

Aiken City Council Minutes

February 8, 2002

Aiken's Horizons

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Clyburn, Cunning, 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, Stanley Quarles, Sara Ridout, Roger Dyar of ARCADIS, Bill Reynolds, Karen Daily of the Aiken Standard, and Josh Gelinas of the Augusta Chronicle.

The Aiken City Council met at Rye Patch on Whiskey Road for their annual Council retreat called Horizons 2002, 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 2001-2002. Mr. LeDuc discussed health insurance costs, future losses in revenue including vehicle taxes and telecommunications fees, and interfund loans. He also discussed funding for community concerns and stated these funds were being requested: Aiken Corporation Loan \$3,500,000, Airport Runway improvements \$450,000, Center for Performing Arts (Playhouse) \$1,500,000 and reconstruction of Railroad Station on Union Street \$700,000. Mr. LeDuc stated Council will have to decide if they will fund the projects and how. Mr. LeDuc also presented a list of other possible projects including: planning studies \$83,000, Whiskey Road \$250,000, Big Box Initiative \$85,000, and Right of Way Beautification \$380,000.

Mr. LeDuc also stated Council will be faced with possible increases in sewer and stormwater rate fees in the upcoming budget.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Coaches

Background Checks

Glenn Parker, Recreation Director, made a presentation to Council on proposed background checks for volunteer youth coaches. He felt with an increase in violence and crime on children in youth sports across the nation that screening coaches would help deter this in Aiken. He suggested using SLED or the National Association of Youth Sports (NAYS) to perform the checks for the city. He suggested increasing the registration fee \$3 per player to pay for the program.

Council supported using NAYS for performing background checks on coaches.

TRAFFIC PLANNING

Mr. Ed Evans, Planning Director, gave an overview of what has happened and what will happen in the future to improve traffic on the south side of Aiken. He pointed out the Whiskey Road Traffic Corridor Study (ARCADIS) and the Whiskey Road Corridor Study (LDR) had been completed. He said the city is presently working on interparcel connections from Aiken Mall to Aiken Exchange (Target), Wendy's to Staple's, Whiskey Road to Wal-Mart thru Arby's, Dougherty Road to Publix, Dougherty Road to Wal-Mart. He said the Planning Department is also working on improvements to Dougherty Road intersections at Whiskey and Silver Bluff, Whiskey Road-Silver Bluff Road Connector Study, Whiskey Road-Powderhouse Road Connections, changes to ARTS priorities, the Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan, and an on-call Traffic Engineer has been selected for traffic engineering services. He said Roger Dyar, of ARCADIS, will be working with the city on-call for traffic engineering services.

Mr. Dyar, of ARCADIS, then made a presentation to Council on the Goals and Objectives of the program and a discussion of the elements of the program and approach.

WATER

Mr. Larry Morris, Public Works Director, talked to Council about the city's water system, the present drought, the city's present water sources and future needs and wells and the city's water system boundaries.

Council discussed the proposed water agreement with New Ellenton which will be on the Council Agenda on February 11, 2002. There was concern about the agreement and New Ellenton serving the proposed hotel development on Whiskey Road, the need for New Ellenton to connect to Aiken's water system, and the definition of emergency connection.

MINUTES

The next item discussed was the taking of minutes at work sessions.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated since minutes must be taken at all public meetings, he suggested that Council hold all their meetings in the Council Chambers where there is more room and the meetings can be taped. It was suggested that work sessions become a part of the regular Council meeting with the work sessions being held at the end of the regular business on the agenda. It was suggested that perhaps Council will need to set their meeting time earlier than 7:30 P.M.

Council discussed at length where to hold work sessions, the time for Council meetings, and time for holding executive sessions. It was pointed out that work sessions were for Council's information so they would be informed on matters and not action matters. Matters requiring Council's action are placed on the agenda at a later date.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 P.M.


Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk