

Aiken City Council Minutes

November 25, 2002

WORKSESSION

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Clyburn, Cuning, Price, Smith, Sprawls and Vaughters.

Others Present: Roger LeDuc, Bill Huggins, Gary Smith, Larry Morris, Richard Pearce, Ed Evans, Anita Lilly, Sara Ridout, Karen Daily of the Aiken Standard, Josh Gelinas of the Augusta Chronicle, and 22 citizens.

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 6:50 P.M.

AUDIT 2001-2002

Financial Report

Cherry, Bekaert & Holland

Mr. LeDuc stated the city has received the results of the audit from the firm of Cherry, Bekaert & Holland and Mr. Ken Fields and Ms. Bonnie Cox are present to discuss their findings. The city did receive an unqualified opinion with no reportable findings or questionable costs. The audit report has been placed on the agenda for first reading for Council's approval. In the past we have accepted the audit as information, however, this year we are asking for Council's approval since we are using the audit as a way of modifying our annual budget to reflect the actual spending.

Mr. Ken Fields, of Cherry, Bekaert & Holland, stated he was the partner in charge of the City of Aiken Audit. Also present was Ms. Bonnie Cox, Senior Manager, who conducted the audit. Mr. Fields reviewed the highlights of the audit and presented Council with a summary of the audit findings. He said the city staff was very cooperative, and Cherry, Bekaert & Holland found the city's records in good shape. He said the City of Aiken had a healthy cash balance and could operate 128 days on its cash balance. He pointed out the General Fund would have had a small surplus except for its expenses for the Aiken Playhouse. He stated it takes about \$70,000 a day to operate the city. He said there were no significant audit adjustments.

TRAFFIC

Calming Devices

Humps

Cardinal

Oriole

Silver Bluff Road

Mr. LeDuc stated earlier this year we received several concerns from residents on Oriole and Cardinal concerning traffic traveling at a high rate of speed through their neighborhood. Surveys were taken which revealed a higher than normal level of traffic in the neighborhood traveling at a high rate of speed. The traffic survey found that over 40% of the traffic was traveling at 35 mph or higher, with some cars traveling at a speed of over 50 mph. It appears that many of these vehicles are using Cardinal and Oriole as a short cut to get from Pine Log Road to the By-Pass. In July we met with the neighborhood to discuss possibilities for slowing down this traffic. This summer they circulated a petition with over 80% of the residents asking for some type of traffic calming in their neighborhood. This fall we presented a plan to the neighborhood which gave them options for using speed humps and traffic islands to reduce the speeding. Based on this meeting we are recommending to City Council that two to three speed humps be placed on Oriole and Cardinal to help slow down the traffic. We will also look at possible changes to the intersection where Oriole and Cardinal come together near Pine Log Road. Staff has done extensive research on speed humps and feel that a portable speed hump would be a good solution for this area. This would allow them to try various locations for slowing down the traffic and once the correct location was identified a permanent speed hump would be installed. The cost of permanent speed humps would

cost between \$500 to \$1,000 each. This would then allow Public Works and Public Safety to use the portable speed humps at other locations throughout the city or for events that require traffic to slow down. The cost of these portable speed humps would be less than \$10,000, and we are recommending the purchase of six portable speed humps to be used on Oriole and Cardinal. If Council agrees with this recommendation, we would ask for your formal approval at the next Council meeting.

Council then discussed briefly the portable humps and how easily they could be moved to other areas. Council felt that traffic in this area was a serious problem and was in favor of trying the portable humps to help solve the problem. The matter will be placed on the next agenda for Council's approval.

CONNECTOR ROADWAY

Work Session
Silver Bluff Road
Whiskey Road

Mr. LeDuc reminded Council of the special work session on Monday, December 2, 2002, at 7:30 A.M., which will be a joint meeting with the Aiken County Council to talk about a proposed connector roadway between Silver Bluff and Whiskey Road.

DEMOLITION PROGRAM

North Side
McGhee, Beatrice

Mr. LeDuc stated he had received a letter from Mrs. Beatrice McGhee regarding the demolition program and housing on the north side. He said he had drafted a response and gave a copy to Council for their review.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Appointments

Councilman Smith stated he would like to recommend George Krist, of 109 Yellow Pine Road, to the Zoning Board of Appeals to replace Nancy Dukes.

Councilwoman Price recommended that Dr. John Gladden be reappointed to the Environmental Committee and Larry Ogletree to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Councilman Sprawls recommended that Keith Coones be reappointed to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Mayor Cavanaugh recommended that McDonald Law be reappointed to the Historic Preservation Commission and Bill Inman reappointed to the Environmental Committee.

PARKING

Downtown

Councilwoman Vaughters stated she was concerned about parking in the downtown area and asked if the city could do something to encourage employees to park in designated areas rather than in front of the stores. She asked if the city could take the leadership role in this matter.

Council discussed the matter and asked that the city do something to encourage employees to park in areas other than in front of their stores.

LANDMARK

McGhee Mile Track

Councilman Smith pointed out the ordinance for designation of McGhee Mile Track was on the agenda for final reading. He said he had a proposed amendment which he would like for Council to consider and asked that he be allowed to present it before the discussion on the matter.