

Aiken City Council Minutes

WORK SESSION

November 11, 2013

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Dewar, Diggs, Ebner, Homoki, Merry and Price.

Others Present: Richard Pearce, Gary Smith, Stuart Bedenbaugh, George Grinton, Tim Coakley, Charles Barranco, Ed Evans, Tilden Hilderbrand, John Raiford, and Sara Ridout.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M. and stated the meeting was a work session to discuss George's Pond and Whiskey Road storm drainage and Silver Bluff Road Wells and water plant.

Silver Bluff Road Wells
Water Plant

Mr. Pearce stated John Raiford of Woolpert Engineering Group is present. He has worked very closely with George Grinton, Engineering and Utilities Department Director and with Pearce Atkins, Assistant City Engineer, on the Silver Bluff Road wells and water plant project.

Mr. Pearce stated about two weeks ago, we conducted a bid opening for the Silver Bluff Water Treatment Plant. The apparent low bidder was Harper Corporation of Greenville. They submitted the lowest responsible bid of \$3,625,000. This plant will be constructed on Silver Bluff Road. Due to its proximity to several residential areas, we are incorporating a treatment system using sodium hypochlorite to disinfect water as an alternative to systems that utilize chlorine gas. Engineering and Utilities Director George Grinton will discuss this important project and a timeline for its completion.

Mr. Grinton said the project is one that has been on the books for a while. It was put out for bid last year. Because of a protest there was a cancellation of that bid. With the transition of Larry Morris and the hiring of Pearce Atkins, we are now getting back on track to complete the project. The first thing we did was to get back with Woolpert to review the project and update it for bid. The bids were opened on October 29. The bid has been awarded for \$3,625,000. The protest time has lapsed, and the bid has been awarded to Harper Corporation of Greenville. He said they are in the process of scheduling a meeting to work out the schedule of plans for construction. We are anticipating a Notice to Proceed before the end of the year. The contract would require construction to be completed by June, 2015. Then there would be a three month commissioning of start-up testing after construction is completed. Woolpert Engineering would be helping with the project as Engineer of Record. They designed the plant and, along with Pearce Atkins, will be witnessing various construction completion activity so the plant can be processed in conjunction with our personnel with DHEC in a timely manner.

Mr. John Raiford, of Woolpert Engineering from Charlotte, stated Woolpert is an engineering firm out of Dayton, Ohio, and has offices in Columbia and Charlotte and up the eastern coast. He said they were asked to design the water plant a few years ago by Larry Morris and worked with him and others to develop the document for the bid, which was bid again last month. The impetus behind the plant is that pressure drops during the summer months in that part of the system and customers complain about low water pressure. He said the plant will address the low pressure issues. He said there are two wells—one on the plant site and one at Fire Station No. 4 that have been drilled already and developed. Those wells are very good producing wells waiting for pumps to be installed so the city can utilize the raw water source that has been developed. The plant

will have an ultimate capacity of 3MGD. Right now, with two wells, it offers 2 MGD. A future third well can be added to bring it to its maximum design capacity. One of the interesting features of the plant, a non-standard feature, is it uses on-site sodium hypochlorite generation. Instead of using conventional bleach which contains chlorine gas, which can be very dangerous, it generates the bleach on-site at a very low concentration using salt and electricity. You would not be paying someone to haul water around, as bleach is mostly water. You would just be paying someone to haul salt, which is much safer to haul, and you don't have to have as many deliveries. He said you take the salt and mix it with the water on-site with some electricity and you get a low stream bleach. The features of the plant are a 750,000 gallon ground storage tank. It also has three high service pumps which will distribute the water into the distribution system through a finished water main that has already been constructed and is in service now. A future project from the plant will be a raw water line which will connect the outside well to the plant site. That will be done under another contract and is not part of this project.

Mr. Grinton stated the connection had been designed for the raw water connection. With the Silver Bluff Road expansion, the lanes will be widened, so they will be contacting SCDOT the early part of December to review the drawings to make sure there have not been changes to the widening that would affect the utilities and make the final changes if needed to the design. Then we would be ready to go out for bid for the raw water line, and Woolpert will assist with the preparation.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked what the raw water line would do for the system. Mr. Raiford stated the raw water line would simply transport water from the well at the Fire Station to the plant, where it will receive treatment. Mr. Grinton stated it is part of the 2 MGD that will be added. It is one of the sources. There will be 1 MGD from each of the two wells.

Councilman Homoki asked how noisy the pumps will be. He asked if it is the same pump that extracts water that also pumps it up to the storage tank or if it was two separate systems. Mr. Raiford stated there will be two separate systems. There is a well pump and there will be pumps at the site which are high service pumps. The pumps are fairly quiet. They are electric motors so they don't make a loud noise.

Councilwoman Price asked if the \$3.6 million includes the total cost of the project. Mr. Raiford stated that was the contractor's bid price for the water plant. Mr. Grinton stated it includes everything that remains with two exceptions, with one being the raw water line that has to be installed between the pumps and the plant. The estimated cost for the raw water line is \$300,000. Then there is a contract with Woolpert where we will spend approximately \$160,000 for design, certification, and start up. He said he would estimate the total remaining cost from the \$3.6 million to be up to \$4.2 million. Mr. Pearce pointed out the cost was in the budget material submitted to Council.

Councilman Merry stated the proposed system for disinfecting the water using an on-site sodium hypochlorite system seems interesting. He asked what the difference in cost for that system may be versus the conventional chlorine based system. Mr. Raiford stated bleach would probably be the cheapest. Councilman Merry stated he felt the on-site sodium hypochlorite system would be something that is much more responsible ecologically and safer. Mr. Raiford stated he felt the upfront costs would be more, but over time there is lower cost for salt versus bleach, and then there is the electricity cost. He felt over time they will even out. Mr. Grinton stated he felt it was something that we definitely want to look at for other water treatment facilities. He said it is much safer in a populated area.

Councilman Ebner asked if we use gas or have liquid chlorine at any of our sites. Mr. Grinton stated we use gas at our main Shaws Creek plant. He said we are in the process of converting from 1 ton cylinders to 150 lbs. with smaller vessels. Because of the byproducts of the chlorine, we have changed our process which has resulted in us starting to meet those requirements. Hopefully that is some capital savings in treating the water. It also reduces the amount of chlorine that we use, so we don't have to replenish it as frequently and that allows us to go to a smaller cylinder, slightly more in cost, but much, much safer. It eliminates a risk management plan that we have to have. He said we are

in the process; we have just started to convert. He said we are going through the paper work that we have to do to certify with the state that we have changed from a 1 ton to a smaller cylinder. That change makes it safer and also allows us to eliminate some regulation compliance requirements.

Councilman Ebner pointed out that a risk management plan for a chlorine cylinder is rather expensive.

Councilman Merry asked how far this site is from the Fire Station and how many wells are at the station. Mr. Raiford stated one well is at the Fire Station and is about 2,300 feet from the station.

Mr. Pearce Atkins pointed out that the system can be up scaled and down scaled by adding cells to basically the same operating system.

Mr. Raiford stated the system has the capability designed into it to take shipments of liquid bleach. If the other system goes out, you can order bleach and it will work the same way.

Councilman Dewar asked when the \$3.6 million contract is done will it resolve the pressure problems in Woodside and Houndslake and will it produce 3 MGD. Mr. Raiford responded that it would resolve the pressure problems. He said the wells are very good producing wells, but by law you can only run wells for 16 hours per day. The firm capacity will be 2 million gallons for the two wells. It can go higher with a third well. He said 2 million is the firm capacity for the two wells over a 24 hour period. You can overlap the two wells and pump out a little more, but only during the overlap period.

In response to Councilman Dewar's question as to whether a third well is needed, Mr. Grinton responded not at this time. He said the need is not so much capacity as it is storage. He said we would benefit from having more storage. He said another 750,000 gallon tank located on the south side would be beneficial. He said in effect we pump out all our storage now between the hours of 5 a.m. and 9 a.m. in the summer, primarily because of irrigation. What happens when you pump out the storage, you are running directly from the wells, running all your boosters, etc. and that keeps the pressure up. If there is a power outage and the wells go out, you lose pressure quickly because sprinklers continue to run. Then we have to pick our pumps back up. He said we don't have the reserve. If you have storage, it would not come into play. He said above ground storage would be ideal.

Councilman Homoki asked if a third well is needed where that would be. Mr. Grinton stated it would be somewhere in that vicinity. He said there is the question as to how close do you put your raw water line so you don't have too much expense. He said they had worked with USGF to understand a little more about well characterization. He said you used to think that you do cones around the wells and you would have an overlap of influence if you were too close. However, they have shown us that the wells are more like plumes. They are almost like an underground water source, a little river. It has worked out that we have wells very close to each other, and they have proven not to be interfering with each other because of the directional lines. He said we would look at where our wells are and look for an appropriate space for an additional well so they would not interfere. A third well would not be too far away, probably 2,300 feet, but not closer than 1,000 feet.

Councilman Homoki stated this work is supposed to take care of the pressure problems in Houndslake, Gem Lakes, and Woodside. He asked if we were talking about another well being dug on Town Creek Road. He asked if that was in consideration.

Mr. Grinton stated the only thing he remembers about Town Creek is the possible expansion of storage.

Councilman Ebner stated he would go back in history. At one time we looked at putting a tank at Town Creek and putting a well there. His understanding is that you have to be

about a half mile apart with the wells. We looked at putting a tank at Town Creek, but there was not enough room to put another tank and have the purification. That is why the tank moved down as the wells had to go out there anyway. There is one at Town Creek, one at Executive Center, and another one about another half mile away. There are about 3 or 4 in that area.

Mr. Pearce pointed out we had Jim Heffner, who retired from SRS, and his Senior Tax Write Off project was to help us identify water sources. We met several times on that. He sees the opportunities more east for future wells, so it would be the southeastern quadrant of the city. We had a developer at Powderhouse Landing that was offering land for an additional well site for the city. He said that would probably be the next area with the construction going on out there.

Councilman Merry asked if we require a performance bond on contracts such as this. Mr. Pearce responded there was a bid bond and performance bond as well. Councilman Merry stated it sounds as if the estimate for the subsequent work and this contract totals the \$4.2 million budgeted. He asked how we deal with overruns, change orders, unexpected surprises, etc.

Mr. Grinton stated if there are significant surprises, they are required to absorb 10%, but beyond that they would be due some compensation. He said hopefully there would be no surprises. Mr. Pearce stated if there were overruns, change orders, etc. that would have to come back to Council as it would be unbudgeted.

Councilman Merry stated he sees change orders customarily in what he has done, and he would expect that the city would see it.

Mr. Grinton stated there are some contractors who seem to be very good at bidding low and then come back with change orders. He said we would hold them to the specifications. He said he felt we have defined everything that needs to be done, and hopefully there will not be any big surprises.

Mr. Pearce pointed out that the rebid on this project gave us the opportunity to tighten down on some things. Mr. Grinton stated he felt the only area of any concern would be the tank pilings, etc. because that is a little bit of geology that we are not familiar with. Mr. Atkins and Mr. Raiford pointed out the whole project is a lump sum totally bid project. Mr. Grinton stated one of the values of retaining Woolpert for assistance would be if there are changes we would consult with Woolpert.

Councilman Dewar stated assuming construction begins in December, at what point would the pressure problems in Houndslake, Gem Lakes, and Woodside be resolved. He asked if it would take the entire contract period.

Mr. Grinton stated it would take the contract time. He said you construct, and then you have to go thru a certification process with DHEC to allow us to turn the water on. Until DHEC gives us a permit to use the water there will be no change in the water pressure. Councilman Dewar asked if there were any costs associated with the certification process in the contract.

Mr. Pearce stated it is part of the \$4.2 million that Council budgeted, but it is not part of the contract that was bid. It is not in the \$3.6 million bid for this project. The additional line to connect to the plant is in the vicinity of \$300,000 with another \$160,000 for Woolpert to help us with the certification process. That should get us up and running by the fall of 2015.

Councilman Homoki asked how the city would pay for the project since it is a lump sum contract. He asked if it would be paid in a lump sum or if there would be progress payments for milestones.

Mr. Raiford stated the contractor would be required to give a schedule of values. They would break down their work into different schedules. Then the city will make progress

payments based on the percentage completed of those scheduled values. A retainage of 10% will be held until they are 50% through the contract, and they will have a performance bond.

Councilman Ebner asked if Mr. Raiford was serving as the Engineer of Record for all the drawings for DHEC and also certify the plans. Mr. Raiford responded they would. Councilman Ebner asked if Woolpert would do that inclusive in the \$160,000. Mr. Raiford stated Woolpert's contract provides assistance to the city in construction and administration services. He said they would not have a full time representative on site. They will be inspecting the work enough to certify the job.

Mr. Grinton stated that Pearce Atkins would be working hand in hand, as he will be here, and he can provide the eyes. Councilman Ebner stated his interest was that we already have included in the cost that he is going to stamp all the drawings, sign off on everything. He said, of course, the city is the ultimate owner.

Councilman Ebner asked if the pumps were included in the \$300,000 raw water line. Mr. Raiford responded that the pumps are bid in the currently bid project of \$3.6 million. Councilman Ebner stated the current contractor will put the pumps in, hook them up and run the power, etc. He said the pumps are covered then. Councilman Ebner stated it is odd that we have a \$3.6 million contract, and are not planning on any extras. The project is running 18 to 24 months in a schedule. He said that is almost a hazard to your health.

Mr. Atkins responded that we would be coming off well water. We are not coming off river water so you don't have the variables for treatment that you would have in some water plants. The building will be conventional, low commercial type, and the treatment systems are basically mundane. Again, there is room, but it is fairly simple construction.

Mr. Grinton stated from a pure philosophical perspective if he were at a bid point, he would be down to a much lower contingency percentage. He said these are the prices where we are, so we are trying to maintain the budget as it was originally entered and would work very hard to maintain the budget that Council gave them.

Councilman Ebner stated from a commercial side, he would not go into it with zero contingency. He felt that would be hazardous to his job. He asked about the city cost for the roadway, the gates, fences, etc. He asked if that was in the contract. He asked about the detention pond. He said it had been moved around a couple of times. We have been through at least two concept plan changes. He asked if the contractor will tie into the raw water line that comes down the hill, etc. He asked if the wells had been certified.

Mr. Raiford stated fencing for the plant and the roadway driveway to the plant is in the cost of construction. He said they plant the grass and put in sprinklers as well. Mr. Grinton stated the detention pond is part of the project. He said he understands the wells have been certified. Mr. Raiford stated the wells have been permitted, but not permitted to operate. They have been tested at 1 million gallons per day flow. They have been pumped for 24 hours at 1,000 gallons per minute. Councilman Ebner asked if the draw down had been checked. He pointed out when they were drilling one of the wells something dropped in it. He said the contractor lost the bit as he was drilling and not after the screen was in. Mr. Raiford stated they lost a bit, but he was able to retrieve the bit before the screen was in. Mr. Raiford stated both wells were tested and the test results have been submitted to DHEC. Record drawings have been produced for both wells. They are sealed now waiting for the pumps.

Councilman Ebner stated he could ask the cost questions later. He said we started at \$4.5 million. Last year the audit said we have \$4.3 million to spend. He said for \$190,000 we put in two wells and a water line. He said he would check that later. He said that gets us down to about \$200,000 left over.

Councilman Homoki asked where the raw water line would run and if it would run out to the road and parallel the road. He said if SCDOT decides to do something to Silver Bluff Road would that interfere with what we would be doing.

Mr. Pearce stated DOT has a utility easement alongside the road. What happens when they expand the road, they move the easement. He said the line will be in a dedicated utility easement right of way.

Councilman Ebner asked if we had given them our drawings. He said they have already been out there moving lines. He asked if we have our dedicated space from SCDOT yet. Mr. Grinton stated that is why we want to schedule a meeting with SCDOT to confirm that everything is where it should be, because now is the time to change it while it is on paper. He said we believe we have all the easements. If something has to move, we may have to look at that. He said those are the contingencies until they are pinned down. He said those are the things they are going to do right away because we have to meld that schedule of completion into the plant certification.

Councilman Ebner stated they are surveying the area, and there are some fiber optic guys out there over in the tree line already drilling and putting in the typical orange pipe. He felt that should not be delayed very long. He said the survey stakes are already out there.

Councilman Ebner stated he needed to ask his questions, but he had asked them all. He said he would get the cost information later.

WHISKEY ROAD

George's Pond Storm Drainage Detention

Mr. Pearce stated the other item scheduled for the work session was to talk about storm drainage along Whiskey Road.

Mr. Pearce stated Council approved the purchase of George's Pond in June, 2010. This acquisition was part of developing a sufficient regional storm water detention area for the portion of the Whiskey Road corridor near Lowe's, Cracker Barrel, and the Aiken Mall. He said we have been working on finishing the Whiskey Road project. There is a section from Pine Log down to near the Armory where we filled in the ditches, put in sidewalks, curb, storm drains and lighting. We want to continue that project. He said Tilden Hilderbrand is present. He and George Grinton have been working on stormwater issues. Tilden Hilderbrand has been working on a design for us that will enable George's Pond to work in tandem with other existing stormwater installations in order to serve our needs for a storm water detention facility. There have been submissions to SCDOT, and they have given us comments. The project has been going on for a few years, and Mr. Hilderbrand is present to tell us how we can finish the project.

Mr. Pearce stated a question that some members of Council had asked was why we don't just make George's Pond deeper. He said that is why Mr. Hilderbrand is present to talk about what they are proposing and why.

Councilman Homoki stated the real question is how come we paid top dollars for George's Pond and then find out it is inadequate.

Mr. Pearce stated he could not answer that question. He said he knows the comments we have gotten back from DOT, and we have been trying to deal with those. Mr. Hilderbrand has been talking with DOT and Mr. Grinton has been working on it.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated he had been talking with DOT for a long time. He said this was the first time he had met with Council about this project, so he was not familiar with how much Council knows about the history. He said he would review what he knows about the project and then get into a couple of details that are pertinent. Mr. Hilderbrand distributed some drawings for Council's information. He referred to the drawings. He pointed out the large handout gives the last section of the storm drain before the pipe empties into the pond that is behind the Cracker Barrel. He pointed out the contours in the upper right hand corner are the pond area behind Cracker Barrel. Just to the left of

that there are some pipes that are in place behind Cracker Barrel now. He pointed out just to the left of the insert there are two shaded pipes where this project would start and run up Whiskey Road on the east side to near the Verizon store. He pointed out that gives a feel as far as where we are geographically. He pointed out the next page shows the proposed grading of George's Pond. The heavy contours are the proposed finished grades. The outlet pipe system there is shown where you see the label Athol Avenue. That is the proposed outlet system. Just to the right of that is the existing Lowe's detention pond.

Mr. Hilderbrand asked that Council look at the smaller handout. The first sheet gives a list of the constraints for the design of the drainage system as he felt the order of importance. He said they were DOT's constraints and some physical constraints of potential equipment involved. Probably the most important constraint as far as he, the county, the city and DOT are concerned is that the discharge from the Lowe's detention pond not be changed or not be increased in the different storm events—the 2, 5, 10, 25 year storm events due to the fact of the problems that the city and county have had in the past at Powderhouse Road. He said in 1990 there were some problems and still some problems with the road crossing at Powderhouse, as there is no cross drain pipe under Powderhouse Road. When we have these different storm events the property at the southwest side of Powderhouse Road fills up, and water flows over Powderhouse Road. In 1990 the city and county hired a consultant with the University of South Carolina to come up with a proposed solution to that particular problem. At that time it was suggested and recommended that the city and county adopt a detention policy that only allows a two year undeveloped discharge from their detention ponds. He said he and Mr. Evans had talked about that. He said the city and the county adopted that to alleviate not only the Powderhouse Road problem, but also problems in other areas. The policy applies over the whole city. It applies in the county; however, the county modified their requirements in 2003 or 2004 so you could release a 10 year storm event. He said two years is exceptionally low, but it has helped with problems, but it also requires that detention ponds be extremely large in the City of Aiken.

Councilman Ebner stated the two year policy adds about a third. He pointed out that with the percentage for the hotels, it increased the detention pond, and they had to buy more land by 30% or 31% compared to the county.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated the State allows you to release a 25 year undeveloped rate.

Councilman Ebner asked if the calculations for George's Pond were based on the city requirements. Mr. Hilderbrand stated this was a little different. He said the Lowe's detention pond was designed in the county originally. Rather than recreating the detention calculations for that, he calculated the actual release rate from the pond as it is now. We are holding the release rate to those discharges. He said Larry Morris agreed with that, and SCDOT agrees with that. He said they had been dealing with the DOT Hydrology Department for a couple of years. He said that is the primary constraint.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated the other constraints are that George's Pond has to be built on the parcel that was sold to the city. Also, the proposed pipe system along Whiskey Road is to be sized for the 25 year storm event. DOT sizes all of their pipe systems for a 10 year storm until you get to 70 acres. This actually has a drainage basin of about 250 acres. All the pipes along Whiskey Road are sized for a 25 year storm event. A big requirement that has been critical throughout this process and that has caused a lot of heartache is the proposed pipe system is not allowed to flow under pressure. That means the water should flow through the pipe system below the top of the pipe internally. If head builds up in the storm structure so the pipe is under pressure, then you go to the next pipe size. DOT says there is no wiggle room around that. You have to go to their highest officials to get that waived, and they don't waive it. That has been the primary stumbling block that we have had throughout this process. He said that leads up to his discussion.

Councilman Merry stated he thought the pond behind Home Depot and Kroger had pressure discharge. Mr. Hilderbrand stated that pond is pumped. They have a lift station.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated a typical surface mounted lift station pump can't pump more than 20 feet vertically. He said that limits the depth of the pond. You can't just continue to dig deeper and deeper until you get a desired volume. Secondly, the maximum practical pump capacity is 2 cfs, which is 2 cubic feet per second, about 1,000 gallons a minute. He said that is a pretty good size pump. The pumps behind Kroger, Walmart, at Price Avenue, and the pump they are about to install at Owens-Corning are all 1 cfs pumps. That is a fairly large pump with a capacity of 480 gallons a minute. He said you are limited as to how much you can pump out.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated you are hurt by the fact that you can't pump out 2 cfs in a 250 acre drainage basin. You really need to be discharging about 20 cfs, so the pond does not fill up too much and empty out all at one time and overload the Lowe's pond.

Mr. Hilderbrand called attention to sheet 3 of the handout. He pointed out a red line and stated the red line is the discharge point of the pipes that empty into George's Pond now. If you follow the red line, that is the proposed rating of George's Pond. He pointed out the dashed line above the red line. He stated that is the bottom of George's Pond now. The proposal is to undercut George's Pond considerably so we get some storage in it—make it deeper. The red line is the proposed excavation, with 3 to 1 side slope.

Councilman Dewar stated when we purchased George's Pond the minutes reflected that we were going to build a retention pond. Mr. Hilderbrand stated that is correct and that has not been done yet. He said the pond would be pumped to a certain level and then the water would remain below that level. He said we have had that discussion briefly with John George, and he was satisfied with that. He said he thought Mr. George wanted the pond to retain water so it would be an amenity for future development.

Councilman Dewar stated that is what was talked about. He said they talked about making a walkway around the pond.

Councilman Ebner asked if you could do that. He pointed out you lose some volume having a pond there.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated you do lose some volume, but the walkway would have to be on the flatter area around the pond. Then a pool would be maintained at some elevation down in the pond. Councilman Ebner stated then you would still get your total pumping capacity and have a deeper pool. He said the amenity should not affect the operation capability.

Councilman Dewar asked if we would have to dig George's Pond down to the red line, and Mr. Hilderbrand stated that was correct.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated the 20 foot suction lift would still maintain an 8 foot pool or more in the pond. He said we would maximize detention and still retain below the elevation.

Councilman Homoki asked if Athol Avenue would be like a causeway, as it would be elevated and there would be excavation on both sides of the road.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated George's Pond now has a very small pipe that goes under Athol Avenue. The proposal would be to enlarge that pipe so we can get more water into the Lowe's pond. He said if Lowe's pond is acquired from the developer, it would allow the city to modify the outlet system so we can maintain the discharge. More importantly, it would allow a lower discharge with a larger pipe from George's Pond so we can utilize both of these ponds. He pointed out that the dash line to the right of the words "George's Pond dam" is the lowest elevation that we can get water out of George's Pond by gravity. In other words if we install a pipe there is only about 6 feet of freeboard that we can use to get water out naturally from George's Pond to get it into Lowe's pond without pumping. If we only pump it 2 cfs, George's Pond fills up very rapidly, and we don't have a lot of room to get water into the Lowe's pond, therefore, making George's Pond too small and overloading Lowe's pond so that the discharge rate is changed in it. He said that may be hard to follow, but acquiring Lowe's pond would allow us to get

more water out of George's Pond earlier in a storm event and it allows us to utilize more volume in the Lowe's pond and to modify their outlet so we can maintain the discharge rate that we are required to maintain.

Councilwoman Price asked if Lowe's owns the pond referred to as Lowe's pond. Mr. Pearce stated a real estate development group owns it, as Lowe's leases their building. He pointed out there is a new owner. Mr. Grinton stated he had not contacted the new owner yet. He was waiting to have the conversation with Mr. Hilderbrand to make sure that he had accurate drawings and the size of the area that we are looking for as we need to expand the pond.

Councilwoman Diggs asked if Mr. Hilderbrand was suggesting that we purchase the Lowe's pond. Mr. Pearce responded that it would take a dedication to make the pond a part of our stormwater system as we have done with other developers.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated the pond was previously owned by the Hull, Storey Group, and they recently sold it to some real estate group out of New York.

Councilwoman Diggs asked how long all this would take. Mr. Grinton stated the dedication could happen relatively soon, assuming the people were agreeable to the dedication. He said that would be a big challenge. He said one of the things we have to do is confirm with SCDOT that they concur that this will solve the issue. They have \$520,000 allocated, and the city has approximately \$700,000, making about \$2 million allocated for the project. There are pieces of the project that we can do. We can design it. It can probably modify the pond, but he was not sure we have enough money allocated to complete the whole Whiskey Road Improvement Project. We may be short by as much as \$1 million.

Councilman Ebner pointed out that CPST III also has some money for Whiskey Road improvements.

Mr. Grinton pointed out there are two Whiskey Road projects, one in CPST II and one in CPST III. They are both \$700,000. He said it depends on the definition of what you said CPST II and CPST III were for and whether they are for the same project or a continuation of the project.

Councilman Ebner stated he voted on CPST III and asked that question. He said that is for the Whiskey Road drainage and the pond work. He said it is not to be coming out of stormwater.

Mr. Pearce stated the pond would be in the stormwater system. Councilman Ebner stated the pond would be in the stormwater system, but the money comes from CPST II and CPST III and from the state. Mr. Pearce stated CPST II was much more specific with the wording for Whiskey Road improvements including drainage, curbing, sidewalks and landscaping. He said there would be \$700,000 in CPST II and \$700,000 in CPST III and \$520,000 in STIP. That is about \$2 million.

Councilman Dewar stated when we get through everything that Mr. Hilderbrand wants to do, which probably includes buying Lowe's pond and making George's Pond deeper, etc., what would the impact be on future development. He asked if we would be building to the point where we can only accommodate what we know is going to be built. He pointed out there are 100's of acres behind this area that could possibly be developed. He wondered if that could not be developed because of the detention/retention issues.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated that would be the advantage to the way that the stormwater detention ordinance is set up now. He said they have designed everything per the conditions as they are today. Your stormwater ordinance would reduce the rate of discharge from anything that was developed that would feed into the system. Actually the rate would be reduced into the system. He said it would not impede or hinder any future development in the basin. Mr. Hilderbrand stated all the calculations are based on the runoff rate that goes into the pipe system. He said they are designing the detention as

it is now—2, 5, 10, 25 year undeveloped rate. He said if someone develops in the basin, and they build a detention pond and release slower than it is released today, then theoretically this runoff volume into the pipe system would be less over time.

Councilman Dewar asked what the effect would be if we built the Powderhouse connector road, which is in future plans. Mr. Hilderbrand stated as with any road project these days, you would have a detention pond for it, and it would release into the pipe system at a slower rate than it releases now.

Mr. Pearce stated we have talked with the owners of both tracts of land, and they are very interested in working with the city. Obviously, they would want to develop the cotton fields into developments. As far as donation of right of way, donation of land for detention, and green infrastructure are all on the table.

Mr. Hilderbrand pointed out that the handout has a typical pipe with a hydraulic grade line in it—the red line. He said the point that he was trying to get across is that if we can't get the water out of George's Pond quickly enough, the water in George's Pond will actually back up into the pipe systems and the red line will go above the top of the pipe. He said that is the whole point of trying to acquire the Lowe's pond so we can use both ponds to keep the water level down in George's Pond in the different storm events to keep the water from backing up the pipe system.

Councilman Dewar asked what the impact would be if Lowe's does not want to sell the pond to the city. Mr. Pearce stated the pond would be dedicated, not purchased. Mr. Hilderbrand pointed out that generally speaking a developer is glad to get rid of a detention pond because of liability.

Councilman Dewar stated he understood in the case of Lowe's, that the previous time it was addressed that Lowe's did not want to dedicate the pond.

Mr. Pearce stated that was the previous owners, but it was felt the new owners may work with the city.

Councilman Ebner asked Mr. Grinton that when we go back to the state this time, will we be able to meet their requirements, are all the calculations done, are all the fall lines done. He pointed out the one they were given before was larger than what he is talking about now since we bought George's Pond. Mr. Hilderbrand stated he and Randall Mungo had had the discussion, and he is in agreement with what we have. Councilman Ebner stated then if he calls them up this time, they will say they have it and it is okay. Mr. Hilderbrand said they don't have it yet, but it will be resubmitted.

Mr. Grinton stated DOT had asked for some additional details which Mr. Hilderbrand is working on. Councilman Ebner stated one of them was the fall line, and having the right fall line for the whole area. Before it was 300 acres and now it is 250 acres. He asked if Mr. Hilderbrand feels confident about that. He said he would give Mr. Hilderbrand a copy of the ordinance and everything they did. He said it does not match what he is telling them.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated it was time for the regular Council meeting, and the work session needs to be closed.

REGULAR MEETING

November 11, 2013

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Dewar, Diggs, Ebner, Homoki, Merry, and Price.

Others Present: Richard Pearce, Gary Smith, Stuart Bedenbaugh, George Grinton, Kim Abney, Ed Evans, Tim Coakley, Charles Barranco, Kim Coleman, Alicia Davis, Sara Ridout, Maayan Schechter of the Aiken Standard, and about 30 citizens.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 7:06 P.M. Mayor Cavanaugh led in prayer, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Mayor Cavanaugh recognized the Veterans present at the meeting and thanked them for their service.

GUIDELINES

Mayor Cavanaugh reviewed the guidelines for speaking at the Council meeting. He asked that those who would like to speak raise their hand and be recognized and limit their comments to five minutes. He pointed out that citizens could only speak on the items on the agenda.

MINUTES

The minutes of the regular meeting of October 28, 2013, were considered for approval. Councilman Ebner moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve the October 28, 2013, minutes as submitted.

Councilman Ebner pointed out that at the last meeting there was a resolution to purchase 602 Kershaw Street. He said the price for purchase is now different from what was discussed at the last meeting. He asked if the resolution needed to be redone since the price is different from what Council voted on.

Mr. Pearce stated the resolution was conditioned on the appraisal of the property. The property appraised at \$16,900. He said that would not affect the minutes. He said the owners had accepted the appraised price of \$16,900. He said the resolution did not need to be changed since the purchase was conditioned on the appraisal of the property. He said staff wanted Council to be aware that the property appraised for less than \$22,500. He said the price is more in favor of the City at this point and helps a lot as far as the proposed demolition and construction of new housing on the property.

Mr. Pearce stated at the ARTS meeting last week several people who were concerned about the project were in attendance. He said he told them that upon approval of the minutes at this meeting that we would generate a letter to ARTS regarding the motion that was passed by Council directing SCDOT to have 45 mile per hour speed limit on the Hitchcock Parkway, but also pursuant to Councilwoman Price's motion that the concern of those citizens be shared with ARTS as well. That document has been prepared for Council's signature to forward to ARTS with the approval of the minutes.

Mayor Cavanaugh called for a vote on the motion to approve the minutes of October 28, 2013. The motion was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATIONS

Oktoberfest

Young Professionals

Aiken Downtown Development Association

University of S.C. Aiken

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council would like to recognize the Oktoberfest event volunteers.

Mr. Pearce stated he and Emory Langston had worked with representatives of USCAiken, Aiken Young Professionals, and Aiken Downtown Development Association on the Oktoberfest event. They all worked very hard on October 12th's inaugural Oktoberfest event. This event was also supported by the City of Aiken. We all expected a few hundred attendees, but over 3,000 attended this fun-filled event. Adjacent restaurants were jammed as well. In the process, this group raised over \$4,500.00 for the Aiken Downtown Development Association events budget.

This group, by working together, has met several objectives of our Council-approved Strategic Plan Update: *Aiken's Tomorrow*. Under the Strategic Plan, which Council adopted in 2010, we were looking for opportunities to work with our academic communities and with non-profits to promote our downtown area for a festival site and other events. He said they had a wonderful time meeting, and he was so compelled by the energy of the group that he volunteered to cook Milwaukee made bratwurst for the event. He said they had expected about 500 people, but the group did such a great job that 3,000 people showed up. He said staff and people who attended the event were talking about what a great inaugural event. He said the hope was that the event would break even and bring people downtown. The event raised \$4,500 for Aiken Downtown Development Association. He said it appears that the Oktoberfest will be back at the Newberry Street Festival Center.

Mr. Pearce asked that representatives of the groups come to the front of the room. He introduced Sarah Kinney of the Young Professionals who did the posters for the event. Also present are Avery Spears-Mahoney, new Director of ADDA, Angel Miano of USCAiken, Derrick McLane, of the Young Professionals, Emory Langston, City of Aiken Special Projects Coordinator, and Dr. Sandra Jordan, Chancellor of USCAiken. He pointed out that Deidre Martin and Ahmed Samaha of USCAiken also worked on the event. He said that Derrick McLane came before Council at the beginning of the year and talked about things that Council could support that would be of interest to Young Professionals and have them feel more invested in our downtown.

Mayor Cavanaugh read the resolution which was prepared to recognize the work and efforts of USCAiken, ADDA, and Young Professionals. He presented a resolution to a representative of each group. Council thanked the groups for their work and efforts in organizing the Oktoberfest event.

Ms. Spears-Mahoney stated they would also like to thank the City of Aiken for their partnership as well as URS who was a sponsor, Aiken Standard, Sun Printing, and Beasley Broadcast. She said without the entire group and partnership they would not have been able to do the event.

Special Presentation

Ms. Carla Cloud was not present for the special presentation.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Appointments

David Fauth

Environmental and Energy Committee

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider appointments to the various boards, commissions, and committees.

Mr. Pearce stated Council has 13 pending appointments to fill vacancies on different City boards, commissions, and committees. One appointment is presented for Council's consideration and vote.

Mayor Cavanaugh has recommended that David Fauth be appointed to the Environmental and Energy Committee to fill the vacant position left by Mark Hudgins. If appointed the term would expire December 31, 2014.

For City Council consideration is the appointment of Mr. Fauth to the Environmental and Energy Committee with the term to expire December 31, 2014.

Councilman Dewar moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve the appointment of David Fauth to the Environmental and Energy Committee with the term to expire December 31, 2014. The motion was unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Price stated she would like to recommend the reappointment Leroy Myrick to the Community Development Committee.

Councilman Merry stated he would like to recommend reappointment of James R. Findley to the Building Code Appeals Committee and Butch Roberson to the General Aviation Commission.

Councilwoman Diggs recommended the reappointment of Carmen Roa to the Community Development Committee.

Councilman Dewar reminded Council of the three openings on the Park Commission. He pointed out the Park Commission is having difficulty getting a quorum to hold a meeting.

BRIDGES— ORDINANCE 11112013

Wooden Bridges

Railroad Cut

Union Street SE

Fairfield Street SE

York Street SE

Historic Landmark

Aiken Historic Register

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for the second reading and public hearing on an ordinance to designate the wooden bridges over the railroad cut at Union, Fairfield, and York Streets as Historic Landmarks on the City of Aiken's Historic Register.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE WOODEN BRIDGES OVER THE RAILROAD CUT AT UNION STREET SE, FAIRFIELD STREET SE, AND YORK STREET SE AS HISTORIC LANDMARKS ON THE CITY OF AIKEN HISTORIC REGISTER.

Mr. Pearce stated the Design Review Board, upon petition filed with it by Ben Lott, voted unanimously at their September 3, 2013, meeting to designate the wooden bridges over the railroad cut at Union Street SE, Fairfield Street SE, and York Street SE as Historic Landmarks. Their recommendation was then sent to the Planning Commission for

review and a recommendation to City Council. The Planning Commission met, conducted a public hearing and voted unanimously to recommend designating the wooden bridges over the railroad cut at Union Street SE, Fairfield Street SE, and York Street SE to the City of Aiken Historic Register as Historic Landmarks.

City Council unanimously approved the ordinance on first reading at the October 28, 2013, meeting. For Council consideration on second reading and public hearing is an ordinance to designate the wooden bridges over the railroad cut at Union Street SE, Fairfield Street SE and York Street SE as Historic Landmarks on the City of Aiken Historic Register.

The public hearing was held.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve on second and final reading an ordinance to designate the wooden bridges over the railroad cut at Union, Fairfield, and York Streets as Historic Landmarks on the City of Aiken Historic Register. The motion was unanimously approved.

ZONING ORDINANCE – ORDINANCE 11112013A

Amendment

Historic Overlay

Old Aiken Overlay

Bridges

Approaches to Bridges

Certificate of Appropriateness

Street Right of Way

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing on an ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance in the Historic Overlay and the Old Aiken Overlay adding bridges and their approaches to structures requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness in a street right of way.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING BRIDGES IN THE HISTORIC OVERLAY AND THE OLD AIKEN OVERLAY.

Mr. Pearce stated at the October 15, 2013, meeting, the Planning Commission unanimously voted to designate the wooden bridges over the railroad cut at Union Street SE, Fairfield Street SE, and York Street SE as Historic Landmarks on the City of Aiken's Historic Register.

However, the designation of the bridges and their approaches alone is not sufficient to place them under the jurisdiction of our Design Review Board. Under our Zoning Ordinance Certificates of Appropriateness for streets within our Historic District for alteration, construction, demolition, or relocation of buildings, walls, fences, gates, and stone curbs are the only items that DRB may consider. The Planning Commission recommends amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to add bridges and their approaches to the list of structures requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness and DRB review.

Because the approaches to the bridges on Union Street SE, Fairfield Street SE, and York Street SE are in the Historic Overlay District on the south side and in the Old Aiken Overlay on the north side, amendments are required in two sections of the Zoning Ordinance.

At the October 28, 2013, meeting, City Council unanimously approved this ordinance on first reading. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance in the Historic Overlay and the Old Aiken Overlay adding bridges and their related approaches to structures requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness in a street right of way.

The public hearing was held.

Councilman Merry moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve on second and final reading an ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance regarding adding bridges and their approaches to the list of structures requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Pearce stated staff had been in touch with representatives of the railroad, and they are not interested in a public hearing on the topic. He said he planned to be in Columbia next week to meet with their PR representative. He said there were some excellent points made from the people in the area that the Laurens Street bridge should be the template for the height of bridges up the railroad line. He said he and Councilman Merry plan to meet with the railroad representative. He pointed out Councilman Merry is a past chair of the DRB. He said with Council's permission they would meet with the representative and confirm with them the case that the height of the Laurens Street bridge is the bridge height for the other bridges. He said a report would be given to Council after the meeting.

AUDIT – ORDINANCE

Elliott Davis
FY 2012-13

Mayor Cavanaugh stated an ordinance had been prepared for Council's consideration of the audit adjusting the FY 2012-13 budget to show actual revenues and expenditures.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING THE FISCAL YEAR 2012-2013 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUTHORIZING VARIANCES TO THE FISCAL YEAR 2012-2013 BUDGET ORDINANCE.

Mr. Pearce stated our auditor, Elliott Davis, LLC has prepared the FY 2012-13 financial audit, required by state law and our city code, of our city finances. In this audit the line items from our FY 2012-13 budget are adjusted in the audit report to show actual revenues received as well as actual expenditures made. He said staff came to Council in August and Council appropriated unspent funds from the budget year. The auditor has presented the full audit report to Council. He said typically an ordinance is passed by Council to approve the audit adjusting the figures since the budget is approved by the ordinance process.

Elliott Davis Shareholder Tim Grow was with us at our October 28, 2013, meeting and reviewed the audit with Council. As you know he reported that the audit showed no material weaknesses [what has been referred to as a "clean report"] and no instances of noncompliance material to our financial statements.

For City Council consideration is first reading of an ordinance to accept our FY 2012-13 audited financial statements.

Councilman Ebner stated there were a couple of items he would like to discuss again. He asked if the rules could be suspended so they could discuss the items.

Mr. Pearce asked if the question was about the Crosland Park loan and the interest on the loan as well as the status of the loan to the General Fund on the Silver Bluff Water Plant and the \$328,000 loan to the Aiken Corporation. He said he could address those loans if Council wanted him to.

Councilman Ebner stated he would like to discuss the loans. He asked if the rules needed to be suspended or could they be discussed before a motion.

Mr. Smith stated Council could suspend the rules if Council desires to do so. Otherwise, Council would need to make a motion to approve the ordinance and then have discussion.

Councilman Ebner stated the motion he wants to make is to continue the ordinance until February until Council gets the data at Horizons. He said he wanted to be sure we were okay with that.

Councilman Ebner moved that Council continue consideration of the ordinance approving the audit until Council receives the information in February at Horizons meeting on the \$1.5 million loan and payment for the \$4.5 million loan for the water tank on Silver Bluff Road. He said that is a lot of money. He stated Mr. Pearce has done a lot of research on the loans. He felt Council needs the details on the loans. He felt the citizens would be interested in the loan on the water tank if we have to raise the water rates to pay for the loan. Up until now we have not been accumulating money for that, which is normal business. He said his motion is to continue the ordinance until Council gets information on the loans. Mayor Cavanaugh seconded the motion.

Councilman Dewar asked for clarification. He pointed out Councilman Ebner talked about continuing the ordinance until Horizons. Councilman Ebner stated he wanted the ordinance continued until Horizons or until Council gets the information. He pointed out that Mr. Pearce had said several times that he would give that information to Council at Horizons. He said if Council gets the information before Horizons, the ordinance could be considered whenever Council gets the information.

Councilman Ebner restated his motion. He moved that Council continue first reading of the ordinance approving the audit until Council receives information on the status of the \$1.5 million loan pay off which is due in April, 2014, and also the payout for the \$4.5 million Silver Bluff Water Plant loan. Mayor Cavanaugh seconded the motion.

Councilman Dewar stated he still has a few questions about the audit, even though the ordinance is to be continued. He asked if it was appropriate.

Mr. Pearce asked that Councilman Dewar send the questions to him, and he would answer them. Councilman Dewar stated he had sent the questions to Mr. Pearce, and he had questions on the answers.

Councilman Dewar stated he would hold his questions until it comes back to Council. He asked if there was a requirement to submit an approved audit to the State Treasurer's Office by the end of the year.

Mr. Pearce stated the payout numbers were given to Council. He said there is a time for submittal of the audit to the State. Mr. Pearce stated staff had provided the information, and it was in several documents. He said perhaps they could talk about it on Wednesday after another meeting.

Councilman Ebner stated Council and the city have actually defaulted on the \$1.5 million loan, as it is supposed to be paid back every year. He said nothing was put in the budget to cover when it is due in April, 2014. He said he would like to see how we are going to handle our money. He said Mr. Pearce had given him a lot of data on the loan, but nothing says what we will do in April, 2014.

Mr. Pearce stated the current balance is \$1,459,700. He said interest payments have been made on the loan. He pointed out that Council had approved the sale of one house in Crosland Park which will close on December 5, 2013, and there is an ordinance to sell an additional house. He said he would be happy to go through the figures with Councilman Ebner.

Councilman Ebner stated he would rather go through it with Council.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked that Council move on the matter. He called for a vote on the motion to continue first reading of the ordinance until Council receives information on the status of the \$1.5 million loan pay off and the \$4.5 million loan for the Silver Bluff Water Plant. The motion was unanimously approved.

CROSLAND PARK – ORDINANCE

1220 Alfred Street NE
Renita Prince

Mayor Cavanaugh stated an ordinance had been prepared for Council's consideration to sell a house in Crosland Park.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF AIKEN TO CONVEY CERTAIN
REAL PROPERTY IN THE CROSLAND PARK SUBDIVISION AT 1220 ALFRED
STREET NE TO RENITA PRINCE.

Mr. Pearce stated Renita Prince has made a cash offer to purchase 1220 Alfred Street in Crosland Park for \$73,000. We asked for several conditions as part of the agreement to purchase the property:

- The property must be owner-occupied;
- The property will be sold "as-is;"
- Earnest money must be paid in the amount of \$500;
- The buyer will pay for an appraisal of the property;
- The seller will pay normal seller closing costs;
- Aiken City Council must approve the sale.

Ms. Prince has agreed to these stipulations. Staff and I have reviewed this proposed purchase and recommend Council approval.

For Council approval is first reading of an ordinance to sell 1220 Alfred Street to Renita Prince for \$73,000 upon the terms and conditions set forth in the Purchase and Sale Agreement.

Councilman Dewar asked about the condition that the property must be owner-occupied. He asked if that was forever. He asked if there was a timeframe associated with it being owner-occupied.

Mr. Pearce stated that was a condition for the sale of the house. He said there is no timeframe in the ordinance. It is that the property is not to be used for rental property. The condition is that the property be owner-occupied and not sold as rental property.

Councilman Ebner stated that was very important because we are in the price range for the houses for someone to buy the houses and rent them. The note is only about \$400 per month and the houses rent for about \$600 to \$650.

Councilman Ebner asked if the money from the sale of the houses will be used to pay off the \$1.5 million loan. He wondered how we have designated the funds from the sale of the houses.

Mr. Pearce responded that we have not designated the funds. Last summer we discussed that any proceeds from the sale of the houses would be used for further work in Crosland Park. He said we could have that discussion at second reading if that is a concern of Council.

Councilman Ebner suggested that be done at the second reading.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Ebner, that Council pass on first reading an ordinance to sell 1220 Alfred Street NE to Renita Prince for \$73,000 upon the terms and conditions set forth in the Purchase and Sale Agreement and that second reading and public hearing be set for the next regular meeting of Council. The motion was unanimously approved.

INFORMATIONAiken Downtown Development Association

Mr. Pearce stated Council had met Avery Spears-Mahoney, the new Executive Director of the Aiken Downtown Development Association. She will begin work on Monday, November 18, 2013. Ms. Cloud has continued to work at ADDA. Her new job is at ACTS, but she helps in the afternoon at ADDA. In the future we will have Avery come to Council and talk about her plans and visions for ADDA as we move forward.

Hitchcock Parkway
SCDOT

Mr. Pearce stated that on December 5, 2013, from 5 to 7 p.m. SCDOT will hold a public information meeting at St. Paul Lutheran Church on the revised concept plan for the widening of Hitchcock Parkway which takes into account the comments received by SCDOT to date.

Dougherty Road
University Parkway

Mr. Pearce stated we are proceeding with concepts for University Parkway and for Dougherty Road. Dougherty Road will proceed as a maintenance project with SCDOT. We are getting permits from DOT. The project is to add an additional right turn lane onto Whiskey Road.

On University Parkway there is a concept plan that we are sharing with USCAiken and with Aiken Regional Medical Centers as the two main property owners along the road. We will provide a report to Council once they have had their review of the proposal.

All-America City

Mr. Pearce stated he had received a postcard from All-America Cities. He said Aiken was chosen an All-America City in 1997. Staff with All-America Cities has shared with us that it is a ten year award. The new award is particularly focused on a wellness city. They need a letter of intent from the city by November 15, 2013. The competition would be to show how our community cooperates with the business sector, non-profits, and volunteers to promote wellness in Aiken. He said unless there is some particular concern by Council, he was going to send a letter of intent this week. That would obligate the city to a \$200 entry fee. The actual competition would be in March, 2014. He said he would have more information by either November 25 or the December 9, 2013, Council meeting.

He said the format is similar to what was done in 1997. However, the technology has increased tremendously since 1997. He said staff has already participated in a couple of conference calls. He said they are encouraged that the city's wellness program would more than qualify to be part of the competition. He said we would have to identify a budget and stakeholders. At this stage we would just send a letter of intent.

Hitchcock Parkway

Councilman Dewar questioned with regard to the public information meeting on Hitchcock Parkway, whether DOT would come back to Council after the public meeting.

Mr. Pearce responded they do. Any time DOT performs a construction project within the city limits his understanding, from DOT and our legal staff, is that they must obtain a Municipal Agreement as we did with the Laurens Street bridge.

Councilman Dewar stated he knew they have to come for approval of the Municipal Agreement. However, he felt that was years off as he understands it. He said his question is that when they have the public information meeting and present to the public

their latest version of what is going to happen on the Hitchcock Parkway and then take public comments for a 30 or 60 day period, will DOT come back to the city and tell the city what their plans are based on the public input.

Mr. Pearce stated his understanding is that all we have to do is request them to come down and they will.

Councilman Dewar stated he felt we should request them to come after the public comment time, as he was not sure the public meeting will answer the questions that the community has with regards to the project. He wondered how quickly they could come. He said there is a time sensitivity. Representatives from DOT had said it would take them 12 to 18 months to design the project. He said he would not look for them to come in December, but he would look for them to come back to the community and let the community have a discussion and dialogue with DOT about what they saw at the public information meeting on December 5, 2013.

Mr. Pearce stated he understood DOT will have a modified concept plan at the December 5, 2013, meeting. The comments would be that night. DOT would go through the comments. DOT typically then would go ahead and begin their design work. He said he understood Councilman Dewar sees that as a critical juncture. He said, however, they have also said they would be happy to come and talk about the project any time if requested to do so. After the December 5 meeting and after they compile the information, we could invite them to come back.

Councilman Dewar stated he would like to see DOT come back. He said he still does not know what they are going to do.

Councilman Homoki stated one of the questions he has that he had asked, but did not get an answer, is that the city had given somebody marching orders at some time along the way. He said he did not know when. He asked what is the record of City Council's marching orders to ARTS or to SCDOT. He said apparently there was a letter sometime in the past that outlined what Council agreed to for Hitchcock Parkway. He said right now you say that City Council has to give approval by a Municipal Agreement for everything that happens within the boundary of the city. He asked what City Council is on record for as far as Hitchcock Parkway improvements.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the project goes back to 2007 or 2008.

Mr. Pearce stated 2007 was the State Infrastructure Bank request. Councilman Homoki asked if staff could find a letter from Council regarding the project.

Mr. Pearce stated Councilman Homoki is questioning the methodology being used as to whether it is a capacity project or safety and improvements project. He said there are two different methodologies.

Councilman Homoki stated his question is what was the city's stance. He said in the past City Council had to give some kind of input at the beginning of the project as to whether it was capacity, level of service, four lane, five lane, keep everything with the acceleration lanes. He asked if there was a piece of correspondence that is hanging over the whole operation.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the answer is yes. He said it should be in the files. He said he thought the reason was safety and capacity. Councilman Homoki asked if that correspondence could be found, as he felt that would be a help to Council.

Councilman Ebner stated he felt one of the things Councilman Homoki is looking for is that Mr. Gilbert presented that information at one of the meetings. It goes back to the original letter from the mid or late 1990's. He said that is when the original concept plan was done. Then it was updated in 2007 and 2011. He said he felt what Councilman Homoki is looking for is the original concept and that goes back about 15 years. Councilman Ebner stated he would send Mr. Pearce what he has on that, as he has

information from the County. He said the history starts with Mr. Penland back when he dedicated the right of way in the 1970's for the bypass.

Councilman Ebner stated that Mr. Pearce needs to give Council the loan agreement from the State Infrastructure Bank. He said Council approved the loan in the last 6 to 8 months, and that agreement has some specific words such as who is in charge and who spends the money. He asked that the loan agreement be included with information to Council. He said the agreement has specific wording as to who is in charge of the phase, who designs and builds and operates it.

Mr. Pearce stated it is being referred to as a loan, but it is actually a grant and does not have to be repaid.

Mr. Bob White stated he wanted to make a comment because of what he had just heard. He said he lives in the horse district at 435 Orangeburg Street. He said he attended the ARTS session on November 7, 2013. He said he took copious notes. He said he wanted to read a couple of comments he heard at that meeting. He said a specific question was asked to SCDOT Project Manager, Kevin Gantt, about the public information meeting to be held on December 5, 2013. The question was what was the relevance of the consumer input. Mr. White stated he understood Mr. Gantt to say that they don't listen any more to those comments. Mr. Gantt said the issue before him was the current classification for the Hitchcock Parkway. Mr. Gantt's comment was that they do not take comments unless they are within the structure. If you have other comments to make and want to change the classification of the project, until the classification is changed, his section at DOT takes no action. They continue on the course that they are on currently. Mr. Gantt said he has a charge and they are working on it. They are not changing it. Public hearings are held, but they don't influence them because the purpose is still the same. The purpose was capacity.

Mr. White stated he asked the Acting Chairman Lark Jones if we want to change the direction and have some input before the ARTS group how do we do that. Mr. Jones said he had been on the ARTS commission for 18 years. There is a protocol to follow. The municipality that requests a project is the only group that the ARTS group will listen to for making a change. The protocol is that if you submit something and ask for a project to get underway, ARTS will not modify that unless they hear from the people that originated it. Mr. White said then if we want to make some change in the classification for what is currently going on Hitchcock Parkway that you would ask the City Council of Aiken to submit something. He said Mr. Jones said that is what he was saying. Mr. White said Mr. Pearce was there. He said he wanted to make sure he understood what went on. He said they had heard from the transportation guy that they would not do anything unless Council makes a change. They heard from the guy who was running the ARTS meeting that night—the only way they would make a change was if they heard from City Council. Mr. White said his question then was to Mr. Pearce—the letter you are preparing that City Council is going to send to the ARTS Committee will address the issue of classification in addition to speed limit and dissatisfaction. Mr. White said what he heard tonight was the purpose of the letter was just to say we want you to listen to the people who complain. He said if what he just told Council is correct, then nobody is listening. He said the letter from Council is going back saying that Council has taken care of the speed limit, but they are concerned about citizen input. He said Mr. Gantt said they don't listen. Mr. White said he was concerned and felt it could not be that confusing, but had to be very straightforward. He said he leaves that with Council to unravel. He said apparently the letter from Council has nothing to do with classification of the project.

Mr. Pearce stated the letter that Council signed tonight was confirming the 6-1 vote to have SCDOT prepare a concept plan that has a 45 mph speed limit for the entire length of the Hitchcock Parkway. Then, as part of the motion, it alerts the concern of several citizens who attended the Council meeting and spoke. He said we have the minutes to send along with the letter, so people's specific comments will be in ARTS possession. The December 5, 2013, public information session is on a concept plan. That concept plan is supposed to incorporate comments that DOT has heard to date. What Mr. Gantt

also said at the meeting last week is that he would be providing the City of Aiken with all comments that are received at the December 5, 2013, meeting. If Council wants to review the methodology that is used for the project design and how the money would be spent, there is nothing to prevent Council from doing that at any time.

Councilman Dewar stated Mr. White was correct in what he says about DOT. They are marching to the capacity direction and not to the corridor improvements.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated what Mr. Gantt said was correct. He is looking at what the city said from way back. They don't get off track for that until it is changed. ARTS cannot change it on its own. It has to come from the city because that is what we wanted initially.

Mr. White said he thought the purpose of the letter was to at least address the issue of change.

Mr. Pearce stated that was not what Council voted on.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the letter was just conveying the information that took place at the Council meeting on October 28, 2013.

Mr. White said he was not present when Council passed the motion for the letter. He said he thought the motion for the letter came from what was said in the audience at the Council meeting that night and that a letter should be sent. He said he did not think the letter was to talk about miles per hour. It was to talk about classification.

Councilwoman Price said the letter was for two things. It was to talk about the change in the miles per hour in addition to sharing that there were citizens' concerns expressed regarding expansion of the highway from a two lane to a four lane.

Mr. Pearce stated he wanted to be clear for the record as it appears there are some misunderstandings. He said he would be glad to give Mr. White a copy of the minutes of exactly what Council voted on. It is in the agenda packet for this meeting. The minutes show exactly what was discussed and what the final motion and vote was. The thing about the methodology was only the speed limit and the concern of the citizens present. He said that is why it is so important for everyone to go to the December 5, 2013, meeting, because that will put all those comments on the record. DOT has assured him, and he will make a written request, that they provide the city through him all comments received on December 5, 2013. That information will be available and on the website for viewing.

Mr. White said Council should be aware that a move to change the classification starts with Council. He asked if they all accept that. He said that is what was stated by the Vice Chair Lark Jones. Any change in classification from capacity to another classification has to start with City Council. He asked if all Councilmembers were aware of that. He said if they were aware then, are they satisfied.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he understands that is what has to be done as Council started it. Mayor Cavanaugh stated when this started they had the whole Aiken County Delegation behind them and many people supporting it. He said that was the momentum when it started. To change that you don't send that to the South Carolina ARTS Subcommittee that is made up of two people from the city, two from the County, Burnetown, and North Augusta. The Subcommittee does not make the decision to change what the city and those who supported and requested the project in the beginning.

Mr. White stated Mr. Jones was very guarded and specific. He said the protocol calls that it come back to Aiken if it is to be changed as Aiken Council requested it. He said he was making sure that if there is a change in the future we understand that it starts with Council.

Councilman Dewar stated that is what happened for the Silver Bluff Road widening project. Council changed the purpose and need. If there is a change of purpose and need for Hitchcock Parkway, it has to start with Council and it has to be approved by City Council.

Northside Initiative

Councilman Ebner stated the update for the Northside was done very well. He said he assumed that would be done every quarter or six months. He felt the pictures and write ups were good. He said he did have a concern about some of the things in the article in the Aiken Standard. He said over his career he had dealt with the public and the aftermath of stuff Dupont would do wrong, etc. He said when we talk about the budget items, his concern is talking about the budget numbers versus what we actually are going to do. He said he felt the public reads a number and, if we say we are going to spend \$534,000, he felt their concept is that we are going to spend that. He said in reality that is a budget amount. He pointed out that on the housing we put the real numbers, and they were in the range. But when we put budgeted numbers a concern of his is that people will think we should spend \$534,000, but in reality it is probably somewhat less than that because of other factors that go in there. He felt we should put some realistic numbers of what we will actually spend. He said that is more difficult to do, but it keeps us out of hot water when somebody says "you said you were going to do this, but you didn't." The comment is that he is looking at using budgeted numbers versus an estimated number. He said he would rather see us estimate we are going to spend \$200,000 versus a budgeted amount. He said "we will spend" is a much more positive thing than saying budget amount. He said the comment is for what it's worth, but he did not want to mislead the public. He said the update is good and the newspaper article is good, but we need to look at real numbers when we talk about money.

911 Murrah Avenue Publix Shopping Center Aiken Mall

Councilman Dewar stated Council approved purchasing the property on Murrah Drive so we could make a connection to the Aiken Mall. He said he had read somewhere that the city is working with the owners of the Mall.

Mr. Pearce stated we have had some conversations with the owners of Publix. He said there is the owner of the dirt and the lessee of the business. He said they have talked with the realtor, the developer, or the real estate investment entity, and they think it is a great idea. The people with Publix have indicated that they are very interested. They just want to make sure where it will be and whether it would interfere with delivery trucks, but we don't believe it will. He said this was part of the URS Dougherty Road Corridor Study. He said that property was a perfect place to connect, in their view. He said we don't see any roadblocks so far. Everybody has been very receptive.

Public Safety Personnel

Councilman Dewar thanked Mr. Pearce for providing the minutes of his and Councilwoman Price's meeting with Mr. Pearce, Chief Barranco, and Sara Ridout, concerning his concerns about the manning and morale in Public Safety. He said he had reviewed the minutes briefly, and a quick assessment does not reflect any issues, but he will review them more closely. He said he remains concerned about the experience level at Public Safety. He said he thought there were 30 Public Safety Officers out of 89 that have less than two years' service. He said turnover has been way too high, and we need to continue to work and make Aiken a good place for Public Safety Officers to work.

Mr. Pearce stated Councilman Dewar had shared in the meeting that he had not received any complaints about the service of Public Safety.

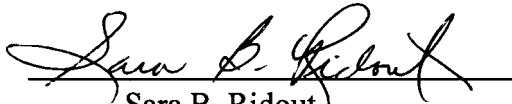
Councilman Dewar stated he had never had a complaint about the service that Public Safety does. The only concerns that have been expressed to him is that there is not enough of them, and we are losing too many of them. He said he thought we have lost 34 officers.

Mayor Cavanaugh pointed out a number have gone through their training now even though they are new employees.

Councilman Dewar stated we are patrolling with people that are police trained, but not fire trained. They are working hard to get up to speed.

ADJOURNMENT

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


Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk