

Aiken City Council Minutes

January 31, 2003

Aiken's Horizons

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

Others Present: Roger LeDuc, Bill Huggins, Gary Smith, Ed Evans, Anita Lilly, Pete Frommer, Larry Morris, Glenn Parker, Richard Pearce, Kenneth Cook, Sara Ridout, Steve Hale, and Karen Daily of the Aiken Standard.

The Aiken City Council met in the City Council Chambers in the Municipal Building at 214 Park Avenue SW for their annual Council retreat, called Horizons 2003, beginning at 12 noon with lunch.

BUDGET

Roger LeDuc, City Manager, and Anita Lilly, Finance Director, presented an update on the budget expenditures and revenues for fiscal year 2002-2003 for the General Fund, Utilities Fund and for the Capital Project Sales Tax. Mr. LeDuc discussed health insurance costs, future losses in revenue including vehicle taxes and telecommunications fees. He also stated there was a projected revenue shortfall in the utilities revenue for water, sewer, fees and interest earned of \$813,965. He pointed out the city's major water user had declared bankruptcy and was not using the water anticipated. He said the revenue was not coming in as anticipated and there had been some unanticipated expenses. He said the city will be faced with increasing water and sewer rates in the near future.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Kenneth Cook, Human Resources Manager, reviewed the results of a recent survey of city employees regarding turnover, satisfaction with job, and salaries. He also reviewed some recent changes in salaries for some job classifications to combat turnover.

Mr. LeDuc presented information received from a salary survey regarding salaries for the Mayor and Councilmembers.

GREENWAYS

Mr. Kenneth Driggers, of Palmetto Conservation, gave Council an update on the study being conducted for greenways and open space protection for Aiken.

YARD TRASH

Larry Morris, Public Works Director, presented to Council a proposal for changing the policy for pickup of yard trash. Since the city has considerable problems with citizens mixing yard trash and other items, the suggestion was that the city charge for all mixed piles, and that non-compostable items be picked up one time per quarter. He also suggested that the city charge for special pickups of items and that the fee be charged as a fee on the water bill. Mr. Morris presented the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed policy.

GARBAGE

Roll Cart Curbside Pickup

Mr. Morris also suggested in order to cut expenses that the city go to a roll cart, curb side pickup of garbage rather than backyard pickup. He reviewed the proposed program and

cost for Council. It was suggested that the city send out a card asking the citizens if they would prefer to pay more for garbage pickup or go to a roll cart, curb side pickup.

RECREATION

Glenn Parker, Recreation Director, discussed the present fee structure and future fees for recreation programs and how these fees are determined. He also discussed the need for a maintenance facility for the recreation operation, possible use of the Woodward House on Banks Mill Road and the Woodmen of the World building, possible construction of a new facility for the recreation maintenance facility near Citizens Park, possible changes to the master plan at Citizens Park based on decreased registration for some programs, and the possibility of a recreation commission to guide staff and Council on some recreation operations.

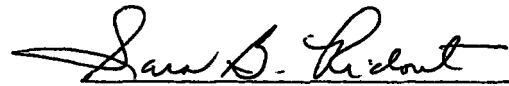
PLAYHOUSE BUILDING

Price Avenue

Virginia Acres Park

Ms. Meghan Clemmens, a senior architectural student from Clemson and a resident of Aiken, presented several ideas on proposed uses which can be made of the old Playhouse building at the corner of Price Avenue and Two Notch Road should Council desire to purchase the building. One of the suggestions was an environmental center for students adjacent to the Carolina Bay. Other suggestions discussed were a conference center for rental for events, use a portion for the Ceramic Program which is currently in an old house fronting on Whiskey Road, or storage.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 P.M.



Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk