

Aiken City Council MinutesWORK SESSION

March 14, 2016

Present: Mayor Osbon, Councilmembers Dewar, Diggs, Ebner, Homoki, Merry and Price.

Others Present: John Klimm, Stuart Bedenbaugh, Gary Smith, and Sara Ridout.

Mayor Osbon called the meeting to order at 6 P.M. He stated the purpose of the work session was to discuss the Park Commission.

PARK COMMISSION

Mr. Klimm stated the matter regarding the future of the Park Commission needed to be discussed. He pointed out that the Commission had not met in some time as well as some other commissions and there was some concern about the committees that don't meet regularly. He said some concern had been raised about the Park Commission. He pointed out that as part of our visioning process and the Main Street program the future of the Park Commission was a concern. He said the future of the parkways had become an issue. He felt it would be in the best interest of the city to have an active Park Commission. The question is would Council try to fill the existing vacancies on the Park Commission with new people or disband the present Commission and create an ad hoc committee. He asked how Council would like to approach this matter. He felt the parkways will be a very important topic of discussion in the next few years.

Councilwoman Diggs pointed out that some of the present members of the Park Commission have been disappointed that the Commission has not met. She felt the present members should be contacted to see if they would still be willing to serve and go from there.

Mr. Klimm pointed out that one issue is whether Council will keep the existing Commission and supplement it with new people or create a new committee and another question is whether Council is satisfied with the present charge for the Park Commission and whether that needs to be addressed.

Mayor Osbon stated he felt the charge for the Park Commission needs to be addressed. It mentions preserving the passive parks. He said the talk in the visioning had been to change the parkways and make them with more active walkways for connectivity to the downtown. He felt engaging the individuals who have offered their services to serve on the Park Commission would be fine. He said he sees the Park Commission tying in more with the Strategic Plan and putting committees together to implement some of the ideas mentioned in the visioning process. He said he was sure something regarding the parkways would be mentioned in Main Street. He felt the mission of the Park Commission does not really align with some of the comments made during the visioning process. We could give the Commission an opportunity to be a part of it. He said he sees more of an ad hoc or six month or a year timeline where we say we would like to see a path forward presented to Council from the Park Commission at this time and more of an ad hoc committee as opposed to the standing committee. He felt the standing committee of the Park Commission could have positions on the ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee could probably be expanded. He felt people from GAIT should have a voice. He felt the Park Commission should be a more diversified group. He said whether Council does away with the Park Commission, the positions would certainly be different post strategic plan than pre strategic plan. He felt there was a sentiment to make the parkways more active as opposed to passive that we have now. He said if we have citizens who are willing to give input and work, he would not want to alienate them. He said he perceives for the project of the strategic plan process a different group which could include the present Park Commission members, but probably not a standing committee but more of an ad hoc committee.

Councilman Dewar stated he felt we should ask ourselves if we need the Park Commission and what function they would play in regards to staff. He pointed out Tom Rapp is the liaison for the Park Commission and the person staff charges to take care of the parkways. The question becomes what is the role of the volunteers serving on the Park Commission and what are they going to do. He said if we are going to have a Park Commission they should serve a purpose and be meaningful and staff should support them. He said staff is not supporting the Park Commission for whatever reason. He pointed out that we have no difficulties with the Planning Commission, Design Review Board, and the Board of Zoning Appeals committees. He said, however, for the other boards and commissions Council needs to decide what we want from them.

Councilman Homoki pointed out there is someone who maintains an arboretum along Colleton Avenue and there is no one ready to step in to take over the arboretum and maintain it if this person cannot do it any longer.

Mr. Klimm stated Bob McCartney is that person and staff is working with Bob McCartney to try to get an intern grad student from Clemson to work for six months. He said Mr. McCartney is a walking encyclopedia, and if he could not take care of it a lot would be lost. He pointed out that he had spent a half day with Mr. McCartney, and it is remarkable with the number of trees he has planted, and the uniqueness of the plants. That needs to be catalogued for prosperity's sake. He said staff is working on that. Councilman Homoki stated that perhaps that is an area where the Park Commission could function.

Councilwoman Price stated she felt the Park Commission did not have an understanding of the charge for the Park Commission. She said even if Council charges them with a task, she was not sure what they would be up against if they saw some need for improvements and recommended it to Tom Rapp how far it would go. She pointed out we are all aware of the concerns that we have with our parks with overgrowth and sight problems in crossing the streets. She felt Council needs to define the role and responsibility of the committee. She suggested that we may want to increase the number of committee members because there is more to do. She stated we may want to change the name from Park Commission.

Councilwoman Diggs pointed out there are three positions available now on the Park Commission that need to be filled. She pointed out that we do a poor job of letting people know what we expect of them when we appoint them to the boards and commissions. She stated the short description on the website for the boards and commissions is not enough.

Councilwoman Price pointed out the Energy and Environmental Committee. At first it was the Environmental Committee and at that time the concern was the environment or climate changes. She was not sure how much the committee got involved with the environment and climate changes. Later she recommended that Council change the committee to the Energy and Environmental Committee. She pointed out the Environmental Committee got into recycling which has an impact on the environment. She pointed out that our community is not energy conscious enough and needs to get more involved in that. She stated the Energy and Environmental Committee for the second year is involved in education in promoting Earth Day with many activities for Earth Day. She said that is a board that appears to want to be involved and do some things.

It was discussed that the Energy and Environmental Committee is doing a good job in promoting Earth Day. They are raising money to support Earth Day and providing many activities for Earth Day. They are also discussing other matters to consider such as doing away with plastic bags in the city. That committee wants to be involved and engaged and that is what Council wants to see on all the committees.

Councilman Merry pointed out there is the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department, he asked if the Park Commission only works with parkways in the historic grid or does it

have anything to do with other parks. Councilman Dewar pointed out the description stated the Park Commission is to protect, preserve, and enhance all the city's passive parks. Councilman Merry stated he always thought the Park Commission just worked with the parkways downtown. He said he thought as the Mayor said and as we have heard through the visioning and strategic planning process that there is interest in exploring active use of the parkways. He said he wants to protect the parkways from threat, but with the name park he felt they need to be used otherwise they are just a planted median. He thought an ad hoc committee might be the best way to do it initially. It could be made up of the current members of the Park Commission, and also other persons such as GAIT, the bicycle club, and business owners from the downtown district. The ad hoc committee could explore the options and opportunities and make a recommendation. Pursuant to that they could be a remaining Park Commission that would handle ongoing issues and maintenance and also the charge could be to get them to plan and organize one or two park activities a year, called something like a health walk, etc. That could be their ongoing role. As suggested by the Mayor there could be an ad hoc larger committee that brings in other interests as those on the Park Commission presently is too narrow and does not represent all interests.

Councilwoman Price pointed out a lot of the interest of a board or commission depends on the leader to help the board or commission seek others to develop the commission.

Mr. Klimm pointed out that there is confusion with the name of Park Commission as that committee has nothing to do with the parks in the Recreation Department such as Citizens Park, Gyles Park, etc. The commission is to work with the parkways, particularly in the downtown area. It was suggested that if Council keeps a standing committee it was felt perhaps the name should be changed.

Councilman Dewar pointed out that he has on the agenda for the Council Finance and Administration Committee to revamp the boards and commissions program. He said he had suggested in the past that the terms of boards and commission members run with the term of the Councilmember who made the appointment. He noted that sometimes Council has trouble finding people who will work. He felt that we don't reach out to the community when we have openings on the boards and commissions and ask for volunteers. There is a form that can be used for volunteers to apply for the various boards and commissions. At one time a list was maintained of volunteers for the boards and commissions. He felt this gives an opportunity for people to get involved. He thought perhaps we could look at other communities to see what they do with their boards and commissions and what the charges are for the boards and commissions.

Councilman Merry pointed out there is a committee of people whose role is to deal with greenways and a trail in Augusta. If the committee is to be made more active there will be a role for the committee going forward. He said he had had people approach him and suggest that they raise funds through sponsorship of features like benches or gazebos, and they would donate money for such as a memorial in memory of a relative. The Park Commission could spearhead a program like that if the idea is acceptable, and the Park Commission would still have the ongoing maintenance and management of the parkways. It would be nice if the Park Commission could create events like the Energy and Environmental Committee is doing for Earth Day.

Councilwoman Price pointed out that in the 80's Council appointed members to boards and commissions at large. There were some concerns about diversity so Council went to each Councilmember recommending an appointee to each board and commission. She said Council may want to increase the number of members on a board or commission. Each Councilmember could recommend an appointee for each board and commission, then Council as a whole body could recommend four members for a board or commission, making a total of 11 members on each board and commission. It was pointed out that it is sometimes difficult to do anything by a committee of seven much less eleven people. Also, sometimes it is difficult to get someone appointed in a timely manner.

Mr. Klimm asked Council how they want to move forward on this issue. He asked if a proposal needs to be drafted for Council to consider.

Councilman Dewar stated the matter is on the agenda for the Council Finance and Administrative Committee on March 16, 2016. He stated he would take any input on the matter. He said Council could make the terms of boards and commission members commensurate with the terms of Council. Also, announcement could be made via the website for vacancies on the boards and commissions, and there could be a form to apply for any vacancies on the boards. He said the concern is the name of a board or commission, how many members on a board, and the purpose of the board or commission. He said we could check with other communities to see what their boards and commissions are doing and how they operate. He pointed out that membership of many of our boards and commissions have remained stagnant over the years.

Mayor Osbon stated he did not like the terms of the boards and commission not running concurrent with the terms of Council. Councilwoman Price pointed out the people on the boards and commissions are volunteers. She pointed out she wants to see who is volunteering for service on a board or commission and wants them to be considered by Council. She said she gets very few people who volunteer to her for service on a board or commission. She said the tendency is to stay with the people that Council knows and whom Council feels will represent us well. Councilman Dewar stated he has some people on the committees that he recommended eight years ago, and they are still on the committee and doing a great job. He said we can make an outreach to let people know of openings on boards and commissions. If we get a list of people who want to volunteer, Council can then use that list in recommending appointees to the boards and commissions.

Councilman Homoki suggested expanding the statement of work for each board or commission. It was felt this would help in defining the role of the committee and help in recruiting members for a committee.

Mayor Osbon stated he was referring further discussion of boards and commissions to the Council Finance and Administration Committee.

Councilman Merry stated he would suggest as Mayor Osbon did that for discussion regarding the parks downtown at least for a temporary period making an ad hoc committee larger that brings in persons with varied interests.

Councilman Ebner asked if Council was willing to go against the people who live on the streets with parkways in front of their houses. He felt they would come to Council if and when changes are to be made to a parkway in front of their house. He felt that was one reason the parkways have not progressed into walking trails. He pointed out regarding the arboretum on Colleton Avenue, there were many people in the area who did not want a sign in their parkway in front of their house.

Mayor Osbon stated at this time Council needs to go into executive session to discuss the next matter.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

March 14, 2016

Present: Mayor Osbon, Councilmembers Dewar, Diggs, Ebner, Homoki, Merry and Price.

Others Present: John Klimm, Stuart Bedenbaugh, Gary Smith, and Sara Ridout.

Mayor Osbon stated Council needed to go into executive session pursuant to Section 30-4-70(a)(2) of the South Carolina Code to discuss negotiations incident to a proposed contractual arrangement and proposed sale or purchase of property. Specifically, City

March 14, 2016

Council will discuss a proposed lease arrangement for property owned by the City of Aiken and the purchase of some property.

Councilman Dewar moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs that Council go into executive session as noted by Mayor Osbon. The motion was unanimously approved.

Council went into executive session at 6:33 p.m.

Council came out of executive session and returned to the Council Chambers. Councilwoman Diggs moved that Council come out of executive session temporarily and go back into executive session after the regular Council meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Dewar and unanimously approved.

Aiken City Council Minutes

REGULAR MEETING

March 14, 2016

Present: Mayor Osbon, Councilmembers Dewar, Diggs, Ebner, Homoki, Merry and Price.

Others Present: John Klimm, Stuart Bedenbaugh, Gary Smith, Charles Barranco, Jessica Campbell, Kim Abney, George Grinton, Alicia Davis, Sara Ridout, Emory Langston, Dan Brown of the Aiken Standard, a TV Channel, and about 20 citizens.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Osbon called the regular meeting to order at 7:07 P.M. He asked that a moment of silence be observed in remembrance of a member of the City family. He said David Sizemore who works in the Public Services Department lost his 6 year old son in a car accident. Mayor Osbon led in prayer. The pledge of allegiance to the flag was led by Public Safety Director Charles Barranco.

GUIDELINES

Mayor Osbon reviewed the guidelines for speaking at the Council meeting. All the meetings are public meetings in which many opinions are expressed and the business of the city must be conducted. He said discipline, honorable and professional decorum is paramount. Courteous and respectful communication is expected. In public hearing all questions and statements from the public shall be directed to the Chair. He welcomed comments from the audience on the agenda items listed for public hearing. He asked that comments be limited to five minutes; that persons speak only one time per topic. He asked that those who would like to speak raise their hand and be recognized and come to the podium and give their name and address.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Mayor Osbon asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda.

Councilman Ebner moved that the agenda be approved as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Diggs and unanimously approved.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Council Strategic Planning Session of February 12, 2016, the Regular Meeting of February 22, 2016, and the Executive and Special Meeting of February 29, 2016, were considered for approval. Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that the minutes of February 12, 22, and 29, 2016, be approved. The motion was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION

Cumbee Center to Assist Abused Persons

Teal Ribbons

Downtown

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

April

Mayor Osbon stated a representative was present from the Cumbee Center to Assist Abused Persons for permission to place teal ribbons on the light poles in downtown Aiken. He said a proclamation had been prepared for Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Ms. Susan Selden, Executive Director of the Cumbee Center to Assist Abused Persons, has asked that Council proclaim April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in Aiken. She has also requested permission from Council to hang teal ribbons on the light poles in downtown Aiken. She would like to place the ribbons on the light poles on each side of Laurens Street between Park and Richland and on the two blocks on Richland Avenue from Pendleton Street to Newberry Street. She has asked that they be displayed during the month of April.

Ms. Selden pointed out that President Obama had issued a proclamation recognizing April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. She stated sexual violence is wide-spread and impacts everyone in our community. She pointed out some alarming statistics—one in five women and one in 71 men will be raped at some point in their lives. She also pointed out that one in six boys and one in four girls will experience sexual assault before age 18. She stated the Cumbee Center wants to recognize Sexual Assault Awareness in our community and bring awareness to this. They want to support survivors and provide education that will prevent this from happening to other people. One way they want to do that is to put teal ribbons downtown on Laurens Street and Richland Avenue for the month of April.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve the request of the Cumbee Center to place teal ribbons on the light poles in the downtown area during the month of April as requested. The motion was unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Price read the proclamation proclaiming April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Mayor Osbon and Councilwoman Price presented the proclamation to Ms. Selden of the Cumbee Center.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Appointments

Mayor Osbon stated for consideration is discussion of appointees to the various city boards, commissions and committees. He said Council has 14 pending appointments to fill vacancies on different City boards, commissions, and committees. No appointments are presented for Council's consideration and vote at the meeting tonight. However, a list of boards, commissions and committees needing appointments by City Council has been provided to Council. He asked if there were any nominations for appointments to be considered at the next meeting of Council.

Councilman Dewar stated he would like to nominate Melanie Rattanachane to the Energy and Environmental Committee to be considered at the next Council meeting.

BUSINESS LICENSE – ORDINANCE 03142016

NAICS Codes

Municipal Association of South Carolina

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing on an ordinance for Council's consideration to amend the Business License Ordinance to adopt the new NAICS Codes.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 12-52 OF THE CITY OF AIKEN LICENSE ORDINANCE.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Merry, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to amend the Business License Ordinance to update the ordinance to use the current rate class schedule based on the NAICS system.

Mr. Klimm stated over the past few years, the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) has emphasized the need for all municipalities to update their business license ordinance to use the most current rate class schedule based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). This is in order to ensure a consistent license fee basis for businesses throughout South Carolina.

Each year the MASC compiles a listing of all the NAICS rate class changes and distributes it to each municipality, encouraging them to update their ordinance every 3 years to keep current. The City of Aiken hasn't updated its Business License Ordinance since 2005, the first year we started using the NAICS as our classification system. There have been 3 updates since then. The goal in making the changes is to be revenue neutral.

On February 9, 2016, the Mayor's appointed Finance and Administration Committee met, and Ms. Abney, Finance Director, reviewed with them some proposed options to update our Business License Ordinance using the current rate class schedule based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

After review the Finance and Administration Committee is recommending that Council amend the Business License Ordinance to eliminate the cap and the declining rate charged for gross receipts over \$1 million and also decrease the base rate for each type license by \$5. This option would negatively affect the least number of business license holders as well as decrease the initial license fee for any new businesses. This option would also allow us to remain revenue neutral after the update.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the February 22, 2016, meeting. For City Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to amend the Business License Ordinance to update the ordinance to use the current rate class schedule based on the NAICS system. This amendment would also include eliminating the cap and the declining rate for gross receipts over \$1 million and also decrease the base rate for each type license by \$5.

The public hearing was held.

Councilman Dewar pointed out that the goal in the update was to be revenue neutral. He commended the efforts of the Finance Department staff for making the update revenue neutral. He pointed out that most businesses went down in class, with three categories going up. He thought the update was being done the best way we could do. He noted that the update which would remove \$5 from each license holder is a nominal amount, but it will make the update revenue neutral.

Mayor Osbon also thanked the staff for their efforts for working on this and also the Council Finance and Administration Committee for their work on this item.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilman Merry, that Council approve on second reading and public hearing an ordinance to amend the Business License Ordinance to adopt the new NAICS Codes. The motion was unanimously approved.

REZONING – ORDINANCE 03142016A

449 Rutland Drive
Aiken High School
Concept Plan
Aiken County Public School District

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing on an ordinance for Council's consideration to rezone property at 449 Rutland Drive, the site of Aiken High School, from Residential Single Family to Planned Institutional and approve a concept plan.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING OF REAL ESTATE LOCATED AT 449 RUTLAND DRIVE FROM RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY TO PLANNED INSTITUTIONAL AND TO APPROVE A CONCEPT PLAN.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to rezone property at 449 Rutland Drive, the site of Aiken High School, from Residential Single Family to Planned Institutional and approve a concept plan.

Mr. Klimm stated the Aiken County Public School District is requesting the rezoning of the site of Aiken High School, located at 449 Rutland Drive, from Residential Single-Family (RS-10) to Planned Institutional (PI). The request is to rezone the 49.67 acre site for the redevelopment of Aiken High School. The Planned Institutional (PI) zone provides locations for schools, churches, and other institutional uses. The Planned Institutional zone requires a concept plan approved by City Council after Planning Commission review which may address site layout, building design, tree protection and buffers and other issues to assure compatibility with surrounding uses.

The Planning Commission reviewed the rezoning request and the concept plan for the redevelopment of Aiken High School at their February 9, 2016, meeting. After review the Planning Commission unanimously recommended the rezoning request to Planned Institutional and approval of the concept plan for the redevelopment of Aiken High School.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the February 22, 2016, meeting. For City Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to rezone 49.67 acres located at 449 Rutland Drive, the site of Aiken High School, from Residential Single-Family to Planned Institutional and to approve the concept plan for the redevelopment of the school.

Mr. Klimm pointed out that Dr. Sean Alford and Shawn Foster of the Aiken County School District as well as city staff were present to answer any questions.

The public hearing was held.

There being no comments, Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to rezone property at 449 Rutland Drive the site of Aiken High School from Residential Single Family to Planned Institutional and approve the concept plan. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Osbon thanked the representatives from the School District for being present to answer any questions.

RESOLUTION 03142016B

Aiken County School Board
Morgan Street
Edgefield Avenue
Maintenance Facility
Eustis Park
Senior/Youth Center
Aiken County Board of Education

Mayor Osbon stated Council needed to consider approval of a resolution authorizing the purchase of real estate from the Aiken County Board of Education.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the resolution.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF REAL ESTATE FROM THE
AIKEN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Ebner, that Council approve the resolution authorizing the purchase of real estate from the Aiken County Board of Education.

Mr. Klimm stated over a year ago, the City of Aiken approached the Aiken County School Board about purchasing their 5.5 acre tract at the intersection of Morgan Street and Edgefield Avenue currently used as their maintenance facility. After consideration, the School Board decided against a sale of the property to us, but late last year Mr. Bedenbaugh and I contacted and held a series of meetings with the new Superintendent and his staff about this potential purchase again. The as-is purchase of this property would enable us to place an appropriately-sized senior/youth facility at Eustis Park as part of our CPST program and would expand Eustis Park from 9 acres to over 14 acres. The Superintendent agreed to reconsider the acquisition and has been extraordinarily helpful to us on this matter. After receiving two appraisals, the agreed upon purchase price is \$425,000 with the source of funds being the Eustis Park Senior/Youth Center line item from CPST II (016-5150-455.72-00 PREP). Our proposed agreement allows us to withdraw our offer if the pending Phase II environmental report shows too much concern. Preliminary results from the testing company indicate major mitigation will not be necessary. He said additional information was presented to Council at this meeting which further confirms that fact.

For Council consideration is approval of a resolution authorizing the purchase of real estate from the Aiken County Board of Education.

Mr. Klimm stated he would like to state again that we would not be here tonight if it were not for School Superintendent Dr. Sean Alford, and Deputy Superintendent Shawn Foster, who are present at this meeting as well as members of the Aiken County School Board who have made every effort to partner with the city for this project. He said we plan to build the Eustis Park Senior/Youth Center, but we want to make sure we do it right. He pointed out the additional acquisition of land makes sense for the project. He urged Council's consideration for the purchase of this property. He said Mr. Bedenbaugh could give an update on the environmental analysis of the property.

Mr. Stuart Bedenbaugh, Assistant City Manager, stated the city had received the preliminary Environmental Phase II report which the Phase I report had recommended be done. For the Phase II report borings were conducted around the property. The ground water is much deeper than expected, about 37 feet below the initial water table. Also, there have been low level impacts from petroleum products. That was a concern with the property having been a maintenance facility since the 1990s. There will need to be some abatement of pesticides due to pesticide storage. Also, due to the age of the buildings dating from the 1950s, there will be some asbestos and lead paint mitigation that will have to be disposed of properly.

A public hearing was held and there were no comments.

Councilman Ebner pointed out in the Purchase and Sale Agreement under Section Seven, Conveyances and Deliveries at Closing, regarding easements, he thought all the easements and covenants would come forth sometime before the July 1, 2016, closing. He felt that since the property had been developed for over 100 years there is bound to be something hidden somewhere that could cause a problem. He felt we should not wait until July 1 for that to show up.

Mr. Gary Smith, City Attorney, responded that once the contract of sale is approved, then the process of a title search will be done to see what the title says. He said if everything is clean, the closing would proceed. He said the closing would probably be before July 1 if the title is clear.

Councilman Ebner stated the concern is if there might be easements for roads from years ago. He felt it was important to look into history and then if necessary do a quit claim deed.

Councilman Merry asked about the appraisals. Mr. Klimm pointed out that both appraisals justified the acquisition price for the 5.5 acres.

Councilwoman Price stated she wanted to echo what the City Manager stated about Dr. Alford and Dr. Foster partnering with the City of Aiken on this project. She pointed out that the city had waited close to 10 years for this to happen. She stated that Dr. Alford and Dr. Foster had moved very promptly to try to resolve the issue and the acquisition of the property. She thanked them for their efforts on this project. She felt the community would be very grateful to have this senior/youth facility. She said there are a lot of plans to make sure that area is one that will be a show place not only for the City of Aiken, but also for people coming in from Aiken County to enjoy this area.

Councilman Homoki stated there was a concept plan where we were designing the senior/youth center. There was concern about parking in the area. He asked if the purchase of the property would alleviate the parking problem, or if the concept plan would change the location of the center.

Mr. Bedenbaugh responded stating he thought the concept plan could potentially be changed. He pointed out that initially parking was a big concern because we were trying to fit the building on 9 acres. Moving the building closer to Morgan Street would give us more options. He stated the exterior appearance of the building was a mock-up that can be revisited. He said with the purchase of the 5.5 acres he felt parking would be taken care of. He pointed out with the 9 acres we had the Land Water Conservation Fund issue due to the grant that we received in 1970s for recreation improvements. He said that would require us to find replacement land. He felt the purchase of the 5.5 acres would eliminate having to go that route.

Councilman Ebner noted that once we get the environmental study, the concept plan will have to be redone. He pointed out that demolition and other expenses will use up \$600,000 to \$700,000 of the funding of \$4.3 million. Now the funding will be down to about \$3.8 million.

Councilwoman Price stated she is aware that the square footage of the facility may be impacted with the funding that is available.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilman Ebner, that Council approve the resolution authorizing the purchase of real estate from the Aiken County Board of Education. The motion was unanimously approved.

ABBEVILLE AVENUE – ORDINANCEDevelopment AgreementNehemiah Community Revitalization CorporationSecond Baptist Community Development CorporationAbbeville Avenue

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for Council's consideration on first reading approving a development agreement with Nehemiah Community Revitalization Corporation and Second Baptist Community Development Corporation to develop property on Abbeville Avenue.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF AIKEN TO ENTER INTO A DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH NEHEMIAH COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION CORPORATION AND SECOND BAPTIST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance authorizing the City of Aiken to enter into a Development Agreement with Nehemiah Community Revitalization Corporation and Second Baptist Community Development Corporation.

Mr. Klimm stated staff has been working with the Nehemiah Community Revitalization Corporation and the Second Baptist Community Development Corporation on a potential housing project that involves four properties on the 500 block of Abbeville Avenue NW. Staff and our partners from Nehemiah and Second Baptist propose reinvesting the proceeds from the sale of Neighborhood Improvement Program [NIP] properties in Crosland Park and Edgewood [approximately \$112,780] by purchasing the four Abbeville Avenue NW properties. The City would sample the structures for asbestos and lead-based paint, perform necessary abatement, raze the existing structures and then donate the property to Nehemiah and Second Baptist for development of four workforce or market rate owner-occupied housing units with the target market being residents making between 80% and 120% of the median income for the Aiken area. This project would fit in to our goal of providing attainable owner-occupied housing in our downtown.

For City Council approval is first reading of an ordinance authorizing the City of Aiken to enter into a Development Agreement with Nehemiah Community Revitalization Corporation and Second Baptist Community Development Corporation.

Mr. Klimm pointed out that Ms. Emory Langston of city staff as well as representatives of the Nehemiah Community Revitalization Corporation and Second Baptist Community Development Corporation are present to answer any questions.

Councilwoman Diggs stated she would like to comment that she feels this project is a good partnership and that Second Baptist and Nehemiah Community Revitalization Corporation have proved over and over again that when it comes to affordable housing they are the masters. Everything they have done so far has been successful and added value to the communities in which the housing has been developed. She wished them much success with the new project.

Councilman Dewar stated he had some questions just to make sure he understands what is happening. He asked if we would be taking all of the \$112,780 that we received from Second Baptist to buy four lots.

Ms. Emory Langston, Special Projects Coordinator, stated the answer is yes. She said we would be using the \$112,780 for the acquisition of the property on Abbeville Avenue, environmental testing, raze the structures, and pay for closing costs. In response to the question regarding grassing the four lots, Ms. Langston stated the city would stabilize the ground once the structures have been razed. Councilman Dewar asked for an estimate for the added cost to the city above the \$112,780 and where it would come from. Ms.

Langston pointed out that Exhibit A in the agenda packet breaks down the anticipated costs. She pointed out the purchase price on the Exhibit. She noted the costs for broker evaluations. She pointed out the four properties are clustered on Abbeville Avenue with three other properties that are a part of the NIP Program. The purchase price is based on the broker evaluation and then there is the cost for the broker evaluation. Another cost involved is the estimated environmental sampling cost. Another cost is the estimated average for abatement/air monitoring. She stated she had costs analysis done in Crosland Park, and she took the high and low and averaged those costs. Regarding the demolition cost she checked with Mike Goss in the Engineering and Utilities Department on what the average cost was for the city to take down a home under the demolition program the city has and that was \$7,900.

Councilman Dewar asked if we need to spend money to find out if there is asbestos in them. He wondered if we can just assume there is asbestos. Ms. Langston responded that it a requirement of the grant that the environmental sampling be done. They are very specific about how it is to be done, and there is a chain of command that has ownership for what the document has to go through. She said we have to get cost estimates to make sure that the prices we are getting are in line. She said it is a grant requirement.

Councilman Dewar asked who builds the houses once the preparation work has been done. Ms. Langston stated for these properties once all the preparation work has been done, then the City would donate the property to Nehemiah and Second Baptist CDC for the properties to be developed. In response to a question, she stated the houses being built by the CDC would generate tax money for the City of Aiken.

Councilwoman Diggs pointed out that the big advantage of these properties is that they are all on the same street and are in a cluster. This will make a big difference in the area.

Councilman Ebner asked if they had looked at the properties on Hampton and Kershaw across from these properties on Abbeville. He pointed out the city owns nine or thirteen lots off Kershaw and Sumter. He pointed out the city owns those lots already and there is nothing on them. He asked if those lots were looked at as a possibility also.

Ms. Langston pointed out the unique opportunity we have with these properties on Abbeville Avenue is that when we applied for this grant over a year ago, we brought in our partners for the grant and Nehemiah identified the properties on Abbeville Avenue. The unique opportunity on Abbeville is the clustered development with one owner. She said this is a jump off of the grant that was started. This came after the fact. Councilman Ebner stated he was just curious if they had looked at the Kershaw area. Ms. Langston responded that they did look at the Kershaw area, but they were also trying to figure out the best option for the partners and needed their input as well. She pointed out she understands there will be another round of funds coming in 2018.

Councilman Ebner pointed that on the first page of the Development Agreement there is concern about the statement that if the property is not developed in four years the property would come back to the city. Ms. Langston pointed out the agreement was between the city and the partners and did not have to do with the grant.

Mr. Smith, City Attorney, stated the agreement did not obligate the city to take the property back.

Councilwoman Price pointed out that when Council retained Mr. Klimm as City Manager, one of the first things he did was do an inventory of all the property the city owns. As a result of that over 300 parcels was listed as owned by the city. That includes parks, and many other things. However, in terms of property the city owns over 100 pieces of property. Some are homes that are boarded up. Mr. Klimm's mission is to get these properties on the tax roll as soon as possible. She pointed out an example of this is the involvement of Nehemiah. In addition the city has other real estate people who want to discuss some properties as well. She stated this is a priority of the City Manager. He does not want over 100 pieces of property in the city not providing revenue for the city by being on the tax rolls. She said this is a beginning to get these properties on the tax rolls. She said she looks forward to seeing this project completed just as Nehemiah has

done DuPont Landing which was a very successful project as well as some others in Aiken. She felt this area could be a show piece for Abbeville Avenue, especially since it is a cluster of lots. She commended Ms. Langston for the great job she is doing in working with the developers, Crosland Park and other areas.

Councilman Dewar pointed out that at the Council Finance and Administration Committee meeting this week they hoped to identify three or four additional pieces of property that the city can pursue sale of to get them back on the tax rolls. He commended Mr. Bedenbaugh for the outstanding job he is doing to help get that done.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance authorizing the City of Aiken to enter into a Development Agreement with Nehemiah Community Revitalization Corporation and Second Baptist Community Development Corporation for the development of four lots on Abbeville Avenue. The motion was unanimously approved.

WATER TOWER – ORDINANCE

Water Tank
York Street
South Boundary
Lease Space
Verizon Wireless

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for Council's consideration on first reading to approve a lease of space on the York Street water tower to Verizon Wireless.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A LEASE OF SPACE ON THE YORK STREET WATER TOWER TO VERIZON WIRELESS OF THE EAST, L.P.

Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilman Dewar, that Council pass on first reading an ordinance approving a new cell tower lease with Verizon Wireless for use of the water tower at York Street and South Boundary.

Mr. Klimm stated we have been contacted by representatives of Verizon Wireless to lease space for cell phone antennae installation on the water tank at York Street and South Boundary.

They have also requested to lease a parcel of land for the installation of an equipment building and an easement for ingress and egress seven (7) days a week twenty-four (24) hours a day, on foot or motor vehicle, including trucks, and for the installation and maintenance of utility wires, poles, cables, fiber, conduits, and pipes over, under, or along a ten foot (10') wide easement extending from the nearest public right-of-way, York Street SE, to the Land Space.

They are proposing an annual lease of \$24,000 with payments made monthly for each month of the proposed five-year term. The agreement will automatically be extended for four (4) additional five (5) year terms unless LESSEE terminates it at the end of the then current term by giving LESSOR written notice of the intent to terminate at least six (6) months prior to the end of the then current term. The annual rental will increase on the fifth anniversary of the Commencement Date and on each annual anniversary thereafter (including any extension terms) such that the annual rental shall equal 103% of the annual rental paid immediately preceding such anniversary.

Engineering and Utilities Director George Grinton and Finance Director Kim Abney have reviewed this proposal, and the Design Review Board has issued a certificate of appropriateness for the building.

For Council consideration on first reading is an ordinance approving a new cell tower lease with Verizon Wireless for use of the water tower at York Street and South Boundary.

Mr. Klimm pointed out that a representative from Verizon was present to answer any questions.

There were no comments from the audience.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Price, seconded by Councilman Dewar, that Council pass on first reading an ordinance approving a new cell tower lease with Verizon Wireless for use of the water tower at York Street and South Boundary. The motion was unanimously approved.

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX COMMITTEE

Recommendations for Funding
Funding Requests

Mayor Osbon stated Council needed to consider the recommendation from the Accommodations Tax Committee regarding funding for events from the Accommodations Tax funds.

Mr. Klimm stated that at their February 23 and 25, 2016, meetings, the Accommodations Tax Committee met to discuss additional funds available from the Accommodations Tax funds. The Accommodations Tax Committee has recommended to Council that these funds be distributed as follows:

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>AMOUNT REQUESTED</u>	<u>AMOUNT RECOMMENDED</u>
Aiken Spring Classic Horse Show	\$13,060.00	\$11,000.00
Aiken Garden Show	\$13,819.00	\$ 6,500.00
Marketing Performances of the New Aiken Symphony Orchestra	\$19,300.00	\$ 7,000.00
Southern City Film Festival	\$25,000.00	\$13,000.00
Aiken Bluegrass Festival	\$33,775.00	\$12,000.00
Antiques in the Heart of Aiken	\$24,995.00	\$14,000.00
Exhibition and Arts Center Marketing at the Center for the Arts	\$12,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Aiken Fall Steeplechase	\$23,425.00	\$12,000.00
Aiken's Makin'	\$10,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
Aiken Polo Club Promotions	\$37,022.50	\$15,000.00
21st Annual Aiken Soccer Cup	\$30,000.00	\$17,000.00
Aiken to Ride	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
Citizens Park Bid Fees	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Christmas Craft Show	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,500.00
Encouraging Cultural Tourism through the shows of Aiken Performing Arts Group	\$23,750.00	\$10,500.00
Hitchcock Woods Marketing and Aiken Horse Show	\$13,706.59	\$ 7,500.00
Joye in Aiken Performing Arts Festival	\$19,803.00	\$13,000.00
Juneteenth: A Celebration in the Park	\$17,368.00	\$ 2,000.00
Promotion of Downtown Aiken Through Aiken Downtown Development	\$30,000.00	\$15,000.00
The Aiken Trials (75th Running)	\$46,505.00	\$20,000.00
Touchstone Energy Run United	\$15,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
Total	\$423,529.09	\$202,000.00

A total of \$202,000 is proposed to be distributed with \$25,000 reserved as a contingency fund.

For City Council consideration is approval of the recommendation of the Accommodations Tax Committee for distribution of the Accommodations Tax funds.

Mr. Klimm pointed out that Ms. Campbell, Parks, Recreation & Tourism Director, and Ms. Regina Brackett from the Accommodations Tax Committee are present to answer any questions.

Mr. Klimm stated he knew that the requests are very competitive, and there are various entities that are hoping for levels of funding. He said he knew that the Accommodations Tax Committee had painstakingly gone through the requests and spent a lot of time in reviewing the requests before making their recommendations to Council.

Councilman Dewar asked what Aiken To Ride was. Ms. Brackett stated Aiken To Ride is a bike event that would bring a relatively small number of people into the area. He also asked if we are still monitoring to make sure we track the number of outside visitors coming into the community for these events.

Ms. Campbell pointed out that a survey is required for each of the organizations to the committee that tracks heads on beds.

Councilwoman Price asked if the allocations would deplete all the funds, and Ms. Campbell responded there would be a contingency of \$25,000.

Councilman Homoki asked if the revenue from the Accommodations Tax funds was down. He pointed out there was a lot of difference in the requests and the allocations to the organizations. Ms. Campbell stated about \$250,000 was awarded for the fiscal year 2014-15, and this year the award is \$202,000. There were five new applications. Applications were up and funds were down some. She also pointed out that there was additional income in the prior year that they awarded that is not available this year.

Councilman Merry asked if the promotion of the Downtown Aiken through Aiken Downtown Development would allow the ADDA to provide marketing for the \$15,000 or would that cut the program so they would not be able to provide the promotion package. He said there might have been three or four things to accomplish for \$30,000, but \$15,000 may not allow them to accomplish any item.

Councilman Dewar pointed out that every applicant gives the Committee a form proposing what they plan to do with the funds. When the Committee looks at the requests they take that into consideration. Ms. Brackett stated what they plan to do is taken into consideration and they also take into consideration information from the surveys. The Committee tries to allocate to get the biggest bang for the buck. She also pointed out that they take into consideration what the hotels and restaurants say they are doing as far as revenue for the events. The Committee also does some research on the websites for the organizations' events.

Councilman Merry asked if the organizations were aware of the recommended allocations for their events. Ms. Campbell responded that they were notified of the recommended allocations from the Accommodations Tax Committee and made aware of the matter coming before City Council.

Mayor Osbon asked for a motion to approve the allocations for Accommodations Tax Funds. Councilman Dewar moved, seconded by Councilman Homoki that Council approve the recommendation of the Accommodations Tax Committee for distribution of the Accommodations Tax funds. The motion was unanimously approved.

COMMENDATIONDexter Price

Councilman Dewar stated he had been asked to compliment Dexter Price for his work on the northside and for the extraordinary efforts that he has been making to get the people interested in cleaning up their community and getting involved in their community. There was some publicity in the newspaper about his efforts.

Mayor Osbon stated he would also commend Dexter Price for his efforts in improving the northside.

INFORMATION

Mayor Osbon also pointed out that we all need to try to make a difference in our community. He said he had been talking to staff about possibly working with Ed Giobbe in setting up the County initiative for litter.

Mayor Osbon pointed out the next Council meeting is on March 28, 2016. He pointed out the Aiken Triple Crown starts on Saturday, March 19, with the Aiken Trials. He encouraged everyone to get out and enjoy the Triple Crown and celebrate the equestrian community.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Osbon stated Council needed to go back into executive session pursuant to Section 30-4-70(a)(2) of the South Carolina Code to discuss negotiations incident to a proposed contractual arrangement and proposed sale or purchase of property. Specifically, City Council will discuss a proposed lease arrangement for property owned by the City of Aiken and the purchase of some property.

Councilman Dewar moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs that Council go into executive session as noted by Mayor Osbon. The motion was unanimously approved.

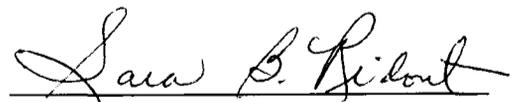
Council went into executive session at 8:01 p.m.

Council came out of executive session and returned to the Council Chambers at 8:33 p.m. Councilman Dewar moved that Council come out of executive session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Homoki and unanimously approved.

Mayor Osbon pointed out that Council discussed the matters noted and that no action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Councilman Merry moved that the meeting adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Homoki and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:34 P.M.


Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk