recommend the reappointment of Catherine Thomas to the Arts Commission and recommend the appointment of Courtney Conger to the Equine Committee.

Councilwoman Gregory stated she would like to recommend the reappointment of Bob Brookshire to the Planning Commission.

Mayor Osbon stated he would like to recommend the appointment of Bonnie Fulghum to the Community Development Committee to replace Jordan Goetzman who has resigned.

Regarding appointments to the Equine Committee, Mayor Osbon stated Council would talk about the appointments at the next meeting. It was noted that now that the Equine Committee is a standing committee, Lucy Knowles cannot serve on both the Design

May 13, 2019

Review Board and the Equine Committee. Ms. Knowles has stated that she would like to remain on the Design Review Board.

REZONE – ORDINANCE 05132019A

Union Street
Williamsburg Street
Park Avenue
Barnwell Avenue
Downtown Business (DB)

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to rezone properties in the area from Union Street to Williamsburg Street and from Park Avenue to Barnwell Avenue to Downtown Business (DB).

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING OF REAL ESTATE FROM SEVERAL DIFFERENT ZONING DESIGNATIONS TO DOWNTOWN BUSINESS (DB).

Councilman Girardeau moved, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to rezone properties in the area from Union Street to Williamsburg Street and from Park Avenue to Barnwell Avenue to Downtown Business (DB).

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated at the March 12, 2019, meeting the Planning Commission considered the rezoning of properties east of the downtown area to Downtown Business (DB).

The area considered for rezoning is bounded by Union Street, Park Avenue, Beaufort Street and Barnwell Avenue. The rezoning to Downtown Business (DB) would allow for a mixture of uses that include commercial retail uses, a variety of housing, including single-family housing and institutional or religious uses. Currently the area is predominantly General Business (GB) west of Williamsburg Street with the exception of six parcels zoned Single-Family Residential (RS-8 and RS-10), and predominantly Light Industrial (LI) east of Williamsburg Street with the exception of four parcels zoned GB.

At a May, 2018, City Council work session, Council requested that the Planning Department review zoning in and around downtown Aiken for agreement with the Comprehensive Plan.

In order to ensure zoning can facilitate the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, zoning is being reviewed in a number of areas defined in the plan, including the area east of downtown. In this area most properties are zoned GB or LI, which allow for a variety of commercial and light industrial uses, but do not allow for stand-alone single family residential. Also, a number of existing properties in the area do not conform to setback requirements of the GB or LI districts, which limits changes to those properties. For these reasons, the Planning Commission considered a rezoning to DB, which allows for a mixture of uses and design standards that more closely fit the traditional or historic development pattern for the area.

On June 26, 2018, following a mailing from the Planning Department to approximately 200 property owners in the East of Downtown Area, a neighborhood meeting was held at the Aiken Visitors Center and Train Museum to discuss land use in the area. Feedback from the community meeting was discussed in a July 2018 Planning Commission work session, and staff was directed to advertise a public hearing for August, 2018 in order to obtain additional input. There were other work sessions and meetings with letters being sent to property owners in January, 2019, and public notices posted regarding the Planning Commission considering rezoning of the area bounded by Union to Williamsburg and from Park to Barnwell.

After review the Planning Commission at their March 12, 2019, meeting voted 5-2 (Commissioners Matthews and Brookshire opposed) to recommend to City Council

to rezone to Downtown Business (DB) the area bounded by Union Street, Park Avenue, Williamsburg Street, and Barnwell Avenue, excluding 600 and 604 Park Avenue. The Planning Commission also recommended to further evaluate the current Light Industrial zone district at a later date.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated a rezoning is being proposed of an area from Union Street east to Williamsburg Street, and north to south from Barnwell to Park Avenue. It is believed this will correct an issue that occurred when the zoning of this area began in the 1970s and subsequently was rezoned in 1999 with amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. By changing the zoning to Downtown Business, it more reflects the character of what is in the area. This is an area that has a number of residential properties which were grandfathered in zoned General Business. That could be problematic if something happened to those buildings, and they needed to be rebuilt. Then they would have to conform to setback requirements and it could be very difficult, if not impossible, to rebuild residential properties. Also, it is part of a Council goal that we asked the Planning Commission to look at potentially expanding the Downtown Business zoning. There have been a number of public meetings regarding this matter. It has been thoroughly discussed and public input has been taken and considered. Initially we were looking to rezone from Union Street east to Beaufort Street. After receiving public input we have reduced the area to be from Union to Williamsburg Street.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the April 22, 2019, meeting. For City Council consideration, is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to rezone the area bounded by Union Street, Park Avenue, Williamsburg Street, and Barnwell Avenue, excluding 600 and 604 Park Avenue (the Salvation Army) to Downtown Business (DB).

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Ms. Rebecca Muir, 106 Trenton Place, stated she had a comment on behalf of Aiken Downtown Development Association and would like to read a statement reflecting ADDA's position on the rezoning ordinance. "The Aiken Downtown Development Association supports the rezoning ordinance in the area bounded by Union Street to Williamsburg Street and from Park Avenue to Barnwell Avenue to Downtown Business (DB). ADDA looks forward to the new opportunities that will be made available in this new footprint, and we are excited to partner with the property owners and business owners and with City Council that we may proudly assist in the growth of their businesses in our Downtown District."

Councilman Woltz stated he wanted to be sure the rezoning encompasses the Farmers' Market. Mr. Bland, Planning Director, pointed out the Train Depot falls in the same situation as the Farmers' Market. He noted that since these facilities are located in the right of way, there is a set of criteria in the Zoning Ordinance to determine because they are not in a zoned district, what district they would fall in. He said they would interpret that they would fall in the Downtown Business District.

Councilwoman Price stated a question had come up regarding housing. She pointed out for the record for the future, she understands that this change in zoning does not eradicate housing in the area being designated as Downtown Business.

Mr. Bland stated it does not eradicate housing, but does the opposite. It would preserve single family homes and the right to continue to have and develop single family homes in the area being rezoned. The rezoning would pull a number of the residential units into compliance that presently have setback issues that would prevent reinvestment in the properties.

Councilman Girardeau stated for the record he had had a conversation with Mr. Clark McCants, and he had some good reasons for the Salvation Army properties to not be rezoned. He said he is now in agreement with him.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilman Girardeau, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to rezone

properties in the area from Union Street to Williamsburg Street and from Park Avenue to Barnwell Avenue to Downtown Business (DB), with the exception of 600 and 604 Park Avenue (Salvation Army). The motion was unanimously approved.

CONCEPT PLAN – ORDINANCE 05132019B

Revision

Village at Woodside

Maintenance Storage

Woodside Plantation

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to amend the Concept Plan for the Village at Woodside to provide maintenance storage.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CONCEPT PLAN FOR PROPERTY LOCATED IN THE VILLAGE AT WOODSIDE.

Councilwoman Gregory moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approved on second reading an ordinance to amend the Concept Plan for the Village at Woodside to provide maintenance storage.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Silver Bluff Development LLC is requesting revision of the concept plan for the Village at Woodside. They are proposing to locate a maintenance yard storage facility and recycling center within the development. The request for the change is to improve efficiency and provide better service to the Village patrons and residents.

Any development in the Planned Residential (PR) zone must provide a concept plan for review by the Planning Commission and approval by City Council.

The Planning Commission reviewed this request for concept plan revision at their April 9, 2019, meeting. The Planning Commission recommended to City Council that the concept plan revision be approved with the following conditions:

1. That a site and landscape plan be submitted for review to ensure there are no conflicts with the existing streets, drainage, or utility systems:
2. That the building design be consistent with the materials and dimensions of the surrounding structures as deemed appropriate by the Planning Director.
3. That the development comply with the landscaping, tree preservation, open space, and signage requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
4. That the applicant sign an agreement stating the conditions of approval within 90 days.
5. That the developer submit a revised concept plan listing conditions of approval within 90 days.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the April 22, 2019, meeting. For City Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to amend the Concept Plan for the Village at Woodside to allow a maintenance yard, storage facility and recycling center within the Village at Woodside with the conditions recommended by the Planning Commission.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Gregory, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approved on second reading an ordinance to amend the Concept Plan for the Village at Woodside to provide maintenance storage. The motion was unanimously approved.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – ORDINANCE 05132019CIncentivesB&W EnterprisesBetsy Simons224 Park Avenue SW

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance authorizing certain economic development incentives for the project developed by B&W Enterprises.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING CERTAIN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES, PURSUANT TO ORDINANCE NO. 08132018 OF THE CITY OF AIKEN CODE OF ORDINANCES, FOR A PROJECT TO BE DEVELOPED BY B&W ENTERPRISES, LLC; APPROVING AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INDUCEMENT AND INCENTIVE AGREEMENT; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Woltz, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance authorizing certain economic development incentives for the project developed by B&W Enterprises.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated following the October 2018 first reading approval of the incentive agreement with Betsy Simons of B&W Enterprises, City Council requested staff prepare specific cost estimates, and make specific recommendations regarding the length of the incentive period and the amount of the rebates to be extended. B&W Enterprises was the first applicant for the development incentives.

Staff has provided those cost estimates in a memo from Tim O'Briant along with a recommendation that the full five years be authorized at the full 50 percent rebate as authorized in the empowering ordinance.

Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the October 22, 2018, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance authorizing certain Economic Development Incentives for the project developed by B&W Enterprises—Betsy's Around the Corner.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilman Woltz, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance authorizing certain economic development incentives for the project developed by B&W Enterprises—Betsy's Around the Corner. The motion was approved unanimously.

WATER AND SEWER RATES – ORDINANCE 05132019DIncrease RatesFY 2019-20

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to adjust the water and sewer rate charges.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING NEW CHARGES FOR WATER AND SEWER SERVICE.

Councilman Woltz moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to adjust the water and sewer rate charges.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated historically, City Council has asked staff to operate our enterprise water and sewer utility as efficiently as possible. This mandate from Council continues

today. Staff has done so by constant monitoring of our system, making repairs in-house when they are within our knowledge and capacity and operating with the minimum number of employees as required. Council has assisted staff in our ability to operate efficiently, but effectively, by recognizing the need to fund infrastructure repairs, upgrades and equipment replacement through the annual budget, allocations through several rounds of the Capital Projects Sales Tax, interfund borrowing and issuing revenue bonds and other external financial instruments.

Council and staff have also recognized that costs are passed on to our operating system by the Aiken County Public Service Authority and others. We need to periodically examine our rates and revenues, and after much thought and deliberation, make a rate adjustment, since our water and sewer utility is an enterprise fund that must be run as a self-supporting entity.

Earlier this year, we were notified by Aiken County that our regional Public Service Authority sewer provider [Horse Creek Waste Water Treatment Facility], was increasing their charges for Operations & Maintenance to the City of Aiken by 1.8%. After discussion with Council, we recommend increasing our sewer rates to pass on this charge to our end users, our residential and commercial customers. A residential user whose rate is based on 800 cubic feet of sewer [our baseline rate] would see their bill increase 40 cents (0.40) per month. However, many of our elderly and fixed-income residents are billed at a rate less than 800 cubic feet, so their increase will be less than this amount.

We have also discussed with Council a 3% water rate increase for users as recommended by our rate study that we presented to Council in Spring 2018. This is needed to keep up with normal cost escalation and inflation that occurs when managing a complex utility system such as ours. A residential user using 800 cubic feet of water [our baseline rate] would see their bill increase 27 cents (0.27) per month. However, many of our elderly and fixed-income residents use much less than 800 cubic feet per month, so their increase will be less than this amount. This rate increase also includes an increase in the base meter rate for all meters greater than 3/4 inch. These meters are those used almost entirely by non-residential properties.

The total increase for the average residential user should be around 67 cents (0.67) per month.

At the April 22, 2019, meeting Council discussed the recommendation to consider increasing our water and sewer charges for non-city residential and commercial customers to 3 times [triple] the in-city rate. However, after discussion Council decided to continue the current charge for out-of-city residents and commercial customers to pay 2 times [double] the in-city rate. The proposed ordinance reflects the 2 times [double] the in-city rate.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the April 22, 2019, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to establish new charges for water and sewer service.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilman Woltz, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to establish new charges for water and sewer with a 3% increase in water rates and a 1.8% increase in sewer rates, and that the charge for water for out-of-city residential and commercial customers remain at two times the in-city rate, as opposed to three times the in-city rate. The motion was unanimously approved.

FAÇADE GRANT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM – ORDINANCE

Downtown Business (DB)

Design Review Board

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to amend the Façade Grant Improvement Program ordinance.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 10-9 OF THE AIKEN CITY CODE
REGARDING INCENTIVES FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF BUILDING FACADES
IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA OF THE CITY OF AIKEN.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to amend the Façade Grant Improvement Program ordinance.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated in September 2005, City Council approved an ordinance to create a facade grant program for properties in the Downtown Business (DB) zone. Council has funded this program every year since its creation. With the passage of expansion of the Downtown Business zone, this will open up additional properties that can benefit from potential grants.

The Design Review Board and Planning staff have been reviewing this program and feel that some changes need to be made to the program. Staff has received multiple requests for the use of the program funds to help offset the cost of awning replacement or the addition of an awning. Currently the ordinance does not allow the use of funds for awnings. Also, the ordinance requires as part of the final approval process that the applicants submit "a letter requesting the grant and documenting the costs and nature of the work." The lack of a standard form leads to administrative inconsistencies and inefficiencies.

At the February 5, 2019, regular meeting of the Design Review Board, the Board unanimously voted to recommend the following to City Council:

That in section 10-9.f.1 that the word "awnings" be deleted and in section 10-9.f.3 the wording "A letter requesting the grant" be stricken and replaced with "A final form supplied by the Planning Department."

After review staff recommends that the Design Review Board recommendation be approved by City Council.

This recommendation by the Design Review Board does not have to go to the Planning Commission; it proceeds directly from them to City Council.

For City Council consideration is first reading of an ordinance to amend the Facade Improvements Grant Program as recommended by the Design Review Board.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Councilwoman Price pointed out that just because someone completes an application for a façade grant, does not mean that the money is available during that budget year. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated that is true. We do have a limited amount of money each year. The grants are based on a first come – first serve basis. We would like potential applicants to keep that in mind. Also, to be noted is that we cannot pay out in a current budget year for work done in a prior year. He advised anyone contemplating taking advantage of this program to please contact our Planning staff for details of the program.

Councilwoman Diggs asked if a property owner has used some of the façade grant money in the past and sells the property to someone else, would staff take into consideration that grant money had been used for the property in the past. Mr. Bland, Planning Director, stated that previous grant money for the property would be taken into consideration. He pointed out that the way the ordinance is written \$10,000 is a maximum benefit over the lifetime of a property. He pointed out that if a property had used \$2,000 in the past, then the property would have a possible \$8,000 left in the program when funds are available.

To clarify the proposed change, Mr. Bedenbaugh stated currently the ordinance does not allow the use of funds for awnings. The proposed change would allow awnings to be a reimbursable item as part of the Façade Grant Program.

Councilman Woltz pointed out that with the expansion of the Downtown Business District, we need to look at the funding in the program to make sure we have enough funds to make a difference. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated that funding in the budget was doubled this year considering the expansion of the Downtown Business District.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to amend the Façade Grant Improvement Program ordinance as recommended by the Planning Department staff and the Design Review Board. The motion was unanimously approved.

SOLID WASTE FEES – ORDINANCE

Increase Rates

FY 2019-20

Garbage

Yard Trash

Recycling

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to amend the solid waste fee.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING NEW CHARGES FOR RESIDENTIAL AND SMALL BUSINESS SOLID WASTE SERVICE.

Councilwoman Gregory moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to amend the solid waste fee.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated since 2015 we have made some changes in our Solid Waste Department. We moved the Solid Waste services out of the General Fund and made it an enterprise fund similar to the Water and Sewer Fund which means it must pay for itself.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated our Public Services Department contains our Solid Waste Division, which provides weekly pickup of garbage and yard debris and biweekly recycling collection. We have had several meetings with Council since November and contemplated privatization of the service. We issued a Request for Proposals in January and received three detailed responses. Council decided to continue with an in-house service which necessitated a review of our rate.

Since 2007, we have had one rate increase in 2015 from \$14 to \$17, but costs continue to rise. Since 2015 we lost one of our main labor pool sources when the Lower Savannah Work Release Center closed. We were using the Work Release inmates as a source of labor, and the loss of that labor put a significant strain on our budget. Staff worked very hard over the last several years to try to mitigate that. For example, we began collecting recycling every other week instead of weekly in an effort to stave off a rate increase. We postponed the purchase of upgrade of equipment. However, after evaluation of operational costs, the needs of the division, and review of several detailed responses to privatize our solid waste operation, we are recommending a rate increase from \$17 per month to \$20.38, a rate increase of \$3.38 per month. This will enable us to replace our existing garbage trucks [only one new truck has been purchased since 2013] and add additional equipment to address an ever-growing increase of yard debris. Unbagged yard debris collection will continue to be provided to residential customers. Curbside recycling services will continue to be offered biweekly. Garbage pickup will continue every week.

The rate also includes, for the first time, \$0.78 cents per month allocated for roll cart replacement. The current carts have an average expected life of 12 years and by establishing this fee, we can ensure that we have the means to replace carts as needed.

For Council consideration is first reading of an ordinance to amend the solid waste fee to \$20.38 per month. This would go into effect July 1, 2019.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Councilwoman Gregory stated she appreciated all the due diligence and work that staff had put into Council's questions. She asked about the yard debris pickup.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Council had had a number of discussions about potentially limiting the yard debris pile size. He said the department at this time will continue to operate to pick up yard debris with no change in policy. The rate increase will enable us to purchase the equipment needed to continue to operate in a manner in which our citizens expect.

Councilman Woltz stated he thought as part of this, we were going to start enforcing some of the rules we have for yard debris. He pointed out that we have pile size limits and other limits that we need to start enforcing in order to try to trim some of the costs. Before we go out and buy a lot of equipment, we need to see what costs we can trim back.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated that is correct, but the average residential user will not see a change in their service.

Councilman Girardeau noted that with new equipment and maintaining the size of the piles, that perhaps we can be more consistent and pick the yard debris up on the day designated for the pick up.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated the department will endeavor to pick up the debris on the day that garbage and recycling is scheduled to be picked up.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Gregory, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to amend the solid waste fee to increase the fee to \$20.38 per month effective July 1, 2019. The motion was unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Gregory stated she felt that before second reading that we need to discuss putting forth a yard debris limitation.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Council could discuss that before second reading of the ordinance in terms of enforcing our ordinance to limit the yard debris.

STORMWATER FEE – ORDINANCE

Increase Rates FY 2019-20

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to amend the stormwater fees.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT UTILITY FEES.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to amend the stormwater fee.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated in 1992, Aiken was the first municipality in South Carolina to implement a stormwater fee. This money is placed in an enterprise fund account and is not comingled with revenues derived from the General Fund, Water and Sewer Fund or other City funds. The money is primarily used to fund stormwater projects and maintenance of our stormwater system. The City staff, guided by Council, has been very

judicious in the use of these funds as indicated by the fact that in 27 years, the fee has only been increased two times: in 2003 and in 2015. As our stormwater system ages, increased maintenance is necessary to ensure that stormwater is properly disposed in a manner that complies with SCDHEC and EPA regulations.

As part of a regular review and evaluation of our stormwater rate system and with a review of critical projects and system depreciation fund, it is recommended that our rate be adjusted from the current fee formula of one Equivalent Residential Unit [ERU] of \$5.42 per month to \$7.90 per month. This amount is billed on all City water customer bills. The average residential property will pay \$7.90 per month and non-residential properties [e.g., commercial, apartments, churches, schools, etc.] will see an increase based on the number of ERUs calculated for the property.

This proposed rate increase should generate approximately \$540,000 more revenue. The proposed FY 2019-20 budget would allocate \$300,000 to capital projects and the remaining \$240,000 will be devoted to system depreciation, which is used for emergency repairs.

For Council consideration is first reading of an ordinance to amend the stormwater fee.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Councilwoman Price pointed out that in the past 27 years the fee has only been increased twice. In between the increases in 27 years there is a 12 year difference and costs have escalated over that period of time.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to amend the stormwater fee increasing the fee formula of one ERU of \$5.42 per month to \$7.90 per month. The motion was unanimously approved.

MILLAGE RATE – ORDINANCE

FY 2019-20

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to set the millage rate for the Fiscal Year 2019-20 budget.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR ORDINARY CITY PURPOSES IN THE CITY OF AIKEN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2019, SET THE MILLAGE AT SIXTY-FOUR (64) MILLS AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE EXPENDITURES THEREOF.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Woltz, that Council approved on first reading an ordinance to set the millage rate for the Fiscal Year 2019-20 budget.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated each year as Council adopts a budget for the City of Aiken for the next fiscal year, Council must set a millage rate by a separate ordinance. Staff has discussed and reviewed with Council at seven budget work sessions the proposed revenue and expenditures for the FY 2019-20 budget. It is being recommended that the millage rate be set at 64 mills. The City's millage rate was 62 mills in FY 2018-19.

For Council consideration, is first reading of an ordinance to set the FY 2019-20 millage rate at 64 mills.

Councilwoman Diggs stated she had moved on to another item on the agenda and did not realize the item being considered was the tax millage rate. She said she wanted to withdraw her motion as she did not want to make the motion for a 64 mill tax rate. Mr. Gary Smith, City Attorney, stated Mayor Osbon could ask someone else to make the motion for first reading for a tax millage rate of 64 mills.

Councilman Woltz moved, seconded by Mayor Osbon, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to set the millage rate at 64 mills for fiscal year 2019-20. Mayor Osbon stated he would second the motion, but does not usually do that. He said Council needs to have discussion on the budget.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Council had a very good work session before the Council meeting, and staff will be coming back to Council at a work session on June 3, 2019, with some suggestions, ideas and proposals with an ordinance for 62 mills or 64 mills for Council's consideration.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Councilman Woltz stated Council has not raised the millage rate in 30 years and had 5 decreases in 30 years. He pointed out that he did not know of anything that had not gone up in 30 years. He said the proposed millage increase would mean about a \$13 increase in taxes for the average house. He said he felt the city had been somewhat irresponsible for not increasing the tax millage rate as it has cost the city a lot of progress that could have been accomplished over the years. He felt an increase once in 30 years is not a bad record. He said to move Aiken forward we need to start digging ourselves out. He said we have cut back in personnel and equipment, and we need to move forward.

Councilwoman Gregory noted that Council did have a work session before the Council meeting to discuss the budget. The proposed increase in taxes would result in approximately \$350,000 geared towards Public Safety, depreciation and personnel, including a Resource Office at a school. The June 3 meeting is a follow up on the budget tax millage rate. Staff is going to go back and review the entire budget to see if we can draw the monies to fulfill the necessities of Public Safety, depreciation and personnel. Council will discuss this further on June 3, and will either go forward or find the money elsewhere.

Councilwoman Price stated when it comes to millage rate increases and fee increases, no matter what city you reside in, as a Council body those discussions are not easy and decisions are not easily made without a lot of thought and discussion. She pointed out this has been tough for Council because they recognize and have some sense of how the taxpayers feel about these matters. Nobody wants to be taxed, and nobody wants to see an increase in their fees. She pointed out that historically in Aiken we have been "kicking the can down the road." She said Council has consistently for 30 years kicked the can down the road to avoid making tough decisions. She pointed out the delay in terms of Council hesitating. She said a tax millage rate increase will happen. It may not be this year, but Council is going to have to make that tough decision soon. She said it is about timing and when is the right time to do it.

Councilman Woltz pointed out there is never a right time to do it. However, what Council is doing tonight will enable Council to continue the discussion and that is what it is about, keeping the discussion going. He said he did not want to see us close the downtown Public Safety Building as a substation because we don't have the money. He said we need to keep a Public Safety presence in the downtown. He said what we are doing is agreeing to move the discussion forward.

Mayor Osbon stated Council had asked staff to review the budget to see if some adjustments could be made. He said if staff comes back and says we have to cut staff at Public Safety, then he is going to support 64 mills. He pointed out that the enterprise funds have to have increases to meet the expenses and be self-sufficient. He pointed out those are different funds from the General Fund. He said he had never seen a Council or staff ask for seven meetings before first reading on the budget. It has been a very enlightening process for Council. He said staff asked for Council's direction for the budget. He said he did not feel that the proposed budget is wasteful, but felt it was to meet the needs of the citizens. He said to him a budget is always about the service to the citizens.

Councilwoman Gregory stated staff had provided Council with a breakdown of what a 2 mill increase would cost a resident based on the value of their homes. She pointed out

that Ms. Lipscomb had asked for numbers to see how a 2 mill increase would affect business owners and people who have a second residence as well. She pointed out that will be reviewed at the June 3 meeting.

Councilman Girardeau stated he would vote to pass the ordinance setting the millage rate at 64 mills at this meeting so it can go to second reading. He said he looked forward to hearing from staff. He said he was reluctant to vote for the stormwater fee and the solid waste fee, but did because he feels those increases are imperative to be done. He said he felt we could forego a 2 mill increase this year, but could possibly do it next year. He said he would like to defer the 2 mill tax increase to next year.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilman Woltz, seconded by Mayor Osbon, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to set the millage rate for the Fiscal Year 2019-20 budget at 64 mills. The motion was approved by a vote of 5 in favor with Councilwoman Gregory opposing the motion. She said she wanted to see the numbers before voting.

BUDGET – ORDINANCE

FY 2019-20

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to adopt certain line item expenditures for FY 2019-20.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING PROPOSED CERTAIN LINE ITEM EXPENDITURES BY THE CITY OF AIKEN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2019, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2020, BEING A PORTION OF THE BUDGET OF THE CITY OF AIKEN.

Mr. Gary Smith, City Attorney, stated the purpose of the ordinance is to allow Councilmembers who serve on various commissions to which the city provides budget funds, to recuse themselves from consideration for that particular item in the budget. He noted that Council will have an individual motion for each of the items set forth in Sec. 1. He pointed out that the Councilmember who has a conflict with Item a. is not present at this meeting so he will not be a part of the discussion. He said the first item would be to approve \$12,000 to the Aiken County Library.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated that for over 20 years Council has funded some support to the Aiken County Library by funding \$12,000 from the budget. He noted that the late Councilmember Mike Anaclerio had supported this funding being included in the budgets.

Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve the expenditure of \$12,000 from the FY 2019-20 budget to the Aiken County Library. The motion was unanimously approved. (Councilman Dewar was absent.)

Mr. Smith stated Item b. is a \$60,000 funding request from the Aiken Downtown Development Association. Councilmember Diggs is a member of the ADDA board and she has recused herself from this item in the budget. Councilwoman Diggs left the Council Chambers.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Councilwoman Diggs is Council's appointee to the Downtown Development Association. The City has been funding the Downtown Development Association \$60,000 almost since the organization's inception dating back to the mid-1990s.

Councilman Girardeau moved, seconded by Councilman Woltz, that Council approve on first reading the funding of \$60,000 from the city budget for the Aiken Downtown Development Association. The motion was unanimously approved with Councilwoman Diggs recusing herself from participating in the discussion and voting on the item. (Councilman Dewar was absent.)

Mr. Smith stated Item c. is a \$15,000 funding request for Aiken Senior Life Services a/k/a Aiken Council on Aging. Councilwoman Gregory is a member of their board, and she has recused herself from participating in the discussion and voting on this matter. Councilman Girardeau stated he was working with the Aiken Senior Life Services to find a new location. He also recused himself from the discussion and voting on the item.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated until around 2009, we have annually funded the Aiken Council on Aging. They stopped requesting funding, but began requesting funds again in 2018.

Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve the request for funding of \$15,000 from the City of Aiken budget to the Aiken Senior Life Services. The motion was approved by a vote of 4, including Mayor Osbon and Councilmembers Woltz, Price, and Diggs, with Councilmembers Gregory and Girardeau not participating in the discussion or voting on the request. (Councilman Dewar was absent).

Mr. Smith stated Item d. is a \$21,000 funding request for the Lower Savannah Council of Governments for the Best Friend Express. He noted that Councilmember Price is a member of that board, and she has recused herself and will not participate in the discussion or vote on this item.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Councilwoman Price is the City's appointee to the Lower Savannah Council of Governments. For a number of years the City has been appropriating funds for the Best Friend Express. He said \$15,000 is for the Best Friend Express with \$6,000 as part of the Transportation Study they have been working on and which is funded by a number of entities.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that Council approve the funding request for \$21,000 for the Lower Savannah Council of Governments for the Best Friend Express and Transportation Study. The motion was approved by a vote of 5 in favor with Councilwoman Price not participating in the discussion or voting on this item. (Councilman Dewar was absent.)

BUDGET – ORDINANCE

FY 2019-20

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to adopt the FY 2019-20 annual budget.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING A BUDGET PROPOSED BY THE CITY MANAGER, CONTAINING ESTIMATES OF PROPOSED REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES BY THE CITY OF AIKEN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2019, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2020, AND DECLARING THAT IT SHALL CONSTITUTE THE BUDGET OF THE CITY OF AIKEN.

Councilman Woltz moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approved on first reading an ordinance adopting the FY 2019-20 annual budget.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated I hereby submit to Council our Fiscal Year 2019-20 Annual Budget, which I have prepared with the assistance of the Finance Department and City of Aiken staff. This year's budget continues our funding the Council's vision of sustaining a modern infrastructure and encouraging the managed growth of our City. This effort was accomplished, after much careful review and discussion with Council. As a result I recommend a minimal increase in fees and millage in order to continue providing superior service to citizens, connect to residents with necessary resources, and protect public health and safety. The primary focus of funding this year is the improvement of necessary water, sewer and storm water systems, solid waste service and the continuation of excellent public safety service through the permanent establishment of Public Safety Station 6, located in the old Public Safety Headquarters at 251 Laurens Street NW.

Through the use of modern GIS technology, the Engineering & Utilities Department will continue to identify weak areas in the city infrastructure and prioritize projects efficiently while minimizing disruptions in service for our citizens. Repair and replacement of water, sewer and storm water pipes will be ongoing to update and maintain our aging system. We have conducted our annual review of our water, sewer and stormwater rates. We are recommending a modest 3% increase to our water rates and a 1.8% increase to our sewer rates, subject to City Council's direction tonight and increasing base rates for meters greater than 3/4". We are proposing only the second increase to our stormwater rates since 2003, by increasing the value of one Equivalent Residential Unit [ERU] from \$5.42 per month to \$7.90. The resulting new revenue of \$540,000 will be used solely for capital projects [\$300,000] and system depreciation [\$240,000]. City-owned streets will continue to be maintained using funds from the collection of Roads Maintenance Fees and Capital Projects Sales Tax.

Our Public Services Department contains our Solid Waste Division, which provides weekly pickup of garbage and yard debris and biweekly recycling collection. Since 2007, we have had one rate increase, but costs continue to rise. After evaluation of operational costs, the needs of the division, and review of several detailed responses to privatize our solid waste operation, we are recommending a rate increase from \$17 per month to \$20.38. This will enable us to replace our existing garbage trucks [only one new truck has been purchased since 2013], add additional equipment to address an ever-growing increase of yard debris, and establishes for the first time, \$0.78 cents per month dedicated to roll cart replacement. The current carts have an average expected life of 12 years and by establishing this fee, we can ensure that we have the means to replace carts as needed.

We are recommending a millage increase to our General Fund budget. Mr. Bedenbaugh said he would review the budget very carefully between now and the next work session on June 3. The 2 mill increase would allow us to bring online Public Safety Station 6, which will continue a downtown presence in our old Public Safety Station Headquarters. This will entail the hiring of three new driver operators, providing equipment for Station 6 and the new employees and maintenance and upkeep of this facility and other Public Safety facilities.

Aiken's trademark tree canopy will be undergoing some positive changes, as power lines are being removed and relocated underground. This will eliminate the need for regular trimming around power lines and will reduce stress on the South Boundary oaks. It will also allow the Public Services Department to take complete control of tree maintenance, which will be done with oversight of the city's arborist. The project is being funded by undergrounding funds from our Hospitality Tax fund and Transportation and Public Safety Fund which dedicates resources to preserving Aiken's natural beauty and contributes to our status as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation. This fund will also be used to help pay for a tree nourishment program that will primarily be paid for with funding from the Aiken Land Conservancy.

Local business is being supported by the City of Aiken's continued cultivation of our parkways into attractive and useable greenspace to draw residents and visitors to our downtown area. This year's budget allows for the expansion of the parkways project along Park Avenue to the Aiken Train Depot to encourage growth of the downtown footprint. An increase in bike and pedestrian traffic is also anticipated with the installation of bike route signage from the University of South Carolina at Aiken along Richland Avenue.

In order to further encourage commercial investment in Aiken's business community, including our opportunity zone that extends from Vacluse Road to Beaufort Street between University Parkway/Rutland Drive and Richland Avenue [except in our downtown business area from Morgan Street to York Street, where the southern boundary is Barnwell Avenue], the budget includes continued funding for a dedicated business development position that will serve local proprietors by working as a liaison to simplify the process of beginning a new business and providing ongoing support and identifying areas where infrastructure can be improved. Additionally, the Inspections &

Building Permits Division will be moving from the City Manager's Office to the Planning Department in an effort to streamline the processes associated with growing our community. We are also doubling the amount of money allocated to our Façade Grant program to \$50,000.

The FY 2019-2020 budget addresses the recreational needs of residents by providing program funding at two new locations. Construction of the Lessie B. Price Aiken Senior & Youth Center has been completed and dedicated in April. As the site opened to the public this year, program funding in FY 2019-2020 will ensure a variety of recreational opportunities for neighboring youth and seniors and will serve to attract new homeowners to the area. Additionally, local residents and visitors to Generations Park on the Northside of Aiken will continue to be served by the Parks, Recreation & Tourism Department as recreational uses and programming strategies are developed at that location. Through constant evaluation of our staffing and resources, we are eliminating six seasonal employment positions and replacing them with one full-time worker at Rye Patch and one part-time employee to assist visitors at the Aiken Visitors Center and Train Museum. The part-time position is funded by the Local Accommodations Tax.

Another issue that is being addressed is the current need for work force housing, which was identified through a rental housing study conducted by the Aiken Chamber of Commerce. To support affordable housing options for potential employees, the City of Aiken will expand development opportunities in identified opportunity zones on the Northside and continue to make the city attractive for annexation by providing improved services and better access to resources.

The City of Aiken connects its residents to these resources by continuing to provide the public with access to vital information across a variety of mediums. The city website www.CityofAikenSC.gov provides links to recordings of City Council meetings, which are also posted to YouTube and broadcast on public access Channel 4. Information on emergency preparedness, public safety, construction projects and upcoming events are routinely posted to the website as well as the City of Aiken Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts and are included in *The Aiken Report*, a monthly printed newsletter that is distributed to water customers.

The latest addition to the city's information network is the availability of the City of Aiken Explorer app, available through Apple's App Store and Google Play. The app provides users with the same up-to-date news and links that are offered on the city website and allows the additional convenience of making payments or registering for sports teams from a mobile device. Since the app was introduced last fall, over 1,300 individuals have downloaded it. Money allocated to the Information Technology Department will ensure that the City of Aiken's digital data is safeguarded and citizens have continued access to essential online resources.

A new downtown law enforcement presence has been established with the opening of the new Public Safety headquarters on Beaufort Street. This year's budget will continue to provide funding for a well-equipped and technologically modern department with a commitment to prevention and community outreach. We are also working with Aiken County to explore the possibility of relocating the communications tower at the old Aiken County Hospital on Richland Avenue W over to City-owned property adjacent to the new Public Safety Headquarters on Beaufort Street NE.

For City Council consideration is first reading of an ordinance for the FY 2019-20 budget.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Councilman Girardeau stated he appreciated the work that Mr. Bedenbaugh and staff have done on the budget with the pictures and graphs.

Ms. Kati Lipscomb stated she was wondering about the opportunity to comment on the budget. She noted that she was present at the work session on the budget and learned a lot and a lot of her questions were answered. She was concerned about communications

May 13, 2019

and where she could go and ask specific questions. She stated one of her biggest questions was if the city would have an Economic Vitality Officer. She felt that was very important for the city. She said she was for a millage increase to be able to have an Economic Vitality Officer for the city.

Mayor Osbon echoed the comments of Councilman Girardeau. He also thanked Ms. Wheat, Finance Director, for her work and that of her staff, and the Assistant City Manager, in preparing the budget document with the pictures and graphs. He commended Mr. Bedenbaugh and staff for presenting a budget that he feels is fiscally responsible, while also trying to meet the needs of our citizens.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilman Woltz, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approved on first reading an ordinance adopting the FY 2019-20 annual budget. The motion was unanimously approved.

WOODSIDE PLANTATION

Fire Works Display July 4, 2019

Mayor Osbon stated a request had been received for approval of a fireworks display on July 4, 2019, at The Reserve Club at Woodside Plantation.

Councilwoman Gregory moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve a fireworks display on July 4, 2019, at the Reserve Club at Woodside Plantation.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated since 2003, the Reserve Club has held a fireworks show every July 4. In 2014 the State Fire Marshal regulations changed and to be in compliance with regulations and our City Code, City Council needs to officially approve the event.

As in previous years, the Reserve Club will have Public Safety Officers and equipment present during the show and will follow all applicable State and local regulations and ordinances.

For City Council approval is a request for a fireworks display on July 4 at the Reserve Club.

Mayor Osbon asked for comment from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Gregory, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve a fireworks display on July 4, 2019, at the Reserve Club at Woodside Plantation. The motion was unanimously approved.

BANNERS

Aiken Civic Ballet Downtown Banners

Mayor Osbon stated Council had received two requests from various organizations regarding placement of banners in the downtown area.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated we have received requests from the following to place banners in the downtown area promoting various events:

Aiken Civic Ballet. A request has been received from Dawn Smith, Aiken Civic Ballet President, for permission to hang banners in the downtown promoting the Aiken Civic Ballet's upcoming performances.

The first request is to place 4 banners for the Dracula performance on October 18 and 19, 2019, on the traffic arms in the downtown from October 4 - 19, 2019.

The second request is to place 4 banners for the Nutcracker performance on December 20-22, 2019, on the traffic arms in the downtown from December 6 - 22, 2019.

Memorial Baptist Church. A request has also been received from Gwen Simpson, of Memorial Baptist Church, for permission to hang 1 banner in the downtown promoting Memorial Baptist Church's Pineapple Festival which is to be held on August 24, 2019. They have requested for permission to hang the banner on a traffic arm in the downtown from August 9 - 24, 2019.

It is being recommended that Council allow staff to determine the location of the banners since there may be other requests for banners during these dates.

For City Council consideration is approval to hang banners in the downtown area promoting the Aiken Civic Ballet's performances of Dracula and the Nutcracker and Memorial Baptist Church's Pineapple Festival.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a motion. Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve the requests for banners in the downtown promoting various events with staff having the ability to determine where the banners will be placed since there are other requests for banners for other events. The motion was unanimously approved.

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX COMMITTEE

Funding Requests

Mayor Osbon stated Council needed to consider approval of a recommendation from the Accommodations Tax Committee for funding requests from the 2019-20 cycle.

Councilman Girardeau moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve the recommendation of the Accommodations Tax Committee for distribution of the Accommodations Tax funds for the 2019-20 cycle.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated on April 30, 2019, the Accommodations Tax Committee met to review requests for new events to be held during Fiscal Year 2019-20. The Accommodations Tax Committee is recommending to City Council that funding in the amount of \$5,000 be allocated to the Aiken Horse Park Foundation for the Grand Prix Event at Bruce's Field.

For City Council consideration is approval of the recommendation of the Accommodations Tax Committee for allocation of Accommodations Tax funds in the amount of \$5,000.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon asked for a vote on the motion by Councilman Girardeau, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve the recommendation from the Accommodations Tax Committee that funding in the amount of \$5,000 be allocated to the Aiken Horse Park Foundation for the Grand Prix Event at Bruce's Field. The motion was unanimously approved.

BID

McCormick Street Stormwater Improvements Inland Pipe Rehabilitation (IPR)

Mayor Osbon stated the next item was consideration of approval of bids for McCormick Street stormwater improvements.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that Council approve the bid for the McCormick Street stormwater improvements as recommended by staff.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated bids were received on May 2, 2019 for the McCormick Street Stormwater Improvements Project. This project will line the stormwater pipes with concrete to seal cracks in the corrugated metal pipes and repair a sinkhole. Trenchless technology will be used to minimize the impact to the roadway and residents. This project was initially budgeted at \$180,000.

For Council consideration is approval of the low bid from Inland Pipe Rehabilitation (IPR) Southeast of Stone Mountain GA, in the amount of \$135,775 to include contingency. The funding will come from the CPST IV Borrow Ahead Funds approved by City Council on January 14, 2019. We will borrow by an interfund loan from our Equipment Replacement Fund to begin the project. We will replenish the funds as money comes in from CPST IV.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that Council approve the bid for the McCormick Street Stormwater Improvements Project from Inland Pipe Rehabilitation as recommended by staff with funding to come from CPST IV Borrow Ahead Funds. The motion was approved unanimously.

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

Laurens Street
Richland Avenue

Mayor Osbon stated the next item on the agenda was a request to relocate the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve relocation of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated we received a request from Dwight Bradham, the Aiken County Veterans Affairs Officer, to relocate the Vietnam Veterans Memorial from the parkway at the intersection of Laurens Street NW and Edgefield Avenue NW, across from the old Public Safety Headquarters, over to the Aiken County Veterans Memorial Park located at 1435 Richland Avenue West. Mr. Bradham is making this request on behalf of the Aiken County Veterans Council.

With the relocation of Public Safety Headquarters from this location to the new facility on Beaufort Street, this is a reasonable request. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated we would propose, with Council's consent, to prepare a resolution for consideration at a future meeting. In the interim we would work with the County. The Veterans Park is on Richland Avenue just past Beaufort Street. The park is maintained by Aiken County. We would ensure formally from Aiken County that they are in agreement for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to be moved to the Veterans Park on Richland Avenue. If they are in agreement, then through a resolution we could execute this move.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Councilwoman Diggs asked if they have approval for a location at the Veterans Park to place the Vietnam Memorial. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated staff would find out, but wanted to get Council's feeling on the request. He pointed out that Council gave approval to install the Vietnam Memorial in February, 1973. Council approved the installation and then the request was sent to the Park Commission. The monument was installed after 1973. Staff feels this is a reasonable request, but wanted to get the sense of Council before proceeding.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve the request for the relocation and that staff check with Aiken County regarding the moving of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to the Veterans Park on Richland Avenue E. The motion was unanimously approved.

ISSUES AND UPDATES

Property Code Violations

Councilwoman Price noted the report from Building Inspections regarding the monthly property code violations. She pointed out for April there were over 100 violations. She asked that representatives from Building Inspections give a presentation to Council regarding the violations.

Mr. Bedenbaugh pointed out that we are probably in the growing season for weeds. He said he would like to ask that Building Inspections make a brief update to Council in July.

Blue Grass Festival

Mayor Osbon congratulated the friends at the Aiken Bluegrass Festival. He pointed out that it was an incredible weekend of music. They brought a lot of people to our community.

Bruce's Field Aiken Horse Park

Mayor Osbon also thanked friends at Bruce's Field and Aiken Horse Park as they have just had two events in two weeks. They also brought a lot of people to our community.

Engineering and Utilities Director

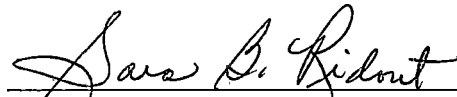
Mr. Bedenbaugh pointed out that since our last Council meeting Mike Przybylowicz has been appointed to be the Director of Engineering and Utilities.

Memorial Day Parade

Councilwoman Diggs invited everyone to come to the Memorial Day Parade to be held on Saturday, May 25, downtown Aiken at 11 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Councilwoman Gregory moved that the meeting adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Price and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:29 P.M.


Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk