

Aiken City Council Minutes

February 24, 1997

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

Others Present: Steve Thompson, Frances Thomas, Gary Smith, and Sara Ridout.

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. Councilman Anaclerio moved, seconded by Councilwoman Papouchado and unanimously approved, that Council go into executive session for a legal briefing by the City Attorney. After discussion, Councilman Anaclerio moved, seconded by Councilwoman Papouchado and unanimously approved, that the executive session end. The executive session adjourned at 7 P.M. Then Council held a pre-Council session for discussion of agenda items and upcoming events.

REGULAR MEETING

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

Others Present: Steve Thompson, Gary Smith, Frances Thomas, Andy Anderson, Anita Lilly, Stanley Quarles, Carrol Busbee, Ed Evans, Sara Ridout, Tom Smith of the Aiken Standard, Chandra McLean of the Augusta Chronicle, and 12 citizens.

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 7:35 P.M. Steve Thompson led in prayer which was followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag. The minutes of the regular meeting of February 10, 1997, were considered for approval. Councilwoman Papouchado moved that the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn and unanimously approved.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONSAppointmentsHistoric Preservation CommissionDavis, Jane

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider appointments to the various boards and commissions of the city.

Mr. Thompson stated City Council has an appointment available on the Historic Preservation Commission. Under the appointments process, Councilwoman Papouchado has nominated Ms. Jane Davis for reappointment to the Historic Preservation Commission. With this reappointment, the new term for Ms. Davis would expire on December 31, 1998.

Councilwoman Papouchado moved, seconded by Councilman Anaclerio and unanimously approved that Jane Davis be reappointed to the Historic Preservation Commission for a two year term to expire December 31, 1998.

ANNEXATION TASK FORCEReport

Mayor Cavanaugh stated City Council had informally received the report of the Annexation Task Force on Tuesday, February 18, 1997, in a work session. The report of the Annexation Task Force is now being presented for consideration by Council.

Mr. Thompson stated the Task Force spent a great deal of time and effort in discussions to improve the annexation process in Aiken. This was an educational process for many members of the Task Force, and several of the members came into the process with the assumption that the city could levy tax abatements and provide other incentives for properties to annex into Aiken. The members found that there are obstacles to tax abatements and other incentives, and the members discussed at length the need to balance incentives for new areas to be annexed with fairness issues for existing residents.

Mr. Thompson stated the conclusion is that the Task Force has recommended that the city should be more proactive, in a very positive way, through hiring a professional annexation director, to help prepare individual information for customers and others interested in annexation. The Task Force also recommended that the city extend the present curb and gutter reimbursement program to the property owners within the doughnut holes, to help off set expenses for connecting to the sewer line. The Task Force also recommended that the city continue to try to work with Aiken County and North Augusta to make annexation more attractive in Aiken County, and recommended that the city continue to pursue the 1% local option sales tax, and to dedicate the proceeds of the sales tax to property tax reduction. The Task Force has seven major recommendations, with several smaller recommendations included under each. These are very positive and will help the city and will help the efforts of the standing Annexation Committee.

Mr. Thompson stated City Council needs to consider acceptance of the report of the Annexation Task Force. On acceptance by City Council, the staff will provide the recommendations to the standing Annexation Committee and start addressing the individual recommendations through the upcoming budget.

Mr. Thompson stated Roland Windham and Joe Lewis, co-chairmen of the Annexation Task Force, were present to answer any questions.

Council commended the work of the Task Force members for their many hours of work and efforts to make recommendations to City Council.

Mr. Joe Lewis briefly reviewed the summary of the recommendations of the Annexation Task Force.

1. Assign a qualified person and support system to manage the annexation process actively for the areas proposed for annexation. Mr. Lewis pointed out the Task Force did not necessarily recommend that the city

hire an annexation manager but that someone be assigned to support and manage the process.

2. Create a standing committee of Aiken County government and Aiken City government to help cause annexation to be a more attractive choice.
3. Encourage a County referendum to establish a 1% local option sales tax in Aiken County, provided that 100% of the revenue generated by the tax be used to roll back property taxes in the City of Aiken.
4. Develop a process to publicize the positive features of annexation.
5. Provide financial incentives to reduce the cost of annexation, such as the utilities reimbursement for curb and gutter.
6. Develop City policies that are attractive to businesses.
7. Continue services to all property owners currently receiving them. The cost of the services to the County residents should not be a burden to City residents.

Mr. Lewis stated the Task Force had spent a lot of time and effort during the last eight months developing the recommendations. He said it was the Task Force's hope that Council will give favorable consideration to the recommendations.

Councilman Radford moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price and unanimously approved, that the report of the Annexation Task Force be accepted.

#### SAVANNAH RIVER SITE

##### Resolution

##### Plutonium

##### Mission

Mayor Cavanaugh stated a resolution had been prepared supporting temporary storage for processing and vitrification of plutonium at the Savannah River Site.

Mr. Thompson stated several groups in the Central Savannah River Area had adopted resolutions supporting continued and expanded missions at the Savannah River Site. He said this was in keeping with Council's efforts in the past. He said a resolution had been prepared for Council's consideration.

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE TEMPORARY STORAGE OF PLUTONIUM FOR THE PURPOSES OF PROCESSING AND VITRIFICATION.

Mr. Thompson stated the resolution supports the expansion of missions for the Savannah River Site.

Councilwoman Clyburn moved, seconded by Councilman Perry and unanimously approved, that Council approve the resolution supporting continued and expanded missions at the Savannah River Site.

BRIDGES

Norfolk Southern  
Railroad  
Newberry Street  
Bridge Replacement

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider a proposal from Norfolk Southern regarding bridge replacement.

Mr. Thompson stated the Norfolk Southern Corporation is participating in the cost of replacement for the Newberry Street bridge. Under this project, the railroad will pay a total of \$115,284 towards the replacement, and the city would pay an equal match for the bridge replacement. Mr. Thompson stated both the City and Norfolk Southern have committed to pay 10% of the replacement cost for the Newberry Street bridge with \$115,284 each.

Norfolk Southern has suggested that the railroad could pay the city's portion on the Newberry Street bridge, for an additional \$115,284, contingent upon the city assuming all responsibility for replacement of the other bridge structures in the city over the railroad in the future. These would include the bridges on Union Street, Fairfield Street, York Street, and Chesterfield Street.

Mr. Thompson stated he had asked the Highway Department for some assistance with this project. Mr. Rocque L. Kneece, the Bridge Design Engineer for the South Carolina Department of Transportation, has stated the remaining bridges are in relatively good shape. Mr. Kneece noted that "while Norfolk Southern's offer does have immediate benefits for Aiken, that the city should consider the future cost of maintenance and possible replacement in the 10-20 year range." The city probably would not have tremendous expenses in the near future, but probably needs to at least leave the possibility open of having the railroad participate in the cost of future repair and replacement.

Mr. Thompson stated City Council needs to consider a proposal from Norfolk Southern Railroad to pay the city's portion of the cost for the Newberry Street bridge in exchange for the city accepting responsibility for the other bridges over the railroad in Aiken.

Mr. Thompson stated the issue is whether or not the money in hand at this time would be a better buy for the city rather than having the railroad involved later in bridge replacement.

Councilman Anaclerio stated he felt it would be to the benefit of the city for the long range to not enter into an agreement to relieve the railroad of maintenance and replacement of the other bridges in the city.

Councilman Anaclerio moved, seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn and unanimously approved, that Council not accept the proposal of an additional \$115,284 from Norfolk Southern, paying the city's share for replacement of the Newberry Street bridge, in exchange for the city accepting maintenance and replacement of the other bridges in the city when needed.

BIDS

Sewer Improvements  
Collier Street  
Pine Log Road  
Public Works Department

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needs to consider the bids submitted for sewer improvements.

Mr. Thompson stated the budget includes several sewer improvements, including extension of sewer service to the property that was recently annexed at the corner of Collier Street and Pine Log Road. The city is also having maintenance problems in the sewer lines along York Street, and has accepted bids for sewer improvements. The bids received are as follows:

	<u>Collier</u>	<u>York</u>	<u>Total</u>
Service & Sales of S.C. Inc.	\$28,000	\$22,000	\$50,000
TNT, Inc.	34,000	14,350	48,850
Gene Ray Fulmer	28,000	25,000	53,000

The staff is recommending acceptance of the low bid of TNT, Inc. of Chapin, at a bid price of \$48,850. TNT is a South Carolina firm, located in Chapin, S.C. The next low bid is submitted by a firm out of Greenwood, and the third low is submitted by Gene Ray Fulmer, of Saluda County. The difference between the low and the bid submitted by Mr. Fulmer totals \$4,150, or 8.5%.

Councilman Radford moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price and unanimously approved, that the low bid of TNT, Inc. for sewer repairs and extensions, with a total bid price of \$48,850 be accepted.

JR. LEADERSHIP AIKEN COUNTY

Request for Funds  
Funds

Mayor Cavanaugh stated a request had been received from the Jr. Leadership Aiken County for funds.

Mr. Thompson stated there are several programs that help promote leadership in the Aiken area, including both Leadership Aiken County and the Jr. Leadership Aiken program. City Council has received a request from the Jr. Leadership Aiken program for \$200.

The Jr. Leadership Aiken program is designed to educate eighth and ninth grade students on the various components that make up Aiken, including government, business, and industry, and is modeled after Leadership Aiken County. The group hopes to expose eighth and ninth grade students to issues and decisions facing the leadership in the community. The request is for a contribution of \$200 by the City.

Council discussed the request. Mayor Cavanaugh stated he felt Jr. Leadership Aiken was very important for the education of the students who take part. He stated the program helps the students learn about government. He pointed out the city had chosen to be a part of the program. He stated he supports the city granting the \$200 to the program.

Councilwoman Clyburn moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve the funding request of Jr. Leadership Aiken County for \$200.

Councilman Perry stated the \$200 was not the issue, but other organizations had been turned down when they made requests to Council for funds. He felt granting the request would be setting a bad precedent.

Councilwoman Price pointed out her basis for supporting the request was the topics of the Jr. Leadership which focuses on government and law enforcement. She felt it would be good to help the students to learn what is involved in government and law enforcement to make them better leaders.

Mayor Cavanaugh called for a vote on the motion to approve the request for \$200 for Jr. Leadership Aiken County. The motion was approved by a majority vote with five in favor and two opposed. Those opposing the motion were Councilmembers Perry and Radford.

UTILITY REQUEST

Water Service  
Sewer Service  
U. S. Highway 1 North  
I-20

Mayor Cavanaugh stated a request had been received for water and sewer service at the intersection of U.S. 1 and I-20.

Mr. Thompson stated City Council has received a request from Boardman Petroleum, Inc., asking for city water and sewer services for a proposed gas station and convenience store to be located along U.S. 1, just south of the I-20 interchange. This store would be located on a 1.74 acre tract.

The Planning Commission has reviewed this request and recommended approval on the following conditions:

1. all comments of the City Engineer should be satisfactorily addressed;
2. all signage should comply with the sign ordinance requirements of the City of Aiken for a Neighborhood Business zone, except that one permitted free-standing sign may have a height not to exceed 80 feet;
3. the use should comply with the requirements of the Tree Protection and Landscaping Ordinance; and
4. the property will have to execute an annexation agreement.

Councilman Perry moved, seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn and unanimously approved, that Council approve a utility extension request for water and sewer for a new gas station and convenience store to be constructed along U.S. 1, just south of the I-20 interchange.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

  
 Sara B. Ridout  
 City Clerk