

Aiken City Council Minutes

July 8, 1996

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Anaclerio, Clyburn, Perry, Papouchado, Price, and Radford.

Others Present: Steve Thompson, Gary Smith, Frances Thomas, Roger LeDuc, Ed Evans, Anita Lilly, Terry Rhinehart, Carrol Busbee, Stanley Quarles, Andy Anderson, Sara Ridout, Chasiti Kirkland, of the Aiken Standard, Chandra McLean, of the Augusta Chronicle, and 17 citizens.

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 7:45 P.M. Mayor Cavanaugh led in prayer which was followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag. The minutes of the regular meeting of June 24, 1996, were considered for approval. Councilwoman Papouchado moved that the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn and unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION

GFOA Award
Certificate of Achievement for
Excellence in Financial Reporting
Finance Department

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Ms. Debra Martin-Coffman, representing the Government Finance Officers Association, was present to make a presentation.

Mr. Thompson stated the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting is an award that took many years and a lot of hard work to achieve. He said Ms. Martin-Coffman is present to make the presentation.

Ms. Martin-Coffman stated she had two awards to present. The first award was an Award of Financial Reporting Achievement to Anita Lilly who made it possible for the next award to be achieved. She stated the Government Finance Officers Association helps to establish standards for financial operations in local governments in the United States. The GFOA supports open disclosure of financial information and encourages public information and monitoring through the development of financial reports. The Association recognizes cities that consistently maintain accurate, accessible, and open information of the financial records and systems in these local governments through the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. She also presented a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for preparation of the CAFR for fiscal year ended June 30, 1995.

Ms. Martin-Coffman commended the City of Aiken and Ms. Anita Lilly for setting standards to achieve the GFOA Award. She stated this was the fourth straight year the City of Aiken had received the award. Ms. Martin-Coffman presented the plaque to Mayor Cavanaugh.

ANNEXATION - ORDINANCE 070896

Parrish, Mary
126 Fore Street
Silver Bluff Estates
Whiskey Road
Heritage Square Shopping Center
Tax Parcel No. 30-058-05-007

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for the second reading and public hearing on an ordinance to annex 126 Fore Street.

Mr. Thompson read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO ANNEX TO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF AIKEN CERTAIN PROPERTY CONSISTING OF .23 ACRES, MORE OR LESS, OWNED BY MARY W. PARRISH LOCATED AT 126 FORE STREET, WITH TAX MAP PARCEL NUMBER 30-058.0-05-007, AND TO ZONE THE SAME R-1A, SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL.

Mr. Thompson stated the city has received a petition from Ms. Mary W. Parrish asking for annexation of her property on Fore Street. The request has been reviewed by the Planning Commission and recommended for approval.

The lot is on Fore Street, a residential street which runs behind Heritage Square Shopping Center. Ms. Parrish would like access to city services and has requested annexation under the R-1A Single Family Residential Zoning classification. The proposed zoning is consistent with the present use of the property.

The public hearing was held and no one spoke.

Councilman Anaclerio moved, seconded by Councilman Radford and unanimously approved, that Council pass the ordinance on second and final reading to annex the property at 126 Fore Street and zone it R-1A Single Family Residential to become effective immediately.

BUDGET 1996-97

Amendment Salaries City Manager

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needs to consider setting the salary for the City Manager for the fiscal year 1996-97.

Mr. Thompson stated Council sets the salary for the City Manager each year and needs to establish the salary for fiscal year 1996-97.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated on June 24 Council held the annual evaluation of the City Manager in executive session and needs to formally vote on the salary for the City Manager.

Councilman Anaclerio moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that the salary for Steve Thompson, City Manager, be increased by 2% for a cost of living increase and that the City Manager be given a 1 1/2% merit increase.

Councilwoman Price pointed out a proposed evaluation form had been given to Council for consideration in evaluating the City Manager's performance. She stated in addition to the proposed questions on the form she would like for Council to look at some measures to evaluate the City Manager. She stated the city has a Strategic Plan and in looking at the plan she felt the City Manager had kept the city on target with the plan. She felt using some of the goals and targets of the Strategic Plan as a measure as well as past performance will give Council information in looking at the City Manager's performance.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he felt the city had had a good year, however, Aiken is in a different environment. He said Aiken had been growing since the 1950's with new jobs and industry. He said, however, with the end of the Cold War and the cut backs at the Savannah River Site, Aiken is in a period where a lot of jobs have been lost. He felt the situations present a tougher time to manage. He pointed out, however, that the population of the city continues to increase. He felt there are good signs and with the Strategic Plan the city is trying to make Aiken the best place to live and to make improvements. He felt the city had been successful and a lot of the success is because of the City Manager for leading and guiding and giving Council options and thoughts.

Mayor Cavanaugh called for a vote on the motion to increase the City Manager's salary by 2% cost of living and a 1 1/2% merit increase. The motion was approved by a vote of 6 in favor with Councilman Perry opposing the motion.

BIDS

Safety Shoes Shoes Tyler Brothers

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needs to consider bids for the purchase of safety shoes for employees.

Mr. Thompson stated every two years the city asks for bids for the purchase of safety shoes for employees. The contract is for a two-year term, and the city contributes up to \$75 annually per employee for safety shoes. Over the last few years the city has averaged between \$9,000 and \$10,000 each year for shoes. Seven bid invitations were distributed and four responses received.

The bids received are as follows:

	<u>Tyler Brothers</u>	<u>Lehigh</u>	<u>Iron Age</u>	<u>Aiken Work Shoe</u>
Men's Boot	\$39.95	\$50.95	\$52.95	\$ 76.80
Boot with Metatarsel Cap	73.45	62.60	78.26	100.20
Women's Boot	39.95	70.20	52.95	74.40
Boot with Metatarsel Cap	73.45	50.00	64.16	95.00

A committee reviewed the shoe bids and also the city's Safety Committee reviewed the bid specifications prior to advertisement.

After review the Committee recommended that the city accept the bid from Tyler Brothers and enter a two-year contract for this service. Their recommendation is based on (1) price - lowest price for basic safety boot; (2) quality and variety of styles offered; and (3) service-convenience of servicing employees at work site. Tyler Brothers is the city's current vendor for safety shoes, and we have been very satisfied with their service and quality of shoes.

Councilman Radford moved, seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn and unanimously approved, that the bid of Tyler Brothers be accepted for the two-year contract for the furnishing of safety shoes for employees.

BIDS

Traffic Light Poles

Light Poles

Poles

Downtown

Streetscape

Traffic Signals

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needs to consider bids for providing traffic light poles.

Mr. Thompson stated the streetscape plan includes the purchase and installation of traffic signal poles, with overhead mast arms to hold the traffic signals. The poles are to be placed in nine intersections in Aiken's downtown. The traffic signal pole was designed by Mike Holland, a local architect, and recommended to Council through the Downtown Development Association. Bids have been received on the purchase of the traffic signal poles and mast arms. The staff is recommending acceptance of the low bid of Graybar Electric Co., Inc. in the amount of \$210,596 for traffic signal poles for downtown intersections.

Mr. Thompson stated the project has been changed many times over the past few years, and overall the issue of new mast arms ties in very closely with the State Highway Department's (SCDOT) plans to computerize the traffic signals in downtown Aiken. The SCDOT has been studying the computerization project for the past 18 months, and has completed the study for these intersections to allow for better control of traffic in Aiken. The city will share in the cost of both the computerization project, with a total expense of approximately \$50,000 and with the purchase of poles. The bid received for the new traffic signal poles totals \$210,596 for approximately 40 traffic light poles, and the city will pay the difference between this cost and the cost that the SCDOT would have paid for concrete poles. The SCDOT does not have a final figure available on how much they will pay per traffic signal pole or per intersection, but the staff has estimated that the SCDOT will pay somewhere between \$50,000 and \$153,000 of the cost. The vast range depends on the number of intersections to be completed. The staff's suggestion to Council is that Council look at this as a price per pole and that the staff work with the SCDOT to keep the price as low as possible. It is hoped that the city's cost can be held to the approximately \$150,000 that has been budgeted over the past few years. The city has included in the negotiations all of the city's expenses such as cost for conduit through the intersections, trenching, and other expenses added to the signalization system. The SCDOT will give the city credit for this work against the total expenses. The Department of Public Works and the Department of Public Safety have done a tremendous amount of work in reducing the city's costs for actual out of pocket expenses for this project. Funds are available for this system. The city will also install the poles, underground the wiring, and install landscape islands and other components of the streetscape program to make these intersections more attractive during this process. In early fall the city is hoping to remove

the medians on Laurens Street to allow the replacement of the median with street trees, bollards and landscaping and paver islands as outlined in the streetscape plan.

Mr. Thompson showed Council a drawing indicating the intersections to be covered in the new traffic signalization. He also showed Council the design of the traffic poles to be used.

Councilwoman Price stated all the plans look good, and she felt as the city moves into the 21st Century the city is going to be a town to be proud of with all the improvements being made.

Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilwoman Papouchado and unanimously approved, that Council accept the low bid of Graybar Electric Co., Inc. in the amount of \$210,596 for traffic signal poles for downtown intersections.

BIDS

Weeks Center

Gym Floor

Floor

Southern Flooring

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider bids for the replacement of the floor at the H. O. Weeks Center gymnasium.

Mr. Thompson stated the city distributed invitations to 16 suppliers and received 2 responses for replacement of the floor at the H. O. Weeks Center gym. The bids are as follows:

<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>BID PRICE</u>
Southern Flooring, Inc.	\$56,754
Columbia Hardwoods & Floors, Inc.	87,760

Mr. Thompson stated the 1995-96 budget includes funding for replacement of the Weeks Center floor. The staff reviewed the bids and recommended acceptance of the low bid of Southern Flooring, of Greenville, SC. Mr. Thompson stated this will be replacing the composite floor with a wood floor and should be a dramatic improvement over the floor in the gym. The company that submitted the low bid, Southern Flooring, is the flooring contractor for the construction of the new Weeks Center gym addition.

Councilman Radford moved, seconded by Councilwoman Papouchado and unanimously approved, that the low bid of Southern Flooring, Inc. in the amount of \$56,754 be accepted for replacement of the Weeks Center gym floor.

GOLDEN HARVEST FOOD BANK

Food Bank

Funds

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider a request from the Golden Harvest Food Bank for funds.

Mr. Thompson stated Council has received a request for funding from the Golden Harvest Food Bank. The Food Bank is hoping to build a new warehouse, and they have asked Council to consider an appropriation of \$7,500 to the Food Bank to assist with this expense. The Golden Harvest is a nonprofit charity which accepts food donations from local and national businesses for distribution to those in need.

Councilman Radford stated in the past Council had limited funding for community organizations. He felt if they funded one organization they would be obligated to fund others. For the reasons stated Councilman Radford moved, seconded by Councilman Perry, that Council deny the request for funding from the Golden Harvest Food Bank. The motion was approved to deny the funding by a majority vote with Councilwoman Clyburn opposing the motion.

Mayor Cavanaugh pointed out it is difficult to deny requests such as this as the organizations are all good and doing good for the community. He stated, however, Council gets a number of requests for funds every month, and it is impossible to fund all of them so it has been Council's policy not to fund the requests.

SIGN

Aiken County Open Land Trust
Price Avenue
Recreation
Carolina Bay

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider a request for signs on city property.

Mr. Thompson stated the city has received a letter from the Aiken County Open Land Trust, asking Council to grant permission for the Land Trust to erect a bulletin board on city property on the north side of Price Avenue. The Land Trust would also like to locate a sign in the Virginia Acres Park inside the walking track facing Price Avenue. The purpose of the signs is to educate potential users of the new park and to inform people about the Land Trust's fund raiser for the purchase of the property to be donated to the City of Aiken.

In the past the only signs that are allowed on city property are the polo signs, recognizing the schedule for polo games, and United Way signs. Both were specifically allowed by City Council and both are allowed within the street right-of-way. The Playhouse is allowed to advertise for the playhouse which is located on the Virginia Acres site. The sign ordinance does not specifically allow or restrict signs on governmental property, however, there is a provision for information signs to be allowed on the street right-of-way and on city property with City Council approval.

The Open Land Trust is conducting a fund raiser and the project is not specifically a city project, however, the city has committed to contribute to the fund raiser.

Council discussed the request. Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council had discussed the request in the pre-Council session with Ms. Dane who had answered a lot of questions regarding the signs. He pointed out the city is a partner with the Aiken County Land Trust which is trying to raise \$600,000 and the City has pledged \$60,000. When the land is purchased by the Land Trust it will be turned over to the city for passive recreation and will be an extension of the Weeks Center.

Mayor Cavanaugh moved, seconded by Councilwoman Papouchado and unanimously approved, that Council approve the request by the Aiken County Land Trust for the two signs requested to be located on city property advertising the fund raiser for the purchase of the Carolina Bay area by the Land Trust.

Mayor Cavanaugh read the wording which is proposed to be on the information signs.

Councilwoman Price stated she just wanted to point out that Council has talked about signs in the past and the number of signs on property. She stated Council has had requests for signs previously and pointed out Council had spent a lot of time discussing signs in the past. She said she had no problem with the signs which Ms. Dane is proposing.

GAZEBO

Park Avenue
Memorial Gazebo
Funding
Weeks, Mayor H. O.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider a request for funds for a memorial gazebo in memory of former Mayor H. O. Weeks.

Mr. Thompson stated the Aiken Downtown Development Association (ADDA) has been developing plans for the construction of a gazebo in the park on Park Avenue in front of the Municipal Building. The streetscape plan includes plans for an arts plaza or gazebo in the parkway. The estate of former Mayor Weeks contributed \$8,280 for the construction of this gazebo. Other donations have been received to bring the total amount of donations available for the project to \$9,281. The Downtown Association has been working with Mike Holland, a local architect, to move forward with this project. The Association is ready to recommend a design and fund raiser for this project to Council.

The design for this gazebo has been reviewed with Council previously and an updated design was presented for Council's information. The project should cost about \$58,000. There are also other costs involved depending on which options are chosen for the gazebo. The downtown Association has asked the city to contribute \$30,000 for this project, and the Association has committed to raising the balance of this money. Last year Council set aside the funds for this project from the previous fiscal year so funds are available for this streetscape component. He said the Downtown Association wants to make sure that City Council is satisfied with moving forward with the project and that the city supports and participates in the project. He said Council had discussed tying the city's contribution to the end of the fund raiser to make sure the fund raiser is successful before the city contributes. Also, if the fund raiser is successful city funds may not be needed for the project.

Councilman Perry moved, seconded by Councilman Anaclerio and unanimously approved, that even though the city had set aside funds for the project that Council wait to see how much money the Association will need for the project and that Council appropriate whatever money is necessary up to \$30,000 for the gazebo after the fund raiser is conducted. He pointed out the Downtown Association had not had a formal fund raiser, but it was felt there was a lot of public support for the project.

Councilman Perry pointed out the proposed gazebo costs a lot of money, but it is of high quality and should last for years.

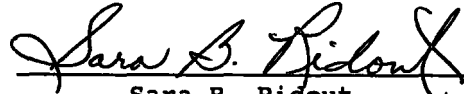
RECOGNITION

Boy Scouts

Mayor Cavanaugh pointed out a group of boys from Scout Troop 432 were present to learn about operation of government.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Council adjourned at 8:20 P.M.


Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk