

Aiken City Council MinutesREGULAR MEETING

July 8, 2019

Present: Mayor Osbon, Councilmembers Dewar, Girardeau, Gregory, Price, and Woltz.

Absent: Councilwoman Diggs

Others Present: Stuart Bedenbaugh, Gary Smith, Kim Abney, Tim Coakley Charles Barranco, Sara Ridout, Kymberley Wheat, Mike Przybylowicz, Ryan Bland, Gary Meadows, Angela Hales, Tim O'Briant, Lex Kirkland, Joy Lester, Colin Demarest, of the Aiken Standard, and about 25 citizens.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Osbon called the regular meeting of July 8, 2019, to order at 7:08 P.M. Mayor Osbon led in prayer. The pledge of allegiance to the flag was led by Aiken County Veterans Affairs Officer, Dwight Bradham.

GUIDELINES

Mayor Osbon reviewed the guidelines for speaking at the Council meeting.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Mayor Osbon recognized Councilmember Price for any additions or deletions to the agenda. Councilwoman Price stated she had no changes to the agenda. Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that the agenda be approved as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

MINUTES

The minutes of the work session and regular meeting of June 24, 2019, were considered for approval. Councilman Woltz moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that the minutes for the meetings of June 24, 2019, be approved as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATIONProclamationHankinson Boxing Gym

Mayor Osbon stated the first item of business was a proclamation recognizing Hankinson Boxing Gym.

Mayor Osbon read the proclamation.

Councilman Dewar moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve the proclamation recognizing Hankinson Boxing Gym and the Hankinson boxers who won national titles. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Mayor and Councilmembers presented proclamations to the Hankinsons and the five medalists.

Ms. Brittany Hankinson stated that Hankinson Boxing Gym has a lot of youth that come in and out. She pointed out that this work takes a lot of dedication, and they have a lot of kids that are very dedicated. They could be just hanging out, but they dedicate themselves every day. She said she was proud of all of them. She thanked everyone.

Mayor Osbon stated he had a comment from Councilwoman Diggs who could not be present at this meeting. Councilwoman Diggs comments were: "To James and Brittany I

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apologize that I can't be with you tonight to recognize you for all you have accomplished with this program. I have followed you and attended your events these past four years and continue to be impressed with your mission to save kids from the streets and help them grow into successful adults. You have built confidence into those and rose their self-esteem, and provided meals because you know kids do better if they are fed. You always stress the importance of education and encourage a "can do" attitude for them all. I thank you for your commitment to this community and congratulate you all."

Veterans

Mr. Stuart Bedenbaugh asked that all the Veterans of the armed forces stand and be recognized.

Councilman Dewar stated he wanted to point out the outstanding work that the Aiken County Veterans Office does. He said they provide superior support to the Veterans of Aiken County in outreaching to those who need help. They do marvelous work.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Appointments

Mayor Osbon stated Council needed to consider appointments to various city boards, commissions, and committees.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Council has 36 pending appointments to fill vacancies on different City boards, commissions, and committees. No nominations for appointments were made at the last Council meeting. However, a list of boards, commissions, and committees needing appointments by City Council had been provided to Council for information. Council may have some nominations for appointments to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of Council.

Mayor Osbon asked if there were any nominations for consideration at the next meeting of Council. No nominations were made.

ANNEXATION – ORDINANCE 07082019

109 Marvin Drive
Cecil R. Cooper
Lisa Cooper
Virginia Acres Subdivision
TPN 122-09-02-005

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to annex 109 Marvin Drive and zone it Residential Single-Family (RS-10).

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO ANNEX TO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF AIKEN CERTAIN PROPERTY LOCATED AT 109 MARVIN DRIVE AND TO ZONE THE SAME RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY (RS-10).

Councilman Girardeau moved, seconded by Councilman Dewar, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to annex 109 Marvin Drive and zone it Residential Single-Family (RS-10).

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated pursuant to the city's Water/Sewer Annexation Policy, Resolution 09122016D, Cecil and Lisa Cooper, owners are requesting annexation of property at 109 Marvin Drive and zoning as Residential Single-Family (RS-10). This property is located in Section 2 of the Virginia Acres Subdivision.

The Planning Commission at their meeting on June 11, 2019, considered this request for annexation and recommended by a vote of 5-0 (Commissioners Rabun and Matthews were not present) that the property be annexed and zoned Residential Single-Family (RS-10).

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the June 24, 2019, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to annex property at 109 Marvin Drive owned by Cecil and Lisa Cooper and zone it Residential Single-Family (RS-10).

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilman Girardeau, seconded by Councilman Dewar, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to annex 109 Marvin Drive and zone it Residential Single-Family (RS-10). The motion was unanimously approved.

REZONE – ORDINANCE 07082019A

955 Colony Parkway

Brenda Quick

Carlos F. Garcia

TPN 106-08-05-001

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to rezone property at 955 Colony Parkway from Residential Multi-Family High Density (RML) to Office (O).

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING OF REAL ESTATE LOCATED AT 955 COLONY PARKWAY FROM RESIDENTIAL MULTI-FAMILY HIGH DENSITY (RMH) TO OFFICE (O).

Councilwoman Gregory moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to rezone property at 955 Colony Parkway from Residential Multi-Family High Density (RML) to Office (O).

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated applicant Brenda Quick and Owner Carlos F. Garcia are requesting that the property at 955 Colony Parkway be rezoned from Residential Multi-Family High Density (RMH) to Office (O). Ms. Quick plans to operate a hair salon at this location. This property was previously used as the office and headquarters of RCS Corporation, an employment contractor. The office use was considered a grandfathered, non-conforming land use under the RMH zoning.

Office (O) zoning is consistent with the previous land use, and would maintain a buffer between the existing recreation area, and the higher intensity commercial uses found across Colony Parkway from the site. The Office (O) zoning would also correct the inconsistent zoning now in place for the site, which is best suited for office or limited commercial retail uses.

The Planning Commission considered this request at their June 11, 2019, meeting and by a vote of 5-0 (Commissioners Rabun and Matthews not present) recommended approval of the rezoning request to Office (O).

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the June 24, 2019, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to rezone property at 955 Colony Parkway from Residential Multi-Family High Density (RMH) to Office (O).

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Gregory, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to rezone property at 955 Colony Parkway from Residential Multi-Family High Density (RML) to Office (O). The motion was unanimously approved.

WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT – ORDINANCEAgreementMontmorenci-CouchtonDeodar PlantationFox Haven SubdivisionSewer ServiceSolid Waste ServiceStormwater Service

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to approve an amendment to the agreement with the Montmorenci-Couchton water and sewer district.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE ALLOWING THE CITY OF AIKEN TO AMEND ITS
AGREEMENT WITH THE MONTMORENCI-COUGHTON WATER AND SEWER
DISTRICT, INC. REGARDING THE PROVISION OF WATER AND SEWER
SERVICES.

Councilman Girardeau moved, seconded by Councilman Dewar, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to approve an amendment to the agreement with the Montmorenci-Couchton water and sewer district.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated the City of Aiken annexed the area known as Deodar Plantation and Fox Haven Subdivisions. The Montmorenci-Couchton Water and Sewer District (the District) serves the customers with water. The City of Aiken serves the area with sanitary sewer service, solid waste and storm water. Our staff has worked with the District to amend the agreement from 1996, also amended in 2002, to assist the City of Aiken in collection of our revenue for our services. We bill the customers for sewer, solid waste and storm water. This new amendment will allow the installation of a water shut-off valve to be used by the City of Aiken in the event that an Aiken customer fails to pay their utility bill in a timely manner. The City works closely with the District and will communicate this information of service interruption to them. The Water Districts are set by the County Council. The Montmorenci-Couchton Water and Sewer District serves the Deodar Plantation and Fox Haven Subdivisions with water, but they do not have the capacity to provide sewer service to the subdivision. The City of Aiken provides sewer service to the subdivision. The reason why this amendment to the agreement is before Council is if people don't pay their City of Aiken services which include sewer, solid waste and stormwater, it is difficult to collect for the services. We need to have a way to impress upon the folks that they need to pay for the services. For future development as part of any parcels being developed a water shut off valve will be installed by the developer for the City of Aiken to use to cut the water off if a customer fails to pay their utility bill. The amendment also allows for the City to install a shut off valve, at City expense, at the current properties being serviced if they aren't paying their bills. He commended the staff in Engineering & Utilities and Finance for working very diligently with the Montmorenci-Couchton Water and Sewer District to develop this agreement. He felt that by having this agreement that our ability to have people pay their bills will be increased tremendously in any future new development.

For Council consideration is first reading of an ordinance to approve an amendment to the Agreement dated December, 1996, and amended May, 2002, with the Montmorenci-Couchton Water and Sewer District.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Councilman Woltz asked if the plan is to just install the water cut off valves on an as needed basis. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated that is correct. If they don't pay their City of Aiken utility bill, a water cut off valve will be installed. He said the reason why we need this agreement is that the City of Aiken does not provide water service to the area and therefore does not have a way to collect the City of Aiken's bill for utility services.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilman Girardeau, seconded by Councilman Dewar, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to approve an amendment to the agreement with the Montmorenci-Coughton water and sewer district. The motion was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION – CONTRACT 07082019B

City Manager

Mayor Osbon stated a resolution had been prepared to authorize a contract with the City Manager.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the resolution.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF AIKEN TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THE CITY MANAGER.

Councilman Woltz moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve the resolution authorizing the City of Aiken to enter into a contractual arrangement with the City Manager.

Mr. Gary Smith, City Attorney, stated recently City Council was in discussions regarding the evaluation of the City Manager, City Council has recommended that the City Manager be granted a new contract. The contract would begin July 9, 2019, and end July 17, 2020. The salary would be \$137,800 per year. Also included in the contract is a clause regarding termination benefits. If the employee is terminated by Council even though the employee is willing and able to perform the duties of City Manager, then the city agrees to pay employee a lump sum cash payment equal to six (6) months' salary and to continue to provide and pay for the hospital, dental and medical benefits for six (6) months following termination. However, if the City Manager is terminated for cause such as misconduct or conviction of a felony, or the City Manager voluntarily resigns the position, then the city would not pay termination benefits.

For City Council consideration is approval of a resolution authorizing a contract with the City Manager.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilman Woltz, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve the resolution to authorize a contract with the City Manager. The motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION – STATE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE BANK
07082019C

Whiskey Road

Transportation Alternatives

Corridor Improvements

Application

Mayor Osbon stated a resolution had been prepared to approve an application to the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank for funding for Whiskey Road transportation alternatives project.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the resolution.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF AIKEN TO MAKE APPLICATION TO THE STATE INFRASTRUCTURE BANK FOR FUNDS FOR THE WHISKEY ROAD CORRIDOR CONSTRUCTION.

Councilwoman Gregory moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve the resolution for submittal of an application to the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank for funding for Whiskey Road Transportation Alternative Project.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Council has had five presentations about the Whiskey Road Corridor projects over the last two and one-half years. He said staff had been waiting for the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank to open up the application period again. In mid-May, the State Infrastructure Bank announced that they would be accepting applications for the latest round of funding until August 1, 2019. Last August Council had a work session of Council where Rick Toole, Engineer, gave a detailed presentation about the need for the improvements. Mr. Toole again made a presentation to Council for the Whiskey Road Corridor improvements at the work session prior to this meeting and summarized what the application consist of. We have been anticipating this application process and have been working on our document for over a year. As part of our application, we must have a resolution from Council approving our application. This work will encompass the Whiskey Road Corridor Improvements which includes the following proposed scope:

Dougherty Road Corridor Improvements;
 A new connector from Dougherty Road to East Gate Drive;
 A new connector from Dougherty Road to Pawnee Street;
 A new connector from Whiskey Road to Powderhouse Road; and
 An extension of South Centennial Avenue to the new Powderhouse Connector.

For City Council consideration is a resolution approving an application for the State Infrastructure Bank.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Gregory, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve the resolution for submittal of an application to the State Transportation Infrastructure Bank for funding for Whiskey Road transportation alternatives. The motion was unanimously approved.

BANNERS

Joye in Aiken
Downtown
Banners

Mayor Osbon stated Council had received a request from Joye in Aiken regarding placement of banners in the downtown area.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated we have received a request from Sandra Field, of Joye! in Aiken, for permission to hang 2 banners in the downtown promoting the Joye! in Aiken festival which is to be held March 2 - 14, 2020. She is requesting permission to hang the 2 two-sided banners on the arches at each end of The Alley.

Ms. Field is also requesting that the fountain on Newberry Street be dyed red during the festival week of March 5 - 13, 2020. Joye in Aiken would purchase the dye for the fountain.

For City Council consideration is approval to hang 2 banners in the downtown on the arches at each end of The Alley promoting the 2020 Joye in Aiken Festival.

Councilwoman Gregory moved, seconded by Councilman Woltz, that Council approve the request to place two banners in the downtown on the arches at each end of The Alley promoting the Joye in Aiken festival March 2-14, 2020, and dying the fountain on Newberry Street red during the week of March 5-13, 2020.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilwoman Gregory, seconded by Councilman Woltz, that Council approve the request from Joye in Aiken regarding placement of banners in the downtown area. The motion was unanimously approved.

INFORMATION

Mr. Bedenbaugh noted that the Planning Commission would not be holding a meeting on Tuesday, July 9, 2019, as no applications were filed.

Mr. Bedenbaugh also pointed out that the Municipal Association will hold ten regional advocacy meetings between August 13 and September 4. The meeting closest to Aiken will be held in North Augusta on August 21.

AIKEN COUNTY VETERANS

Banners

Downtown

Hometown Heroes Project

Mayor Osbon stated the County Veterans Officer is present and asked if he would like to say a few words.

Mr. Dwight Bradham, Aiken County Veterans Officer, stated he would like to address Council concerning an opportunity to continue to recognize our Veterans, not only those currently serving, but also those who have gone on to final formation. It is a chance for families to be able to recognize them and continue to develop and show strong bonds that the City of Aiken has. It is hoped that the reflection will continue on through Aiken County as we go forward. He pointed out that Aiken County Veterans Council Chairman Lowell Koppert had distributed to each of Council a one page report that discusses the Hometown Heroes Project. The program has been very successful in New Jersey. The nice thing about the Sidewalk Program is that it is a personal and visible way to honor military veterans two weeks prior to Veterans Day and again before Memorial Day. He said the program consists of double sided banners. The banners in terms of heaviness and durability, should have a life of about five years. The unique thing is that they would be able to be presented throughout town by using the different lamp posts and hangars and possibly spreading. They would like to have Aiken come aboard initially and then ultimately bring in the other towns around Aiken. The cost would not be borne by the City. It would be borne by families, individual veterans, private donations, or through businesses. It would be considered tax deductible because the cost would go through the Aiken County Veterans Council which is a non-profit organization. Then through that they would be able to have the banners created, and they would be displayed at specific times in coordination with the City of Aiken.

The application process would come through the Aiken County Veterans Affairs Office for vetting. That would include bringing in a DD214 which is a Report of Separation for military members. Of course, we would want to have a photograph of that veteran in uniform. They are looking to establish that through the Aiken County Veterans Council website as well as have a paper version of that in the Veterans Affairs Office. The opportunity would be that families of veterans, veterans, and private organizations would be able to honor those veterans who have served through the display that would be allowed.

He said they are also looking at setting up through the Aiken County Veterans Council website an email address so if there are any inquiries or concerns about anything. The other thing they would look at is limitations on the banners. Limitations on the banners would be based on what is available within the city. If we have more veterans banners to hang than we have locations, then we would establish the banners by lottery or rotate them through the two opportunities mentioned per year—Veterans Day and Memorial Day. That way there would be an opportunity to recognize those veterans for their service and what they have been able to do. Any funds raised in excess of the cost would be retained in the Aiken County Veterans Council Treasury. Presently for the Veterans Council almost all funds are pretty much expended other than what is needed for operating costs or specifically for veterans in need. He noted that is some of the things they would do with the money moving forward. Depending on what is decided for a number of years, any remaining funding could be used for any other issues that are veteran focused. He said that was the intent for what they were looking at.

They would want to look at for those veterans who have given the ultimate sacrifice, that were either killed in action or still missing in action, to have specific places of honor for them within the city itself. Then the rest of the banners would be hung through the city as available by what the city has to offer. He said with the permission on the banners, they would also want to look at doing an online archive where the banners would then be displayed on the website. They could develop links from the City and from the County sites so loved ones and family members would be able to continue to look at that and enjoy the banners that have been created for their veterans.

Councilman Dewar stated he was pleased to have been at a meeting last week where this was discussed. He pointed out that there would be different faces on each banner. It would not be the same person on both sides. There could be a father on one side and his son or daughter on the other side in the cases where both father, son and daughter have served. The banners would be used one year, and if there are more there would be different ones the next year. One banner may be up for a while and then may not be used for a while. They would be paid for by private funds and companies that might want to support veterans. It should be self-funded and a great way to recognize those who have served.

Mayor Osbon stated it is a great program. Mr. Bradham stated currently his office is servicing 14,348 veterans within Aiken County. Councilman Woltz asked how many banner hangers we have on posts. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated he did not know the number. He said we would have Public Safety staff who hang the banners to work with the Veterans Council on identifying the best location for the banners.

Councilman Dewar pointed out that if a big company wants to have a banner, they could put it on their property at their entrance. He felt it did not just have to be on city property. He noted that Chairman Bunker talked about being able to put about 12 on the inside the County Government building. They could be all over the city in addition to where the city would allow them to be placed.

Councilwoman Price pointed out that last year she represented Mayor Osbon at Mt. Anna Baptist Church at a worship service that was totally focused on veterans. The service was well attended. She said what was most impressive to her was following the service to go into the gym and see rows and rows of veterans who have served us and have given their life to our country. She said it was a fantastic experience. She said it was an opportunity for our young people to see the sacrifice and to see the ages of these young people and others as well who had given their lives. She said it was quite a personal experience for her to see that.

Mr. Bradham stated that is a by-product of having the opportunity for this. When you have the banners up, not only for the family members, but you will start having questions from the younger generation. Through that you will have the opportunity to hand down experiences. Then, of course hopefully, it will cultivate a sense of patriotism, citizenship, in those areas that we really need to continue to pass on to our next generation.

Councilman Dewar pointed out that today's USA Today mentions the fact that only 29% of our population of young men and women are eligible to serve in the military. The percentage who actually serve is 4% serving our country. They deserve the recognition.

Council thanked Chairman Koppert and Mr. Bradham for bringing the proposed program to Council. He said he would ask Mr. Bedenbaugh to reach out and try to make a formation of what this would look like in Aiken and bring forward what the program would be for Aiken.

MUNICIPAL INSURANCE POOL

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Aiken belongs to the Municipal Insurance Pool. The city received a surplus check of \$144,689 due to the overall favorable performance of the city employees. He said we were notified that the city can expect to receive a check in June, 2020 for \$144,458. The City of Aiken was one of the founding members of the Insurance Pool in the early 1980s. It has paid dividends a lot of years. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated he

would like to complement our Risk Manager, Lex Kirkland, and our supervisors and department heads. They take safety seriously.

Mayor Osbon asked again that the city hold our young employee who was injured today in our prayers and his family and the crews who were working with him. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated we do have an Employee Assistance Program and counselors will be available. He said the Solid Waste staff will be pulled off the road temporarily on Tuesday at lunch time to meet as a group. Counselors will be available for those who would like to speak individually to the counselors.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Osbon stated Council needs to go back into executive session as Council did not finish discussing the matters before the regular meeting of Council.

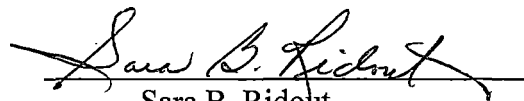
Councilman Woltz moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council go back into executive session to continue discussion of the items posted to be discussed. The motion was unanimously approved.

Council went into executive session at 7:45 p.m.

After discussion, Councilwoman Gregory moved, seconded by Councilman Dewar, that Council come out of executive session. The motion was unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Councilwoman Price moved that the meeting adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Woltz and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 9 P.M.


Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk