

Aiken City Council Minutes

February 2, 2013

Aiken's Horizons

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

Others Present: Richard Pearce, Gary Smith, Stuart Bedenbaugh, Ed Evans, Larry Morris, Glenn Parker, Kim Abney, Charles Barranco, George Grinton, Tim Coakley, Alicia Davis, Sara Ridout, Philip Merry, Randy Gaines, Gary Allington of the Chamber of Commerce, Amy Banton of the Aiken Standard, and Chad Mills of Channel 12.

The Aiken City Council met at Rye Patch at 100 Berrie Road SW for continuation of their annual Council retreat called Horizons 2013, beginning at 8 A.M. with breakfast.

COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORTCAFR

Ms. Kim Abney, Finance Director, presented the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2012, to Council for their information. She briefly pointed out the various information included in the report. She noted the Introductory Section of the Report, the Financial Section and the Statistical Section. She pointed out the listing of Capital Projects Sales Tax projects for Sales Tax II and Sales Tax III. This listing shows what has been spent as of June 30, 2012, in each fund and the money received for Sales Tax II. She noted that the Financial Section is the audit report. She stated the Statistical Section gives ten years trend information for various items. The section contains information about revenue, debt, demographic, and operating information. She pointed out the information regarding Business Licenses, noting that the year ending June 30, 2012, was the highest year of revenue, surpassing the previous high of 2008 and 2009, both in the number of licenses issues and the revenue collected. She also noted the information on the largest water customers. She pointed out that AGY (formerly Owens Corning) is still the city's top customer and uses about 7% of our total consumption. About 20 years ago they were close to about 15% of our total consumption. She also noted there is no General Obligation Bond debt. She noted the pages showing the History of Water and Sewer Rates, fire, and other charges.

BUDGET

Ms. Abney, Finance Director, presented some slides showing an update on the budget revenues for fiscal year 2012-2013 for the General Fund, Utilities Fund and for the Interfund Loans as of December 31, 2012. She stated the real property taxes should exceed the budget. Business licenses should meet budget expectations. Cable franchise fees are increasing slightly each quarter, so the revenue should exceed the budget. Water revenue and sewer revenue are expected to meet budget by year end. Revenues related to new growth (permits and planning) are an average of 50% of budget but slightly less than last year.

Ms. Abney pointed out a six month comparison of revenues for 2012-13, compared to the total budget for 2012-13 and the 2011-12 fiscal year. She pointed out tax collections include the first penalty date of January 15, 2013, and are very close to budget. Business license collections are also on track and are within 1% of last year's figures. Other revenues collected are at about half the budgeted amount.

Ms. Abney pointed out the Water Revenue Analysis for 2009 to 2013, as well as a six month comparison for water and sewer revenues. She pointed out that September is the highest billing and is the consumption for August. It is felt that these revenues are close to the six month level, and the total revenue should be close to the budget. She pointed out that water usage is dependent on the weather, and if it is dry the income will increase.

Councilman Ebner asked about the water and sewer rate increase of 6% last year and how it was being accounted for and used. He pointed out the money was being spent faster

than it was coming in to repair water lines because we bought equipment, meters and hired personnel to do the work. Mr. Pearce pointed out the city has the revenue for the first six months; the employees have been hired; and equipment purchases have been made. He said that is all tracked. He stated money was in the capital items to buy the meters. The increased revenue is included in the 002 Water and Sewer Revenue. The salaries are also shown for the six additional workers. He said the loan was for the advancement for meters. Councilman Ebner wondered if in 4 to 5 years the city could lower the water and sewer rates because we will have gone through the cycle of replacement. Mr. Pearce pointed out that inflation might have increased in the meantime. It was also pointed out that most of the 6% increase was for personnel, so unless we get rid of those people we could not lower the rates. He said this is something we would have to look at in each budget cycle.

Ms. Abney pointed out a chart showing water consumption for the past several years, as well as a chart for water and sewer rate comparison of 15 cities in South Carolina. It was noted the highest consumption was in 2007-08. It was noted that Aiken's rates are still lower than the average of cities in South Carolina. The state average is 43% higher than Aiken, and only Myrtle Beach has a rate lower than Aiken.

Councilman Dewar asked if there was a record regarding the amount of water produced versus what is billed. Mr. Morris stated a monthly comparison is done of water pumped versus billed. This is analyzed and a percentage lost is figured on a monthly basis and an average percentage loss for the year. This is required by DHEC. The loss ranges 10% to 20%. A 10% loss is very good for a system our age and size. It was pointed out that, as the water leaks in the lines are repaired, there will be a little reduction, but it will be difficult to get under the 10% loss. He pointed out the water used for the backwash of filters at the plant is lost water because it is measured but not billed. Testing fire hydrants is also lost water.

Ms. Abney gave an update on the Interfund Loans, including the Northside Redevelopment and Crosland Park project. The other loans included the Gem Lakes Sewer System, the Aiken Corp LED loan, and the Aiken Corp combined notes. It was noted that Aiken Corporation paid off the LED loan and has a zero balance as of December, 2012. She pointed out the Capital Projects Sales Tax for Fund 017, which was borrowed from the General Fund in the amount of \$3,203,000. It is anticipated to wrap up the second round of Sales Tax this quarter. Then collection of the third round of sales tax will begin, with the City possibly receiving some of the funds in late 2013 or early 2014.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if the city had any outstanding utilities bonds. Ms. Abney stated the Utilities Fund does have some outstanding bonds in the amount of \$2.7 million. The final payment will be made in 2015. It was pointed out this is unusual for a city.

Ms. Abney pointed out the city had been increasing its number of customers receiving their utility bill by email. The City now has 849 customers who receive an e bill each month. This has resulted in an annual savings of \$6,375 in postage, paper and printing costs for these customers. Those customers who pay by bank draft are encouraged to go paperless. Also, the city is making electronic payments to vendors, with 158 vendors and 180 employees receiving payments electronically.

Ms. Abney stated the city is working with First Citizens Bank for customers to be able to make payments with a credit card. Application has been filed to accept credit cards for water, taxes, business licenses and other payments receipted at the Administration and Finance Building. It is hoped that we will be able accept credit cards by spring.

P-CARD EXPENDITURES

Mr. Stuart Bedenbaugh stated the city had been encouraging employees to use the Purchase Card for small expenditures. This cuts down on our administrative costs to process a check request, which averages about \$75 per check, including staff time, etc. Also, by using the P-Card the city gets a rebate on each purchase. Last year the rebate

was about \$12,000. We use local vendors where possible. We spent a little over \$2 million in calendar year 2012. The majority of that was spent locally.

SEALED BIDS

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated the city receives sealed bids on projects that we expect to cost over \$10,000. In calendar year 2012 there were 34 sealed bids for various products and services. He said after analysis the bid is awarded to the lowest responsible bidder. In most cases the bid is awarded to the lowest dollar amount bid. Local businesses are classified as a vendor located in Aiken County. He pointed out a city vendor can receive a local vendor preference of 5% or \$3,000, whichever is lower, or an Aiken County vendor can receive a 3% or \$3,000 vendor preference in calculating the lowest responsible bidder. He stated in 2012 there were 14 bid packages submitted where there was at least one local bidder, and in 9 of those cases the lowest responsible bid came from a local vendor. He said we try to spend the money efficiently in determining the lowest responsible bidder and save the city money as well as help small businesses where possible.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated staff reviewed the vendors that participated in the bid openings, as well as the P-card vendors, and reviewed two sets of records in terms of companies registered as minority businesses (a person of color or a female). The lists reviewed were the federal Small Business Administration list, as well as the state list. There was one vendor of each that had registered with the Small Business and the Governor's Office.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated in requesting bids the city runs an ad in the newspaper and also sends requests for bids to those who are registered on the city vendor list for the particular item or service. A business can make application through the City Manager's Office to be on the vendor list. The bid requests are also placed on the city website and the South Carolina Business Opportunities webpage.

Councilwoman Price asked if it would be of interest to the city to benchmark what other municipalities are doing in terms of bids.

Mr. Pearce pointed out that vendors through the South Carolina Business Opportunities publication can see everything the city bids. They can also look at the city's website to see what formal bids are being requested. He said the agenda packet now lists what is coming up for bid as well as a list of bids awarded. The agenda packet is also posted on the website. He said we try to get the information to as many places as possible as we want competitive bidding so we can get the best value for the taxpayer.

Councilman Ebner asked about contracts other than the tree trimming and if there were contracts open where a P-card could be used, such renovating a house. He said at one time there were some time and material vendors on payroll that was open ended.

Mr. Pearce responded there is a dollar limit on the P-card purchases, and we don't have a contractor with a P-card. He stated the city has asked for bids for renovating the Crosland Park Community House, and the contract is a fixed price contract. He said for purchases below \$10,000 three written bids are obtained before purchasing the item.

CAPITAL PROJECTS SALES TAX

Mr. Pearce stated Council had been provided a copy of the 2004 ballot for the Capital Projects Sales Tax and a list of remaining second round of One Cent Sales Projects to do. Then there is a copy of the 2010 ballot for Capital Projects Sales Tax, followed by a list of projects for the third round of sales tax.

Mr. Larry Morris, Engineering and Utilities Director, reviewed each of the remaining projects for the second round of sales tax funds, the 016 account. He stated the Citizens Park Parking Project was just bid, and construction should begin soon. The Citizens Park Restroom should be bid in February. The Splash Pad should be designed in February and receive bids in March. He pointed out we are trying to tie the Citizens Park Parking, Restroom and Splash Pad projects together and have them under construction in the

spring. He said we should receive the electrical design from the consultant this month for the Recreation Maintenance Center on Banks Mill Road and should receive bids in March. This project will upgrade the electrical system in this building, as we have been having trouble with the electrical system, which is quite old. Councilmembers pointed out the building also needs other maintenance and care.

Mr. Morris stated the Eustis Park Development, land and site development, and the Northside Recreation Park have been delayed a little until some decisions are made regarding the Willow Run Park. The project regarding the Hitchcock Woods Drainage is to be determined later. He said he had talked with Dr. Gene Eidson about possibly doing a second round of green infrastructure in the downtown area, which has helped tremendously in the flow of water going into Hitchcock Woods. He said we are waiting for Dr. Eidson to give us a proposal of what could be done. Mr. Pearce stated we need to take Dr. Eidson's recommendations and sit down with the Trustees of the Hitchcock Woods Foundation. The Hitchcock Woods Foundation is in the process of going through some major changes on their board. We will probably meet with the Board in early spring.

Councilman Dewar stated he felt the money should be used for Hitchcock Woods itself. Mr. Pearce stated we could look at that. He said there is money in the second and third rounds for Hitchcock Woods drainage. He pointed out there was an EPA grant for the work done in the downtown. He stated there have been measurable results for the installations in the downtown parks. He pointed out we have to look at remediating the flow. The original thought was a \$16 million cost to extend the pipe in Hitchcock Woods. With the bio-retention and green infrastructure installation and a measurable result, it appears that by taking the second round of sales tax and working on abating the flow into the Woods that instead of a \$16 million cost, it may be significantly less. Then we would have that money to take appropriate remediation efforts. He pointed out there may be opportunities to connect projects to the Hitchcock Woods project. He stated there may be other projects that could tie into the Hitchcock Woods project. He stated there may be an opportunity for green infrastructure in the Hitchcock Parkway widening project, and that water goes into Hitchcock Woods. There may also be other projects in the city infrastructure where we can include the bio-retention green infrastructure and help the Woods as well. He said we want to be sure we connect projects and get as much return out of the money as possible.

Councilman Dewar asked if staff could give Council some information on the Intelligent City concept. Mr. Pearce stated the idea of the green infrastructure project was to reduce stormwater flow into the Woods. He said the flow needed to be measured to see if it has been reduced. He said a company had a unit to measure the flow, but it was \$26,000, so Clemson University went to the design board and came up with something the size of a Rubik's Cube to measure flow. It is called a mote stack. If it can measure the flow of water, it can measure other things as well and tell you whether you are operating efficiently. He said they will use the mote stack technology at the Savannah River and develop an intelligent river. This equipment can be used for an intelligent river or intelligent city concept. He said it can be used for anything to do with flow, such as traffic flow, garbage trucks, etc. It can measure anything that has a rate of flow. There is an intelligent farm in Blackville, and it can measure where the boll weevils are in the cotton on the farm and you can particularly pinpoint where in the cotton field the boll weevils show up. The whole intelligent city concept is being able to monitor and adjust and having many, many pieces of data. The main thing is that there is technology that measures flow and that can help in operations. Clemson has a patent on this equipment.

Councilman Homoki pointed out that he had had several complaints about mosquitoes in the parkways as a result of the water collecting in the parkways.

Mr. Pearce stated the design of the green infrastructure is for the water to be gone in 72 hours. He said there were some calls when the project was first finished, and there was some standing water. In some areas there was a closed valve and those have been taken care of. He said we do want to monitor this and citizens need to call if there is a problem. He pointed out that under DHEC regulations we can't just spray for mosquitoes. We have to trap mosquitoes and look at them to see if they are threatening mosquitoes before any pesticide can be applied.

Councilwoman Price stated she wanted to emphasize that, with all the projects coming up, some minority contractors be considered for the projects. She pointed out that probably some of the contractors sub out some of the work to minority contractors.

Councilman Dewar asked if we would be able to do anything on the Eustis Park Project by September, 2013. Mr. Pearce stated we probably would not because of the potential partners we may have with the land purchase adjacent to the landfill. He said we will have to meet with the Boards of the non-profits to see what kind of commitment they can make. He said the citizens voted on the sales tax, so we are committed to a Senior/Youth Center somewhere at Eustis Park.

Councilman Dewar asked if we don't collect enough money from the sales tax for all the projects, how do we go through the process of deciding what does not get done.

Mr. Pearce stated Council reserved the right to determine the order of the projects. The projects listed on the ballot were adopted by ordinance. Council can adopt another ordinance to modify a previous ordinance.

Councilman Ebner stated he felt it would be good to do a reconciliation of CPST 2 prior to the budget study, so Council could decide if some projects will be done, or whether General Fund revenue would be used to do projects.

Mr. Pearce stated if we are able to work out the partnerships we should be able to achieve the goal of the list without having to delete a project. He said he would like to know what the final collection would be before deciding on not doing a project. He pointed out the citizens voted on the projects and expect the projects to be done.

Mr. Morris then reviewed the third round of sales tax, account 017. He pointed out the Project Timing schedule in the Horizons book. He said the projects were listed in ballot order. He pointed out that loans had been made so the city could proceed with some projects before the money came in. Those projects include the ADPS Mobile Vehicle Computers, Governor Aiken Park Playground Equipment, the Library Park Playground, Water and Sewer Infrastructure, the SPCA Animal Shelter, and Expansion of the Municipal Building. He said all these projects are completed except the Water and Sewer Infrastructure, which is an ongoing project. He said he had proposed a timeline for the other projects, but Council could move the priority of the projects. He said the timing of the projects would depend on the money being received. He said he had listed a time for design work on the projects and then construction of the projects.

Councilman Ebner pointed out to meet the schedule all the projects would have to come to Council for approval, as Council can change the sequence or priority of the projects.

Mr. Pearce pointed out the Project Timing schedule is a proposed schedule and is given to Council as information. It was pointed out that collection of the third round of sales tax is already being collected, however, the city probably will not receive any of the money until the end of 2013 or early 2014.

Council pointed out they would have to decide whether the first money coming in from the third round of sales tax will pay off the loans, or if paying off the loans will be delayed and other projects done first.

Mr. Morris stated the goal is to have some projects under design so when money does come in we will be ready to proceed with the project.

Councilman Ebner stated he felt we should get an analysis of the projects for Public Safety, including the Upgrade of the Burn Building, New Fire Station, and Renovation of the Existing Public Safety Headquarters. He pointed out that some of the projects are seven years old and won't be done for another five years. He felt these projects should be analyzed in light of the ISO certifications.

Mr. Pearce pointed out that Public Safety staff has been working with Engineering and Utilities and with Parks, Recreation and Tourism. It appears that Citizens Park might be the appropriate location for the next fire station to meet ISO standards to get the best insurance rating from them.

GOALS

Mr. Pearce stated each year at Horizons, Council reviews the programs and operations of the city and sets goals as to what they would like to see accomplished next year. Council has received a review of last year's goals and needs to set goals for budget year 2013-14. The proposed goals will be presented to Council for formal adoption in February.

Council first reviewed the short-term goals. Council discussed the first goal regarding exploring and implementing various methods of communication and sharing of information with the citizens. Council discussed the goal and felt it should be continued. They would like to continue to pursue opportunities for the Council meetings to be televised. It was pointed out that there are video on demand and video streaming possibilities. Council felt that the community needs to be informed of what Council is doing. It was felt that pilot projects could be tried to see what might work. It was pointed out that technology has changed a lot in the last year.

Goal 2 regarding the Senior/Youth Center is a goal voted on by the citizens. The goal is to be continued. Council discussed adding a sentence to explore opportunities for a northside recreation facility.

In discussing Goal 3 regarding review of the solid waste program operations, it was felt that goal had been met. An analysis comparing our costs versus private provider changes had been done. MRF facility options had been explored. Mr. Coakley stated a pilot program had been conducted using GPS tracking on solid waste vehicles. The program would provide information on location and speed of vehicle. It was felt it would be expensive to install in all the vehicles, and it needed to be monitored to get the best use of the program. He said the next step they may consider is video cameras in the trucks. Council discussed whether the garbage fee was paying for the services. It was pointed out the current fee is \$14 per month for garbage, recycling, and trash pickup. Expenses for the three services amount to about \$16 per customer.

Goal 4 regarding prioritizing the water, sewer, storm drain and roadway repairs in the budget process is a goal that continues each year with the budget.

Goal 5 was to identify opportunities to work with at-risk individuals in the community. Mr. Pearce pointed out that the launch of the Safe Communities Initiative was held this week. Also, there is a group of 75 individuals meeting at Smith-Hazel to talk about this issue. It was felt this should be a continuing goal of the city.

There was discussion regarding the Safe Communities Initiative and the first call-in that was held. There was concern about helping these people get jobs and their ability to get employment and how they could be helped. It was pointed out that many agencies are involved in this initiative and are willing to help.

It was felt that Goal 6 had been met as Council had had a joint meeting with the Airport FBO and had reviewed the airport operations.

Councilman Ebner felt we need to have a specific goal for Crosland Park. He pointed out we have many new staff members, and things have changed. He felt we need to look at our strategy in Crosland Park. Councilwoman Diggs asked if there would be any more houses constructed in Edgewood. It was pointed out the three that were built were sold very quickly. Mr. Pearce responded there are some stormwater issues on the lots in Edgewood that have to be solved.

Mr. Pearce suggested as a short term goal: Conduct review of Crosland Park Redevelopment Project to evaluate any needed modifications.

Councilman Ebner stated he felt the Edgewood development needed to be tied with the stormwater issue there. He felt a priority needed to be to get the drainage done. Then as many as 11 houses could be built in the area. This could be a goal to be addressed in the budget.

Council then discussed the marketing plan for Crosland Park and the need for actively marketing the houses. It was pointed out the houses had been overpriced, and the price had been lowered.

Councilman Ebner stated the Aiken Corporation goals are starting to change. He felt we should look at their future relationship with the city and how that arm of the city can be used to continue to improve the city.

Mr. Pearce stated there could be a short term goal to find opportunities to partner with Aiken Corporation on new projects to improve Aiken.

Mayor Cavanaugh suggested a short term goal of renovating the first floor of City Hall on Park Avenue. Mr. Pearce suggested wording for the goal: Develop a plan for renovations to the first floor of City Hall.

Councilman Dewar stated he would like to suggest a goal for the short term. He said he would like to monitor staff turnover in the next year. He said he would like to know when employees are hired, who we are hiring and what department. When employees leave he would like to know who we are losing, what department, and why.

Council discussed the matter. It was felt that Council should know overall the basics of what is happening with employment with the city. The goal could be: Reporting on staff.

Councilman Ebner suggested having a plan for Public Safety for the ISO inspections and future needs for the department. It was felt this could be a long term goal. Mr. Pearce suggested a goal: Develop a plan for Public Safety expansion/capital items.

It was also suggested that Goal 8 of the Continuing Goals could be moved to Short Term goals. The goal is about building a connecting roadway from Dougherty Road to the Publix Shopping Center.

Council then reviewed the Continuing Goals. Goals 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 would be continued.

Councilwoman Price stated the city was doing a good job with the Wellness Program and the senior program. She stated she would like to see Aiken be known as a Healthy Community and possibly have some sort of sign indicating a healthy community. It was pointed out that one thing people ask for in talking about a possible Northside Recreation Center is a fitness center. It was also pointed out that a community wellness program should include a program to help people give up smoking. Ms. Abney pointed out the city's Wellness Program had shown results. It has taken time. The checks are showing lower cholesterol, lower blood pressure, less smokers, etc. She pointed out the program reaches out to more than employees, but covers those on the city's insurance plan. It was pointed out the City of Aiken has a 98% participation by employees in the city's Wellness Program.

Councilman Homoki pointed out there is no sign at the Administration and Finance Building about the handicapped entrance being on the side of the building. He also expressed concern about the wheel chair access to the building.

In discussing the pedestrian walkways, it was pointed out that the Virginia Acres walking track needs to be redone.

It was discussed that the city would like to continue to work in cooperation with the local academic campuses to show them what services, activities, and events are available. That is included in the Strategic Plan goals adopted in 2010. We have partnered with them on

various city projects. There were some comments on providing transportation from USC-Aiken to the downtown. There is a possibility that the Council on Aging may be able to expand their role in the transportation hub.

There was discussion regarding goal 13 about utilizing opportunities for the city vehicle fleet to include alternative fuel and all-electric models. Mr. Pearce stated some electric vehicles have been purchased, and we have looked at compressed natural gas. He said we would like to pursue the lawn mower program. On March 2 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Weeks Center, there will be a program promoting electric lawnmowers. The program is sponsored by DHEC, Aiken County Soil and Water Conservation Commission, City of North Augusta, Aiken County, URS, SRNL, and the City of Aiken. It was pointed out there are statistics that show one lawnmower will produce more pollutants than 5 cars on the road. Battery technology has improved so much that they are encouraging people to switch to battery powered lawnmowers. If a person turns in a gas powered lawnmower, they will be given a certificate for \$200 credit on the purchase of a battery powered lawnmower. Black & Decker will be present as well as another vendor with several different models of riding mowers and push mowers.

Regarding goal 15 about street lighting, Mr. Morris stated we have looked at several different lighting possibilities, including LED's and induction lights. He said we are still looking, as so far we have not found anything that will match the light output of the high pressure sodium lights and allow us to use the existing fixtures. He said if we could replace the fixtures on the streets, then LED technology would be the best, but that would be a very large outlay.

Councilman Ebner pointed out that the issue was to be sure that as areas develop that the lighting is put in and maintained by the owner of the parking lot. Mr. Morris responded that the city does not service any parking lot lights. Councilman Ebner stated the other issue was lighting for new additions being built. Mr. Morris responded that, in looking at the matter, we could not make the money work because of the equipment and personnel needed to maintain the lights. He said we are requiring SCE&G and Aiken Cooperative to turn in lighting plans for each subdivision so we can make sure it correlates to the city's current standard of a light at each intersection and every 600 feet if the block is longer than 600 feet. An exception is that if there is a severe curve, a light is usually placed in a curve.

Mr. Pearce stated that goal 16 regarding determining appropriate procedures and projects to strengthen the integrity of our utility infrastructure, including timelines for inspections, repairs, maintenance, replacement and installation of new and improved utility infrastructure should be continued, with the exception of the feasibility of a downtown area camera system. He pointed out we have looked at a camera system and had a proposal, but it was not economically feasible.

Councilman Homoki asked about the test program the Environmental and Energy Committee was considering about new lighting. Mr. Coakley stated the Committee had someone come in and look at the lighting at the Public Services building indoors and outdoors, and a proposal was submitted. He said it looked like the payback on the investment would be about three years. He said he had included the proposal in his capital program this year. The cost would be about \$50,000 to update the lighting fixtures.

Mr. Pearce stated it could be a potential new goal to assess opportunities to improve lighting efficiency at city facilities.

Mr. Morris pointed out in investigating lighting at the Engineering and Utilities building, they changed two of the fluorescent fixtures to LEDs and got rid of ballasts and fluorescent bulbs. He pointed out that the lights are consuming around 8 watts of power. About 10% of the power is giving the same light. Chief Barranco stated some of the same things had been tried at Public Safety building and there appears to be more light.

Mr. Pearce suggested that Council look at the lights on Bee Lane between City Hall and Westside Bowery. He pointed out the lights are very bright.

Councilwoman Price stated in the goal regarding supporting the missions of the Savannah River Site, she did not know what the site is working on in terms of goals or the status of Yucca Mountain, but she would like for someone from SRS to be invited to give Council an update on what is going on at the plant. She also stated she would like to consider how we could fold the Aiken Young Professionals into a goal.

Mr. Pearce stated he felt we could add that in the goal regarding cooperation with the academic campuses. We could add to work with the local chapter of the Aiken Young Professionals and the academic campuses.

CITY LOGO

Mayor Cavanaugh stated we were talking one time about the possibility of changing our city logo, but that had kind of been dropped. He pointed out there were some people who wanted to keep the present logo and some wanted to change the logo. He felt that at some point Council needed to make a decision. He said he was seeing the Recreation logo of the trees on South Boundary a lot on various things. He felt Council should decide whether to keep the present logo of the shield or change it. He felt before people get confused and the present logo just goes away, Council should make some decisions either to keep the long standing logo or change it. He pointed out many people still want to keep the old logo of the shield. He said the tourism logo is being seen on a lot of things, and he felt that pretty soon it would just become the logo. He said he liked the South Boundary trees, but he liked other logos better. He felt Council should make the decision on the logo. It was felt the branding should be consistent.

Mr. Pearce pointed out the South Boundary trees is the tourism logo. He pointed out some people thought the South Boundary trees was the city logo. Others wanted to keep the shield that had been the logo since 1955. He said it just became an impasse, and no new logo came to the forefront. He said a website survey was done, but it was not conclusive that the logo needed to be changed, so the logo has stayed the same.

Councilman Homoki stated he would suggest that we stay with the old logo. He felt the matter should be brought up in a formal Council meeting and a decision made by Council. He said a lot of horse people were upset about taking the horse off the logo.

Mr. Pearce stated as part of the budgeting process money could be allocated for a firm to do a survey to determine what the logo should be.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he felt the city should not change the logo, but continue to use the logo that was adopted and used since 1955. He asked if the South Boundary trees logo would be used on the Administration and Finance Building. He pointed out that the tourism logo is on the side of the building presently on the temporary sign.

Mr. Pearce responded that the sign has the city logo at the top and the tourism logo on the bottom. He stated the stained glass that will be used on the Administration and Finance Building just has City of Aiken.

Mr. Parker stated the tourism logo came out of a study done by the Recreation Department when the wayfinding maps were going to be placed downtown. He said the design group did a study and interviewed a number of people before designing the tourism logo. He said the goal was to have a logo that was used to market Aiken, and when people came to Aiken they would see the logo and know that it represents something from the city. He pointed out the South Boundary trees logo is used on all the Recreation Department's marketing. He said they do not use it for softball registration in town. He said the tourism logo is used mostly through Accommodation Tax money, but is sort of taking on a different life and it is being seen many places. He pointed out that a lot of realty companies have starting using the logo in their ads. He said not just the city is using the logo. He said the Recreation Department uses the South Boundary trees logo for marketing and wayfinding.

Mr. Pearce stated the reason it was not back on the agenda is that there was no overwhelming effort to change the logo. The city already has a logo in use so it did not appear to be an agenda item for a vote.

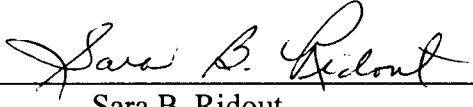
Councilman Ebner pointed out that in the future the South Boundary trees may become the logo. He pointed out presently there are still many people here who were here when the original logo was generated. He felt that may change in the future.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he would like for the shield logo to continue to be used on city stationery and other places.

Council continued to discuss the logo with Councilmembers expressing the feeling that they liked the shield logo and really did not want to change it. The consensus of Council was that the old logo reflects the history of Aiken and Aiken overall, and they wanted to keep the shield logo.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 A.M.


Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk