

Aiken City Council MinutesWORK SESSION

October 13, 2014

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

Absent: Councilman Homoki

Others Present: Roger LeDuc, Stuart Bedenbaugh, Kim Abney, Glenn Parker, Sara Ridout, Tim O'Briant and Maayan Schechter of Aiken Standard.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Mayor Fred Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. and stated the purpose of the meeting was to hear a report from Interim City Manager Roger LeDuc and Glenn Parker on Capital Sales Tax projects and other projects.

Interim City Manager Roger LeDuc stated he would like to move forward on a number of projects and give Mr. Parker and the rest of staff some direction. He stated he wanted to present to Council the various projects that are being worked on and give Council a feeling as to where the projects are, where we believe we are going, and to allow some discussion to make sure we are on the right path. If not, then we will go in a different direction. He stated if at the end of the meeting we are not finished reviewing the projects we can continue the meeting after the regular meeting, or we can wait until the October 27 meeting. He stated Mr. Parker would spend some time and go over the status report. He stated the first several pages of the handout are something Council will be receiving on a regular basis to inform Council of where the City stands financially and on the direction of the projects.

Capital Projects Sales Tax Manager Glenn Parker stated he had tried to give Council something that is cumulative. He has worked with all the department heads, Kim Abney, and George Grinton on these projects so that what Council receives each month is one report. Starting in November, Council should get this report at the second meeting each month. There will be upcoming events in the report, and he will try to tell Council when there is a bid opening or important construction going on. There will be a very simple fund summary. It will show how much was budgeted, how much has been spent to date, and the balance. He stated next month they will not see the "Spent to Date" column. It will be changed to "Spent in the Previous Month." There is a calendar that shows the spend out of the money. It will change as the projects start progressing. He stated that Section B of the handout is a narrative of each project. It will give a little bit of a highlight on each of the projects. It will show what we believe is the estimated budget to complete the project. There will be some dates and the status of the project. There will also be the outlook as to what is coming up in the next month or so. He thinks it will grow as more projects begin. There will be more in the report. One thing he is excited about and has met with IT about is we want to add a section to the City website to talk about Capital Projects to keep the public updated on what the City is doing. He directed Council to look at the Upcoming Event section. He stated under this section we will try to show Council what is coming up. In this particular section, it lists that they met with the Friends of Hopelands/Rye Patch; the Bike Pedestrian Advisory Committee has an upcoming meeting; a bid opening for Citizens Park coming up, etc. In November when we start the public input sessions for Eustis Park and the Northside, there will be a Worksession on November 10 with Council and the consultants to talk about the project. The Urban Land representatives are coming on December 3 and 4 so that is on the calendar for information.

Councilman Dick Dewar asked if November 11 and 13 are the same.

Mr. Parker stated they are not the same. Throughout the day there will be a number of focus groups. A list has been developed of tennis groups, pickleball groups, northside groups, neighborhood associations, etc. that we will be meeting with and the Recreation Commission, the Senior Commission. Some of those groups will have 15 – 20 minutes, and some will have an hour to meet. November 11 is a public meeting. There will be a number of questions. They will take a survey and Clemson will tabulate all the answers. On November 13, Clemson will give the report as to the results of what they heard and their recommendations.

Councilman Dewar asked if the City knows what will be done in the Senior/Youth Center. Mr. Parker stated the City has their ideas, but these meetings are to gather a good bit of the public's input.

Councilman Dewar asked if the stables at Hopelands are going to be used or is it just a beautification project. Mr. Parker stated they talked to the Friends about safety and preservation. He said we would like to make the stables safe so people can walk around and look at them. They are basically closed now. The Friends of Hopelands want to preserve the look.

Councilwoman Gail Diggs asked if the stables are still being used at weddings for people to get dressed. Mr. Parker stated since the new stage has been built he believes they use the restrooms in the stage area.

Mr. Parker stated Section A is a very simple financial report. Fund 016 and Fund 017 are the reports that Finance generates. This information is what he bases his numbers on. He receives his numbers from Kim Abney at the end of the month.

Councilman Dewar asked if at some point Council would decide that there are certain projects in CPST III that cannot be done based on the assessment of how much money will be received. Mr. LeDuc stated yes. He stated he has given Council some initial data, and we are waiting for the payment in November to get one full calendar year of payments to make a better projection, but staff has already projected to 2019 as to what money we believe we will get. He feels based on that project numbers 20 and below will not be completed. Councilwoman Price stated she thought there were 17. Mr. Parker pointed out that for the last five projects on the calendar no funding was projected. Councilwoman Price asked if those projects were University Parkway widening, land purchase – Northside, public school sidewalks, etc. Mr. LeDuc stated that was correct.

Mr. LeDuc stated for project 18 Hitchcock Parkway widening there may be some partial funding for the widening. The final dollar amount is uncertain as far as projections.

Councilman Ebner asked if this was the appropriate time to talk about Capital Projects Sales Tax II and III funding. Mr. LeDuc stated he would prefer to start discussing the projects and then come back to the funding. He said he has an analysis of all the information. Currently, except for the Northside and the Crosland Park area, for that \$1.495 million, everything else has been paid to date. We said we will get money in November and February. He said we are looking at what other projects would fall within that area and that information will be given to Council probably at the next meeting.

Councilman Ebner stated one of the projects is on the agenda for approval tonight. Mr. LeDuc stated he is not asking Council to approve anything tonight. The City will get bids for the fencing at Citizens Park, and then we will have a much better idea of the cost.

Mr. LeDuc stated he would start discussion on the projects leaving the CPST projects for last. The reason for that is the CPST is behind, and he believes the projects listed in the memo are the ones that need to be covered. Some of them have not been talked about in any depth. Mr. LeDuc discussed each project. He stated the Whiskey/Dougherty Intersection is one of the SIB projects. There was \$900,000 proposed for that project, and we raised that amount so the project would be fully funded. He stated he hopes to be able to get the intergovernmental agreement for that individual project at the next meeting. At that point we will be ready to proceed. This project has been on hold since

he arrived in June. Work was stopped on this project because there was not a means of how it would be fully funded. The plans have been completed and approved by SCDOT. The next step is to get the right-of-way. Once the right-of-way has been acquired the final plans will be put together and put out for bids. Potentially this could start in the spring.

Councilman Ebner asked if this would apply to any of the projects with the SIB or SCDOT, and wondered if the city would have to upfront the money and then be reimbursed. Mr. LeDuc stated the City would have to pay the money first. Then we would send our invoices, and they will pay us back. There may be a 30-60 day delay. Councilman Ebner stated at some point the City staff would have to come to Council and say they need a revolving account of money of \$400,000 to \$600,000. Mr. LeDuc stated in the past when we had these types of grants, we used the cash from the checking account to write that check, knowing we will be reimbursed a few months later. He stated if Council prefers we establish some money, we could do that. Councilman Ebner stated his concern is there will be some turnover in the City Manager personnel and one of the things he had talked about was to be sure to establish a pattern for the next couple of years until they get reestablished with a new City Manager. He felt having the pattern in writing would be a help to remind someone of these things. Mr. LeDuc stated this is why he is trying to get the project status month by month so Council will have that information. For the projects that have to do with SIB or any other type of grants, the typical way of paying for them is to pay upfront and then you get reimbursed. That is why we need the intergovernmental agreement so that we are all on the same page as to how much SIB is going to be giving us and how much we will be reimbursed for University and this project. Councilman Ebner stated it is such a large amount and a long period of time, that he thinks it would be good to document these two projects. He stated the normal things that Public Safety does and the other departments are low dollar and short term, and these projects, especially University could go on for a couple of years. Mr. LeDuc stated he will work with Kim Abney to answer that question.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if the bowling alley would be destroyed or sold to someone else. Mr. LeDuc stated there are rumors that could happen, but it is not from the City. We would not need to move the bowling alley for this road. He stated he drove by the bowling alley over the weekend, and there were cars parked on the northside of the building. Cars probably would not be able to park on the northside of the building when this project is finished.

Mr. LeDuc stated the next project is the horse trails. An agreement was made with Woodside Developers that they would give us 25 feet, and we would develop a horse trail. A large portion of this has been graded. We are at a portion of the trail where we have some wetlands that we cannot get over so we are looking at getting some property or easements outside the fenced area of Woodside for this portion of the trail. The properties are not really being occupied. Some churches own this area, so we are in discussions with them as to whether we can lease the property or buy it before we can proceed any further. That would have to come back to Council at some point for Council to approve the easements we would be acquiring from those property owners.

Councilwoman Price asked who would be responsible for paying for the lease or purchase of this property. Mr. LeDuc answered the City would be responsible. This would be the City's horse trail or walking trail. The pathway would link up with several other horse trails in Aiken County. Councilman Ebner stated it is part of the Greater Aiken Integrated Trail system (GAIT), and the trail is already along Anderson Pond. This portion ties it in and gets it close to what is on Silver Bluff. Mr. LeDuc stated the City prefers to come up with a sale so we would not have to worry about a continual leasing of property. We have to work with those property owners. We are only trying to get enough property to complete that portion of the trail. Most of the other area is 25 feet wide. We may be able to get 10 to 15 feet wide in this area. Councilwoman Price asked if this was a private or public trail. Mr. LeDuc stated it is a public trail. Councilman Ebner stated the trail it ties into at both ends is public also and dedicated to public use for horses and walking. He stated this is what he was told by the GAIT people. Mr. LeDuc stated the trail was approved by Council as part of their agreement with The Reserve when it was annexed into the City of Aiken. Councilwoman Price asked how long the trail was. Mr. LeDuc stated the whole trail is about 50 or 60 miles of trail in the county.

Councilman Ebner asked the name of the park on Silver Bluff Road just down from Anderson Pond Road. He was told it was Boyd Pond. Councilman Ebner stated Boyd Pond has a trail from there down to Horse Creek, and there are a couple more miles to go from Boyd Pond to join into this. The trail would be 20-25 miles long then.

Mr. LeDuc stated the Safe Routes to School project is for sidewalks that are being placed in Crosland Park that go to the elementary and middle schools. The plans have been completed and the City is trying to obtain the last couple of easements from some property owners. Councilwoman Diggs stated she was at Crosland Park last week and saw a lot of road work being done on several streets. She asked when that was expected to be completed. Assistant City Manager Stuart Bedenbaugh stated possibly a year from now. It is the sewer work Phases 6 through 10 that Council approved. Mr. LeDuc stated once the sewer is in the front of the houses, they have to work on moving the services lines from the back yard to the front yard. Once that work is finished there are a number of projects with SCDOT to pave those roads through using C funds. That is being delayed until the sewer work is completed.

Mr. LeDuc discussed the Chesterfield – Newberry storm drainage project. He stated along the railroad track we have some exposed storm drainage lines, plus we have done some camera work and some of the pipes have rusted out. By the Willcox Hotel there have been documented slope failures in the past. We have asked, through FEMA for one of the grants that was talked about at the last meeting, so we can go ahead and fix those areas. This is the preliminary study that was done looking at all the various alternatives. We received the study sometime around July, and we have asked several questions. They are getting back to us with the answers. This project could potentially become a multi-million dollar liability and project for the City of Aiken. It is not just the Chesterfield and Newberry area. They started looking down South Boundary and other areas as the feeder lines run into it. A lot of the areas need some future repairs and replacement.

Mr. LeDuc stated the last project is the Railroad Depot deck. In July or August, Council put some additional funding in the 007 Accommodations Tax money to do the Railroad Depot deck. SITEC has been awarded that project and should be starting on it shortly. By the end of the year there should be a nice looking deck at the Depot.

He stated the projects he just discussed are not being funded through the CPST funds. He stated he wanted to talk about the CPST projects now.

Mr. LeDuc stated Councilman Ebner had asked about the funding for the CPST projects, so they put together a preliminary summary. For all the amendments that have been made previously on CPST III, funds came in during August to be able to pay back those loans. However, for two of the projects, Hitchcock Parkway and University Parkway, no loan agreement has been made for those projects. We have spent \$331,851.04 on those projects, so at the next meeting we will ask Council to develop a loan for these two projects. That loan will be paid off in November or February but staff would like to document it so that everyone can see where the money came from and how it will be paid back. In addition, there is the loan payment to be made for Crosland Park to the Water and Sewer fund. We borrowed money from the Water and Sewer fund so we could buy property, build houses, and renovate houses in Crosland Park. They do have a value, but Council has discussed paying back that loan. That loan is for \$1,459,700. That would be paid back from the \$1,750,000 that is in the CPST III project that talks about the Northside renovations. That document will come to Council on October 27 on these various loans. He stated one of the other commitments that we are looking at is the Citizens Park Fencing. We either do the fencing now or we wait until next year at this time. You cannot do fencing when there are tournaments, baseball, soccer, etc. This is the ideal time to do the fencing. There are some safety issues as to why the City would like to do it now. At some of the areas in the outfield and behind the catcher the fencing tends to curl up, and when it curls up there are wires that could cut people if they slide into it or get close to it. Currently there are bids out, and we will be getting them in a couple of weeks. We would like to go forward with it. If that is the case then we will be coming back to Council in November to have it approved. We can either borrow the money or go ahead and pay for any improvements out of the November or February

funds that come in. Every quarter we receive about \$1.3 million. That is the key number. It's about \$5.2 million a year. We are in a fortunate position as most cities and counties borrow money upfront to pay for these improvements. We have been able to pay for them as they come along and borrow from ourselves if needed. The expected \$1.3 million we will receive in November and the \$1.3 million we receive in February is \$2.6 million. If we take all the projects: Hitchcock Parkway, University Parkway, Crosland Park, the work on the Municipal Building, the fencing, and a water tank that needs to be painted, it all comes up to \$2,643,000. He stated Council will receive all of these numbers in a future meeting. We are very close to answering Council's question with having full funding for all of these projects and to pay back ourselves on Crosland Park.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated it seems to him that the fencing project needs to be done, especially if it is a safety issue. Mr. LeDuc stated we currently do not have all the money sitting there for the Citizens Park fencing. Money can be borrowed from ourselves, and then we would pay it back. He stated by February there will be enough money for the fencing. By the time all the work is complete, we will be close timewise to receiving the money. However, to be on the safe side we could go ahead and do an intergovernmental loan agreement to move that project forward. Mayor Cavanaugh stated if the fencing is necessary for several reasons, including the safety of the kids playing, then that is enough to tell him the fencing needs to be done as soon as possible. If it is not that urgent, then that is something else. Mr. LeDuc stated if a child is back there being a catcher, and he slides into the fence, he could potentially get hurt.

Mr. Parker stated there is a huge World Series coming to Citizens Park next summer that would be on that complex. It would look nice aesthetically to have that fencing done. Mr. LeDuc stated if it is not done now, then it cannot be done in the spring and summer.

Councilman Ebner stated he would like to see the spreadsheet. The numbers he has, that are about three months out of date, verify what Mr. LeDuc is saying. By February the City would have everything back on a cash basis. If you take the cash flow of the sewer line work which continues until the middle of next year, the cash is in the bank to do it. He asked if that is what Mr. LeDuc intended to do.

Mr. LeDuc stated to be on the safe side he feels we need to do some intergovernmental loan agreements. If we do have the cash, then we pay it back right away. Councilman Ebner stated it needs to be written up like the last ones. It is not a seven year payout. It is when the money comes in. Mr. LeDuc stated a worst case scenario would be May that it would be paid back. Councilman Ebner stated to make sure no interest is on the loan.

Mr. LeDuc stated the first project is Dougherty to Aiken Mall. This project is ready to go. We are setting up a meeting with Publix and the realtors for that area. We have looked at it and made changes to it. It is a matter of setting up the meeting to move forward. The only question is regarding the house that is there. At one time, City Council or someone said we need to tear down the house. We have looked at it. It is a very sound brick house and someone has come to him to make an offer on the house if the City does not tear it down. There is enough room between the house and the new road. It will cost the City \$10,000 to tear it down, so it would make sense to keep the house if it does not have to be torn down. If it is torn down then the City will have to maintain the lot. He stated he will come back to Council with that information.

Councilman Ebner asked if Mr. LeDuc would have that offer at the next meeting or if Council needs to vote to make an offer. Mr. LeDuc stated he wants to go ahead and work with Publix and make sure everything is okay there before we get to that point. He believes that Council has an agreement that anytime property is sold we put up a For Sale sign for 30 days so that it is not just one person making an offer.

Councilwoman Price asked who the contractor was for this project. Mr. LeDuc stated there is no contractor because we have not let the contract. We have to go to Publix and make sure they are happy with the new layout of the parking lot.

Mr. LeDuc stated street resurfacing is an ongoing project.

Mr. LeDuc discussed Hitchcock Woods erosion. He stated we have money to do a number of things, and we are waiting on Gene Eidson.

Mr. LeDuc discussed the Whiskey Road Sidewalk Curb and Gutter. He stated this is something that has been worked on for several years. In 2009 or 2010, during the recessionary period, the federal government granted \$500,000 to use on a major project. He stated the City thought this was a great project, and we could put a pipe in the ground very quickly. Then it got bogged down because the Highway Department said you cannot just put pipe in the ground because even though we have a 24 or 36 inch culvert under these driveways, it has to be a much larger pipe than what is currently in the ground. He said that is what the Highway Department wanted us to do. We started doing the hydrology studies and went to George's Pond which the city purchased and the Highway Department said based on the volumes from the entire area, we would need to double the size of George's Pond and take Lowe's pond and add that together. He stated we then started talking to the County, and we would be releasing water from these two ponds for several days. It will continue flowing out because that is how detention works. This project will probably cost \$5 million or more for all the work that needs to be done from Powderhouse Road back up to Centennial. We do not have the money or funds. This project has been put on hold. We have asked the designer, Tilden Hilderbrand, to give us a synopsis of it and put it on a disk so we will have it for some point in the future when we get the money to do this project. This project will need to be an inter-City/County agreement. At that point in time we will resurrect this project. He stated he will go to the Highway Department and let them know we have put this project on hold. He has received some calls from Senator Young and other folks regarding this project. He said we just do not have the funding to do the work.

Councilwoman Price asked if we have asked Senator Young whether he could access additional funding for this project. Mr. LeDuc stated he was willing to try to find some funding, but not to this magnitude. The County will have to come back with probably another \$5 million on how to take care of the water from Powderhouse back towards George's Pond and from Powderhouse downstream. He stated for those that were here in 1990, there was a major rain storm and people were in boats in the backs of the yards in College Acres. We know there is a problem, but it will take a unique, long-term, expensive solution.

Mr. LeDuc stated the next project for discussion is downtown streetscape. There is \$45,000 left. He believes the best use of that money is on The Alley. Mr. LeDuc skipped to the Underground Utilities Project. He stated right now SCE&G has been asked to take the lead on undergrounding the wiring in The Alley behind the Municipal Building. They feel they can bore or dig a trench. Their goal is in January or February of next year to totally underground the alleyway. We may start doing some drainage work during that time, but probably will wait until after the Masters and the Triple Crown. This \$45,000 would be used for that.

Councilman Ebner stated he believes Mr. LeDuc mentioned before that they are only putting the conduits in for the cable. They are not tying all of this stuff in. Mr. LeDuc stated the intention would be that once they get all the conduit in, they would do the wiring almost immediately. Councilman Ebner stated he thought we had to use the transformer we have. He asked Mr. LeDuc if he was familiar with that scenario. Mr. LeDuc stated he was. Councilman Ebner stated to use the existing transformer we have to change four or five businesses to 440 versus 220. Mr. LeDuc stated that is a part that the City will be involved with and will have to pay for some of the improvements. We are going around next month with an electrician to each one of these businesses. There are five or six businesses that need to be changed to a voltage compatible to the current transformer. Councilman Ebner asked if by March the poles should disappear. Mr. LeDuc stated that is the goal.

Mr. Parker discussed the Greenways and Open Space. He stated they are looking, and if they come up with some property, there was a plan in the past about preserving open

space from I-20 down to Shaws Creek. They met with the Aiken County Soil and Water Conservation District. They are interested in preserving the Shaws Creek Basin, so they may have access to some funds that we are not aware of.

Mr. Parker stated the Citizens Park Maintenance Center project is basically done. There is a small amount of money left there, but PRT thinks they can light one more of the areas and spend that money.

Mr. Parker stated the Eustis Park Senior/Youth Center project is coming up in November. There will be a study and Clemson will be talking about it. We have had some preliminary looks at what we can do with the \$956,595 if we chose just to use that money for Eustis Park. Taking into consideration the parking lot and site work, we are basically looking at about a 7,000 square foot building. We could seat in one part around 140-180 people depending on how the tables are set up. It will have a meeting room, a stage, a fitness room, and a multi-purpose room.

Councilman Ebner asked if he was talking about the million dollar figure. Mr. Parker stated yes. Councilman Ebner stated he thought the two went together. Councilwoman Price stated she thought the Eustis Park Senior/Youth Center was a combined facility. She asked if they were two separate facilities. She was told it is one facility. She asked if the design work was being done by Cheatham Fletcher. She was told that was correct. She asked how much that was. Mr. Parker stated the \$950,000 is for the building and everything. It does not include any money in the 017 funds. Mr. LeDuc stated those funds could be available if needed, but they were trying to look at whether we could do everything they want for this building, then the money in the CPST III could be used towards the Northside Park. Councilwoman Price stated that was unacceptable. She stated these people have waited a long time, and they deserve a quality building that the voters voted for in this area. Mr. LeDuc asked if this was not what she was looking for, and Councilwoman Price stated it was not. She stated that could be discussed later at a committee meeting. Councilman Dewar stated he thought there was money in CPST 16 for land acquisition and \$3.5 million for the building was in CPST 17. Mr. Parker stated it can be approached that way from this point forward. Councilman Dewar stated he was not interested in changing what the voters approved. He thought that was what it was. First we would spend \$1 million buying the land, and then we would do the building. Councilwoman Price stated we do not have to buy the land. She asked if we are buying some of the School District's property. Mr. Parker stated is it not available right now. If it becomes available, he believes the original plan was to build the facility on that corner where the School District currently has property. Councilwoman Price stated she feels there needs to be a meeting on this project. Mr. Parker stated that is what the November 10 meeting with Council is all about.

Mr. Parker stated the next project is the Northside Park. When Clemson comes we will determine what type of program will go into that, and once we hear from them and from the public what they want in the park, we can start developing plans for what that park should look like. Councilwoman Diggs stated her plans are not to ever put a recreational park on the landfill. She met with a gentleman who owns a business in Aiken who wants to utilize the landfill and Mr. LeDuc and Councilwoman Price met with him as well. The proposal he has would save the City money but also create 20 jobs. She said she wants to bring him to Council so he can present the information to everyone. Her desire is to never put a recreational park on the landfill. She does not know who came up with the idea, but it doesn't sound pleasing to her. She does not think DHEC or anyone can guarantee that there is no contamination left on that site. Mr. Parker stated if that is the consensus, then we can take that money and put it with the \$2 million for the Northside Recreation project. We could use the money from 017 for Eustis Park. Then we have \$4.75 million for a Northside park. He stated the landfill needs to be secured and closed in. Councilwoman Diggs stated the proposal would be an answer. Mr. LeDuc stated the information Mr. Parker has says that several design firms have looked at the landfill and have offered a cleanup and design option. Our current plans are to finish environmental cleanup at the landfill. We are not looking at building a park there. We would like to clean it up. Councilwoman Diggs stated she never wanted to have a recreational program on the landfill. She felt most of the residents would agree with her. Mr. LeDuc stated the intent is take the former landfill and secure it and get it cleaned up. That means that



some of the fencing that is around the entire landfill may have to be resurrected. There is a lower portion where the City had a recycling center at one time. We are talking now to a potential recycler to possibly do something to the lower portion, which is about five acres. The other 60 acres, at this point in time, would be closed up and secured. If Council wants to do something with that in the future they could, but right now the intent would be that the recreational center that we would be looking at on the Northside would probably be in another location. He stated Clemson is coming down to discuss that with the citizens and other groups in the area as to what we want from a program standpoint for the Northside recreational park. They will also talk a little about locations. Locations will be more on how many acres are needed. For instance, if you want to have something similar to Virginia Acres, you would need at least 40 acres for that alone. He said that would be a sizeable piece of property to acquire on the northside to look at future expansion. Right now the intent is not on the landfill property which then frees up money for Council to use for other things.

Councilwoman Diggs stated she wanted to apologize to Mr. Parker. She did not mean to yell at him. She was expressing her opinion.

Councilwoman Price asked what the original square footage of the old portion of the Odell Weeks Center was. Mr. Parker stated it was about 25,000 square feet.

Councilwoman Price asked what that would cost now. Mr. Parker stated it would be \$120-\$125 a square foot.

Mr. Parker discussed the bike paths project. He stated Tom Lex had made a recommendation to Council about the Hayne Avenue bike path. He stated he is working with the BPAC as there is still money available, and they have a priority list for some things they would like to see done. Mr. LeDuc stated the question came up at the September 8 Council meeting about the bike path on Hayne Avenue and the BPAC recommendation is to keep the symbols there but get rid of the white line. If Council has no problem, that is what we propose to do.

Councilwoman Diggs asked if the residents would still be able to park on Hayne in front of their houses. Mr. LeDuc stated if the white line is removed, the symbols would be showing that we are sharing a lane for biking and parking for residents in that area.

Mr. Parker stated in 017 Fund the Public Safety laptop computers are done. He said he had talked about the Eustis Park Center. The Playground at Governor Aiken Park is done.

Mr. Parker stated he met with the Friends of Hopelands last week and talked about the stables and what we would like to do there.

He stated a decision needs to be made regarding the Citizens Park Fence. The canopy has been done. It was part of the original. It was done in-house.

Mr. LeDuc stated regarding the stables, one of the things that was asked about the use of the stables. He stated he had been talking with a couple of people concerning that, and once the stables are completed, Council will have to make a decision as to whether we ever want to lease or rent out those stables on occasion. He stated it would not be on a permanent basis, but as visitors come into the community that would be an opportunity for them.

Mr. Parker stated the Public Safety Training Grounds is down the road a little bit. Public Safety still has some work to do to define their scope.

He stated the Library Park is completed.

Mr. LeDuc discussed the Northside Neighborhood Renewal. He stated for the transfer that was made we will be coming back to Council to pay that off with the money we receive in November or possibly February. It is allocated to pay off the \$1.4 million. The rest of the money will be available and once he talks with Council to get some ideas,



we can decide what to do with that money. At the Council meeting tonight we have the sale of a piece of property, and we have some other property that we certainly intend to be sold at some time. Some funding will come back into that area.

Mr. Parker stated Mr. LeDuc had already discussed the Infrastructure Water. He stated the Lloydtown water tank is coming up. There is a little bit of work left to be done on Mohawk Drive.

Mr. Parker stated as far as the sewer projects, we have the Gem Lakes outfall, the Woodside lift station, and street resurfacing. This is a continuation of what we started in 016.

Mr. Parker stated that the City will have to define the scope for the curbing to see what needs to be done.

He stated the Animal Shelter is completed.

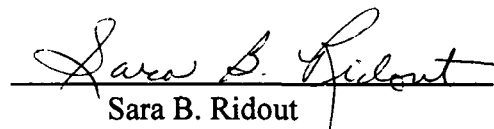
He stated on the Citizens Park walking trail PRT has a preliminary plan of what they want to do with the trail. The trail is about three years down the road.

Mr. LeDuc asked if there were any other questions regarding the projects. He stated Mr. Parker will continue to update the list on a regular basis.

Councilwoman Price asked if it would be possible to have the Northside Recreation at Perry Park project for the restroom facilities done by the summer of 2015. Mr. Parker stated he had met with the School District, and we have a preliminary plan. The plans have to be drawn by an architect. Because the facility would be on school grounds, it has to be approved by the School Board. Once the plans are submitted, there is a 12-14 week wait. As soon as we get the plans back we can go ahead and proceed with the project. He and the School District are on the same page about what they want. They need to work out where they want it. The Recreation Commission has made a recommendation.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Cavanaugh adjourned the work session at 6:58 P.M.

  
Sara B. Ridout  
City Clerk

Aiken City Council MinutesREGULAR MEETING

October 13, 2014

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

Absent: Councilman Homoki

Others Present: Roger LeDuc, Stuart Bedenbaugh, Gary Smith, George Grinton, Kim Abney, Tommy Paradise, Kim Coleman, Alicia Davis, Tim Coakley, Charles Barranco, Jeff Metz, David Turno, Phil Kestin, Emory Langston, Sara Ridout, Maayan Schechter of the Aiken Standard, Tim O'Briant of Aiken Standard and about 60 citizens.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 7:07 P.M. Councilman Merry led in prayer, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

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.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. There were no changes in the agenda.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Work Sessions of September 17, 18, 25, and 29, 2014 and the Work Session and Regular Meeting of September 22, 2014, were considered for approval. Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs that the minutes of September 17, 18, 22, 25, and 29, 2014, be approved.

Councilman Ebner stated in the September 29, 2014, meeting is when Council discussed the contract issue for Hitchcock Parkway and the money spent and working on procedures. He said he had some email discussions as well as vocal discussions with the City Attorney and the City Manager. He said he had asked for some data that they are to provide him on the cost reports, etc. He said he had a memo which he had sent to them and was asking that the memo be put in the minutes.

Mayor Cavanaugh called for a vote on the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Reggie Ebner**

*Put  
TO BE PART OF 10-13-14  
CC MEETING MINUTES*

**From:** "Reggie Ebner" <reggieebner@bellsouth.net>  
**Date:** Monday, October 13, 2014 1:29 AM  
**To:** "Smith Gary" <gsmith@smbgm.com>; "LeDuc Roger" <RLeDuc@CITYOFAIKENSC.GOV>  
**Attach:** Scan0147.pdf  
**Subject:** City Council Agenda-October 13, 2014-Page 93 and 94-SCTIB Contracts

Gary and Roger,

Please see Page 93 and 94 of the October 13, 2014 agenda attached.

It appears to me that the statement on page 93 is in conflict with the statement on page 94. The IGA in question was signed by the mayor on March 11, 2013 but not by the SCTIB. This information was from the IGA file copy from Sara that I requested this year.

A memo that was referred to from Jim Holly had repeatedly ask for information from the city manager so the IGA could be approved.

The SCTIB document approved by council in mid 2012 did not authorized any funds. Nothing in the minutes of the meeting state or imply funds were authorized. I do not believe his thought process believed he had authorization to issue contracts with no funding.

All documents and discussion indicate that the city manager knew funding was not approved.

As part of Gary's report, all of these documents and emails need to be collected for review.

Also attached is my memo of October 6, 2014 requesting verification of cost data for the SIB work and other projects. When will the information be available?

Will there be a preliminary report of Gary's review of these issues at the city council meeting?

Reggie

10/13/2014

IGA # 3-11-13

**AGENDA ITEM #(1)**

Councilman Dewar stated Council does not approve all contracts put out to bid if they are in the budget. He asked if Capital Project Sales Tax money would be approved by Council.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated if the item is budgeted it would not come to Council, and as long as he has been the Assistant City Manager, the Capital Project Sales Tax money has been approved by Council.

Councilman Dewar asked when a bid is included in the budget, is a finance code assigned to it so it is known what account it will go to. It was pointed out that if it is in the budget, it would have a budget code.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated yes it is in the budget. Typically if it is to be bid out for sealed bids that would be listed on the pink pages in the 70s accounts.

Councilman Dewar asked what happens if it is not in the budget.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated if it is over \$25,000, then it would have to go before Council and be justified the money needs to be spent.

Councilman Ebner stated that had been true forever, so the contracts should have come to Council anyway because there was no funding for them.

Councilman Dewar stated the frustrating thing to him is that it happened, and only one person knew it and nobody else out of the 341 who work for the City were able to tell it.

Councilman Homoki asked if he understood correctly that there was no funding for it. He asked if it is a CPST III item, was there enough money to cover the contract. He stated the idea is to use money we will collect in the future. He asked what if it gets to the point that CPST is exhausted, or for the time being, is out. He asked what money is used to keep paying for the contract.

Mr. LeDuc stated he wanted to make a statement on behalf of the previous City Manager about what his thought process may have been. In the summer of 2012, City Council approved an agreement with the State Infrastructure Bank for \$13.5 million to do three projects: Hitchcock Parkway, University Parkway, and Dougherty at Whiskey. It did not say how much money would go to each one, but Council approved that and the intergovernmental agreement was going to be signed for that \$13.5 million. It was after that period of time in November of that year that these contracts were signed. He may have felt that funding was going to come from SIB to pay for this. It does not negate the fact that it should have gone before Council, but the fact is Council did already approve a contractual agreement with SIB for money to do these projects and therefore he was going ahead and getting an engineer to start the projects because Council already had an agreement signed with SIB.

Councilman Dewar asked if SIB approved the request last week, could the same thing happen with the procedures that are in place now.

**AGENDA ITEM #(1)**

Mr. LeDuc stated everything in his opinion should go before Council for approval. That is why the intergovernmental agreement will come back to Council.

Councilman Ebner stated the intergovernmental agreement also has a procedure for payment. The money has to be paid up front, and they reimburse the City. We then need to send a bill to the intergovernmental fund for about \$360,000 to \$370,000.

Mr. LeDuc stated after that agreement is signed, we probably can send a bill because we did upfront the money and it was paid. He asked where do we go in the future with all of this.

Councilman Dewar stated he thinks Council should move on.

Councilman Merry stated he concurred with what Councilwoman Price said. Something needs to be done to pull all of this together because there is a little bit of the checks and balances written here and there. There should be some type of summary document that addresses all of this. He was not sure if it was something Mr. Smith would do or not, but some singular document should address it for every future City Manager and anybody else.

Councilman Ebner stated Mr. Smith could create that document.

Mr. LeDuc stated at the next Council meeting on October 13, there will be a Worksession to go through all the projects he can think of to give Council a status report. Some projects have stopped and some we are moving forward. He needs some direction from Council on some of the projects. At the very least, he feels it would be good for Council to know what is happening so when people ask they can have an answer.

Mr. LeDuc stated it was time to discuss the budget. He said the first item was revenue comparison to North Augusta. He felt it needed to be addressed because he had heard from several people that North Augusta is doing this and that. He worked for North Augusta for five years and is somewhat familiar with how North Augusta does things. If the City had the same millage that they have, and if Aiken had the one cent hospitality fee that they have, and if we raised our garbage rates to their rates, there would be a big difference. They collect \$1 million for the hospitality tax. There is a difference of \$260,000 between their garbage rate and Aiken's, and their tax revenue is \$1.7 million more than ours. They are collecting \$3 million more than the City of Aiken every year based on these items. If we had \$3 million extra then we would not be sitting here talking today.

Mr. LeDuc stated the budget shortfall is about \$700,000. That should be a minimum of what Council is trying to achieve.

Mr. LeDuc stated he wanted to talk to Council about some possible savings. There are some things he believes the City could do to save some real money without raising everything up. Currently there is one individual that works with business licenses that left the City. Carrol Busbee, who has been with the City for 50 years, said that he will probably quit working at the

**Reggie Ebner**

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**From:** "Reggie Ebner" <reggieebner@bellsouth.net>  
**Date:** Monday, October 06, 2014 11:48 PM  
**To:** "LeDuc Roger" <RLeDuc@CITYOFAIKENSC.GOV>  
**Subject:** Budget/Cost Updates

Roger,

The following budget items need to be verified that cost accounting and funding is correct as of June 30, 2014 and for the 2014/15 budget or addressed at the October 13 the council meeting.

Let me know if you have any questions.

1. Why is the \$206,723 (Page 220 Crosland Park budget) in the 2014/15? Should any of the \$207,140 be included in the June 30, 2014 audit? The description that Kim gave me relate to activities that occurred prior to June 30, 2014.
2. Hitchcock Parkway, University Road, and Whiskey/Doughery cost-
  - Did council approve funding with the SIB agreement. If so need copy of the ordinance?
  - Payments were made to contractors prior to June 30, 2013 audit. See June 30, 2013 CPST III yellow sheet.
  - Council and the auditor were aware of the funding issue as early as the September 2013 council meeting and further discussed at the October 2013 meeting. On page 105 of the June 30, 2013 audit, there is an expenditure of 254,718 for roads. Where is the explanation of funding for this amount in the audit report?
  - How are the July 1 to June 30, 2014 expenditures for roads explained in the June 30 2014 audit report?
  - There were no funds in CPST III for roads. Did council approve a loan for this funding?
  - What funds were the three contracts charged to?
  - Are these three contract still on hold?
3. Did Gorge's pond design charge to CPST II? If Charged to CPST III need verification of loan authorization?
4. Did Christee road work charge to CPST II?
5. Did the Alley design charge to CPST II?
6. How and where is the +/- \$419,000 short fall for debris removal accounted for in last year and this years budget? Is this amount a write-off?

Reggie

10/12/2014

## PRESENTATIONS

### Strom Thurmond Award Excellence in Law Enforcement Chief Charles Barranco

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council would like to make a presentation to Chief Charles Barranco who recently received the Strom Thurmond Award for Excellence in Law Enforcement.

Mr. LeDuc stated we are very proud and very honored to have Chief Barranco be recognized with the Strom Thurmond Award. Once a year the State of South Carolina recognizes an individual within the state who has performed in an excellent manner throughout their career in law enforcement. Chief Barranco has been in law enforcement since 1993 for 23 years. On September 12, 2014, Chief Charles Barranco received the prestigious Strom Thurmond Award for Excellence in Law Enforcement. He is the fourth member of the Aiken Department of Public Safety to receive this award.

The Strom Thurmond Awards for Excellence in Law Enforcement were established by Senator Strom Thurmond in 1983 to recognize law enforcement officers whose performances demonstrate the highest ideals of excellence in professional law enforcement.

Chief Barranco began his law enforcement career in 1991 with the USC-Aiken Department of Public Safety. In 1993 he was employed with the City of Aiken Department of Public Safety, and then in 2005 started working at the Aiken County Sheriff's Office. In 2012 Chief Barranco returned to the City of Aiken Department of Public Safety as Director. Chief Barranco has distinguished himself throughout his 23-year law enforcement career.

At this meeting City Council would like to recognize Chief Barranco for receiving the prestigious Strom Thurmond Award for Excellence in Law Enforcement. He pointed out that Chief Barranco received the award in Columbia on September 12, 2014. He said Council would like to thank Chief Barranco, honor him and congratulate him for this award.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the city and Council were very proud of Chief Barranco and the whole Public Safety team. He said it is good to have such a great group working together. It takes everyone working together to be successful. He said Chief Barranco is a great leader and has pulled the team together. He said there had been some ups and downs recently. He asked that Chief Barranco keep up the good work. He pointed out there had been a lot of improvement since Aiken established the Safe Communities Program. He said every few months the Public Safety Department has a meeting with offenders in the Council Chambers and leaders in the community and state and local law enforcement officials challenge the offenders to turn their lives around. Mayor Cavanaugh thanked Chief Barranco for all he does every day in keeping our community safe.

Chief Barranco pointed out that the most important component of the Safe Communities Program is our community and the working relationship we have in the community. He thanked Council for their support of Public Safety and the support of his wife, family and the Public Safety family. He thanked the Public Safety family for the hard work they do every day in the community. He said it is an honor to serve with Public Safety every day.

Councilwoman Price pointed out that Chief Barranco has a new name in Aiken. He is affectionately known as the praying Chief. The reason is that last week he met with some people who had just established their business. He asked them before departing if they would mind him praying with them and give a blessing to their success. So he has become known as the praying Chief.

Mayor Cavanaugh encouraged Chief Barranco to keep up the good work. He said Public Safety is doing a great job and the statistics show that.



Mr. Richard Johnson stated on behalf of the Concerned Ministers Fellowship of Aiken and their President Paul Busch who could not be present, they congratulate Chief Barranco on being awarded the prestigious Strom Thurmond Award and thanked Chief Barranco for doing what he does best and that is keeping the citizens of Aiken safe. Congratulations to Chief Barranco.

#### AWARD

S.C. Recreation & Parks Association

Loretta and Mike Beckner

Champion Award Individual

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the next recognition was presentation of an award from the S.C. Recreation & Parks Association for Champion Award Individual.

Mr. LeDuc stated Jeff Metz, current President of the South Carolina Parks and Recreation Association, is here to recognize Loretta and Mike Beckner.

Mr. Metz stated each year the S.C. Recreation and Parks Association honors a Champion of our community. That basically highlights a volunteer within the state who has done an exception job and really promotes the quality of life within their community. He said Mike and Loretta Beckner are present tonight as recipients of that award.

In 2010 the Beckners came to Aiken and introduced the Parks, Recreation & Tourism Department to the sport of pickleball. He said at the time PRT staff did not know what the Beckners were talking about. He pointed out tonight Council can see what has come about since that time. He pointed out almost one side of the Council Chambers is members of the Aiken Picklebillies who are in support of the Beckners. He said Mike and Loretta met with staff and the pickleball sport was started in Aiken. They play their games at the Weeks Center. Jessica Campbell helped organize the group. There are nine indoor courts and three outdoor courts. It is a booming group with over 200 folks registered to play. It has brought the senior group together. Now there are even younger folks getting in the game and playing. Pickleball offers an alternative for those who want to do something other than tennis. For the last two years tournaments have been held in Aiken. There were over 140 participants in the tournament this year. There were some people from Scotland and from 10 other states to play in the Aiken event. He said the Beckners do not mind beating you on the court, but when you walk away you feel that you have walked away as a friend of Mike and Loretta Beckner. He said he would like to recognize them tonight.

Mr. Mike Beckner stated that he and Loretta gratefully accept the honor. He said they have been very active in promoting a great sport with a funny name, and they are truly honored. He said the award is as much for the City of Aiken as it is for them. Without the support of all the staff at PRT beginning with Glenn Parker, Jeff Metz, Kim Coleman, and Jessica Campbell, the award would not have been possible at all. Secondly, they believe the award is an affirmation of the leadership exhibited by those who represent Aiken city government and who set the pattern by encouraging their employees to think outside of the box and maybe take a chance when it comes to thinking of the best interests of Aiken. He said Aiken is a wonderful city, and they are privileged to live in Aiken.

Ms. Loretta Beckner said the City was so good. They gave them a venue to play and the equipment needed, but they needed players. She pointed out all the people who are present at the meeting and many who could not be present tonight came and gave pickleball a try. She said they could never have gotten to where they are without all the players. Those who played, brought new players after they were hooked on the sport. All have welcomed every one so nicely, and it has made a big difference to the program. She pointed out that they have now organized and call themselves the Aiken Picklebillies. She said to all the Aiken Picklebillies who are present and those not present, she wanted them to know that the award was not only because of them, but also for them.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONSAppointmentsSuzanne HaslupRecreation CommissionDavid MeyersPark CommissionWilliam CoscioniGeneral Aviation Commission

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider approval of appointments to various city boards, commissions, and committees.

Mr. LeDuc stated three appointments are presented for Council's consideration and vote at the meeting tonight.

Councilmember Merry has recommended the reappointment of Suzanne Haslup to the Recreation Commission. If reappointed her term would expire September 1, 2016. He has also recommended that David Meyers be appointed to the Park Commission, and if appointed Mr. Meyers term would expire December 1, 2016.

Councilmember Price has recommended William Coscioni for reappointment to the General Aviation Commission. If reappointed, his term would expire September 1, 2016.

For Council consideration is the reappointment of Suzanne Haslup to the Recreation Commission, and William Coscioni to the General Aviation Commission, and the appointment of David Meyers to the Park Commission.

Councilman Dewar moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve the reappointment of Suzanne Haslup to the Recreation Commission and William Coscioni to the General Aviation Commission, and the appointment of David Meyers to the Park Commission. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if there were any nominations for the next Council meeting.

Councilwoman Diggs stated that she would like to recommend the appointment of Dr. Barbara Bing to replace Michael Gibbons on the Accommodations Tax Committee who has resigned.

Councilman Dewar recommended Elizabeth Neal to the Senior Commission to replace Anthony Coffaro who has resigned.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he would like to recommend Mike Beckner to the Recreation Commission to replace Brenda Mills who has resigned.

The recommendations will be on the next agenda for Council's consideration.

CONCEPT PLAN – ORDINANCE 10132014RevisionJoe RoddeyGMK Associates, Inc.University Healthcare System1021 Silver Bluff RoadTPN: 106-19-05-002

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing on an ordinance to amend the Concept Plan for property owned by University Healthcare System located at 1021 Silver Bluff Road.

Mr. LeDuc read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CONCEPT PLAN FOR PROPERTY OWNED BY GMK ASSOCIATES, INC. [UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES, INC.] AND LOCATED AT 1021 SILVER BLUFF ROAD.

Mr. LeDuc stated applicant Joe Roddey of GMK Associates [University Healthcare System] has requested approval of a revised Concept Plan for a 7,500 square foot medical facility to be located at 1021 Silver Bluff Road. At the time of annexation of this property in March, 2006 a concept plan was approved showing mixed use including retail, office, and upper story residential under the PC Planned Commercial zone. The 2006 Concept Plan was revised for this site and approved by City Council in May, 2009. The revision at that time included a phased project for three medical buildings totaling 72,000 square feet.

Since the current request is different from the previous approval, it requires City Council approval after Planning Commission review and recommendation. Also, review of a concept plan may be required if no building permits have been issued in the previous five years. The site is shown on the Future Land Use map to be Office/Institutional which is consistent with the proposed use.

The Planning Commission at their September 9, 2014, meeting reviewed the request for revision of the Concept Plan and voted unanimously to recommend to City Council that the requested amendments to the Concept Plan be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. the concept plan sketch and narrative be updated to clarify the future development phases, interconnectivity of roads for future development and designation of open space;
2. the traffic study be updated to address the concerns raised by the City's On-Call Traffic Engineer and any requests of SCDOT to include future development in the calculations;
3. all of the parking be situated on the lots interior, not along the Silver Bluff Road side;
4. all access to Silver Bluff Road for the 7.4-acre parcel shall be from the driveway shown on the concept plan and any existing driveways shall be closed
5. the planting strip along Silver Bluff Road should be 35' deep instead of 25' deep because of overhead power lines;
6. an undisturbed 10' buffer be installed adjacent to residential property;
7. the detention pond be 25' from any residential property lines or residential zoning districts and screened from residential property and residential zoning districts by a 25' undisturbed buffer;
8. that minor changes to the buildings and site may be approved by the Planning Director including changes that would preserve additional trees;
9. that the waivers of the provisions of the Access Management Ordinance requested by the applicant to allow the location of the proposed driveway be approved;
10. that the condition on the annexation in 2006 of a northbound deceleration lane on Silver Bluff Road be deleted unless required by SCDOT;
11. that there be only one monument sign with a base of brick of the same type and color used on the building façade and that the Planning Director approve the size, location, and design of the freestanding sign and the design and size of the wall signs; and
12. that the owner execute an agreement listing the conditions of approval and that the agreement be recorded by the City at the RMC office within 90 days of approval by City Council.

Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the September 22, 2014, meeting. For City Council consideration on second reading and public hearing is an ordinance to amend the Concept Plan for property owned by GMK Associates, Inc. [University Health Services, Inc.] located at 1021 Silver Bluff Road.

The public hearing was held.

Mr. Joe Roddey, of GMK Associates from Columbia, stated he is with the architect/engineer design builder for the project. Mr. Scott Ansede, of University Healthcare Systems, is with him. He said they were present to answer any questions

Council might have. He pointed out a revised site plan had been given to Council at this meeting based on the twelve conditions from the Planning Department. He said there were no problems with the twelve conditions. He said they have met or will meet all conditions based on the timeframe.

Councilman Merry pointed out there is a lot of land left on the site. He asked if they have future plans for expansion of more buildings or what would the land be used for.

Mr. Ansede stated the thing they have right now that is built into the drawings, is a layout for a potential expansion of the primary care practice to be attached. That is the only thing they have for the land right now. When they originally purchased the land the health care environment was very different. A lot has changed over the last five years. The move for care has been more focused on primary care so they changed their strategic plan for the land to accommodate that. At this point in time there are no other plans to do anything with the land. Health care changes all the time so we never know. However, the plans submitted are the only plans at this point.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve on second reading and public hearing an ordinance to amend the Concept Plan for property owned by GMK Associates, Inc. [University Healthcare Services, Inc.] located at 1021 Silver Bluff Road. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### ANNEXATION – ORDINANCE 10132014A

Kathy Harris  
475 Town Creek Road  
TPN: 106-17-08-001

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing on an ordinance to annex 475 Town Creek Road and zone it RS-15 Residential Single-Family.

Mr. LeDuc read the title of the ordinance.

#### AN ORDINANCE TO ANNEX TO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF AIKEN PROPERTY OWNED BY KATHY HARRIS AND TO ZONE THE SAME RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY (RS-15).

Mr. LeDuc stated Kathy Harris, owner of an 0.83-acre lot at 475 Town Creek Road has requested annexation and RS-15 zoning for the lot. The property is contiguous to the city limits on the north, south, and west. The property is in an established neighborhood of single-family homes, and a single-family dwelling is being constructed on the lot.

The proposed zoning is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use and Transportation Plan for Low-Density Residential use.

At their September 9, 2014, meeting, the Planning Commission recommended unanimously that the property be annexed and zoned RS-15.

Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the September 22, 2014, meeting. For Council consideration on second reading and public hearing is an ordinance to annex 475 Town Creek Road owned by Kathy Harris and zone it RS-15 Residential Single-Family.

The public hearing was held.

Councilman Ebner moved, seconded by Councilman Merry, that Council approve on second reading and public hearing an ordinance to annex 475 Town Creek Road owned by Kathy Harris and zone it RS-15 Residential Single-Family. The motion was unanimously approved.

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT – ORDINANCE 10132014BSignsVisibilityTrees

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing on an ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance regarding sign visibility and trees.

Mr. LeDuc read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF AIKEN ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING SIGN VISIBILITY AND TREES.

Mr. LeDuc stated on June 10, 2014, the Planning Commission considered a proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance regarding the spacing of trees and sign visibility. At that time the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend to Council that the proposed amendments be approved. City Council approved the revision on second reading at their July 14, 2014, meeting.

The Planning staff has received a request to allow the removal of trees along a rear property line to allow better visibility for signage on an adjacent parcel.

The Zoning Ordinance amendment which was adopted allowed the Planning Director to allow removal of a tree in the planting strip along any street frontage to allow for the location or improve the visibility of a freestanding sign as long as the maximum separation was no more than 40 feet between Small Trees and 60 feet between Large Trees. The amendment limited the Planning Director's authority to allow the removal of trees blocking signs to trees along a street frontage and only for freestanding signs.

In the meantime an additional issue has developed with the implementation of the revision that was approved on July 14, 2014, by City Council. The Planning Department has received two requests for tree removal and both of the requests would result in a separation between trees greater than what is allowed in the ordinance.

After review of the ordinance, the Planning Commission has recommended that the Zoning Ordinance be amended to read as follows:

**Section 4.6.6 Removal of Trees After Development**

After issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for a commercial or multifamily residential project in any zoning district, trees may only be removed in accordance with the following with prior approval: (1) no Significant or Grand Tree may be removed unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the City Horticulturist that one or more of the conditions at 4.6.3A(1-7) exists; or (2) the Planning Director may approve the removal of a tree in the planting strip along any street frontage and or property line to allow for the location or improve the visibility of a freestanding sign signage as long as the maximum separation is no more than 40 feet between Small Trees and 60 feet between Large Trees. If the removal of a tree results in a separation of more than 40 feet between Small Trees and 60 feet between Large Trees, the Planning Director may allow the removal on the condition that additional vegetation approved by the Planning Director is planted along the area of the tree removal.

Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the September 22, 2014, meeting. For City Council consideration on second reading and public hearing is an ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance regarding sign visibility and trees.

The public hearing was held.

Councilman Dewar stated we have come a long way on this, and he felt the ordinance amendment was a good move. He said he hopes it works. It is important for business signs to be seen.

Councilman Ebner moved, seconded by Councilman Merry that Council approve on second reading and public hearing an ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance regarding sign visibility and trees. The motion was unanimously approved.

CROSLAND PARK – ORDINANCE 10132014C

1143 Alderman Street NE

Michael and Barbara Couch

Purchase

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing on an ordinance to approve the sale of 1143 Alderman Street NE in Crosland Park.

Mr. LeDuc read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE SALE OF 1143 ALDERMAN STREET.

Mr. LeDuc stated there is a lot of history and discussion on the houses in Crosland Park. We started selling the house with the prices being much higher. The market conditions have changed since the project was started, and there has been a decline in the level of prices for the homes in Crosland Park.

Mr. LeDuc stated Michael and Barbara Couch have offered to purchase 1143 Alderman Street NE in Crosland Park for \$62,000 which is the appraised value of the property. We originally had an offer of \$70,000 for this property, but the appraisal for the sale came in at \$62,000. A pre-qualification letter from Security Federal has been provided indicating they qualify for a mortgage to purchase the property.

Staff has reviewed this purchase and recommends Council approval.

Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the September 22, 2014, meeting. For Council approval on second reading and public hearing is an ordinance to sell 1143 Alderman Street NE to Michael and Barbara Couch for \$62,000 which is the appraised value of the property, upon the terms and conditions set forth in the Purchase and Sale Agreement.

The public hearing was held.

Councilman Merry asked if the previous house that was sold was appraised for more. Mr. LeDuc stated the last appraisal in the spring on 1407 Aldrich came in at \$68,000. Presently an appraisal is being done on 1407 Aldrich. The Aldrich Street property had a few more amenities than the Alderman Street property.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve on second reading and public hearing an ordinance to sell 1143 Alderman Street for \$62,000 the appraised value of the property upon the terms and conditions set forth in the Purchase and Sale Agreement.

DOLL HOUSE – ORDINANCE

Hopelands Gardens

Aiken Garden Club Council

Lease Renewal

Mayor Cavanaugh stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to renew the lease with the Aiken Garden Club Council for the Doll House at Hopelands Gardens.

Mr. LeDuc read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXTENSION OF THE LEASE BETWEEN THE CITY OF AIKEN AND THE AIKEN GARDEN CLUB COUNCIL CONCERNING THE OPERATION OF "THE DOLL HOUSE" LOCATED IN HOPELANDS GARDENS.

Mr. LeDuc stated our lease with the Aiken Garden Club Council for the Doll House expired on September 30, 2014. The Garden Club is interested in the renewal of the lease for an additional 20 years. The initial lease was executed in 1974 and renewed in 1994. Historically, the Garden Club Council operates the Doll House and takes care of the shrubbery and landscaping immediately around the Doll House. This has always been a very positive relationship and has been a nice addition to Hopelands Gardens.

For City Council consideration on first reading is an ordinance to renew the lease with the Aiken Garden Club for the Doll House through September 30, 2034.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Merry, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to renew the lease with the Aiken Garden Club for the Doll House at Hopelands Gardens for 20 years with the lease to expire September 30, 2034. The motion was unanimously approved.

TRAFFIC SIGNALS – CONTRACT

Warranty Contract  
Rhythm Engineering  
Whiskey Road Traffic Signals  
Maintenance

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider approval of a warranty contract with Rhythm Engineering for the Whiskey Road traffic signals.

Mr. LeDuc stated in the Spring of 2009 traffic signals were installed at 17 intersections along the Whiskey Road Corridor at a cost of over \$1 million. These signals are synchronized based on algorithms and camera sensors which identify existing and oncoming traffic volumes and adjusts the signal control accordingly. Maintenance on these signals has been done by Rhythm Engineering. Their five year contract for maintenance expired in May, 2014, but they have continued monitoring our system. There is a lot of coordination and computerized work in maintaining the signals. He said he had started getting some calls concerning some issues with the signals. It was discovered that the engineering agreement that ended in May was not renewed.

Staff has received a quote from Rhythm Engineering to continue the warranty contract. Staff is recommending that City Council approve extending the warranty contract for a three year period at a cost of \$750 per intersection per year, or a total cost of \$38,250 for the three year period. A three year period is cheaper for the work. He said we do get reimbursed by the State Highway Department for a portion of maintaining all the traffic signals in the city. There is some reimbursement for this contract.

We recently became aware of this oversight and that the funds were not in this year's budget. The budget account will be 001-2150-425.32-10.

For City Council consideration is approval of a warranty contract with Rhythm Engineering for maintenance on the traffic signals at the 17 intersections along the Whiskey Road Corridor at a cost of \$38,250 for a three year period.

Councilwoman Price pointed out that Rhythm Engineering is out of Kansas, and wondered if there was a firm locally that could do the work.

Mr. LeDuc stated the maintenance is very unique in coordinating the signals. When they were installed, we were the first in the State of South Carolina. It is a unique thing. In the future we could look for someone else. Since they were the ones that developed and coordinated the installation of the signals, it was felt at this time we should stay with Rhythm Engineering for the work.



Councilman Dewar asked if they have a local representative that tells them when a situation changes so they can make changes to the algorithms.

Mr. LeDuc stated basically the maintenance is done remotely. Everything is tied into a central computer system. Councilman Merry stated there was reference to maintaining the signals. He said they would not come and repair the signals. Mr. LeDuc responded they would not come and repair the actual signal. The work they would do is the coordination of the signals.

Chief Barranco stated the maintenance is for the software that is involved. He stated there is no local representative. Rhythm Engineering monitors our system from Kansas. They can dial into our system and fix any of the problems we have. He said we have had very good cooperation with the project.

Mayor Cavanaugh pointed out that Columbia County had this traffic signal system, and we looked at their system to make sure it was working fine for them. Then we brought it to Aiken. He pointed out there are many times when one can go all the way from downtown to the Mall without stopping.

Councilman Dewar stated he wished we had that system downtown because sometimes you can wait a long time at the signals downtown.

Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilman Merry, that Council approve the warranty contract with Rhythm Engineering for maintenance on the traffic signals at the 17 intersections along the Whiskey road Corridor at a cost of \$38,250 for a three year period. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### AIKEN COMMUNITY PLAYHOUSE

##### Marquee

##### Projector

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the city has received a request from the Aiken Community Playhouse for the city to share the cost of upgrading the theater marquee and a new projector.

Mr. LeDuc stated the City has had a unique partnership with the Aiken Community Playhouse from the inception of the construction of the building. Over the years the City has partnered with them on several improvements, and the partnership has been very successful. The City owns the building, and we have a long term lease with them for the building. The Playhouse has looked at a couple of changes that they would like to make, and staff is in agreement with them.

Mr. LeDuc stated the City has received a request from the Aiken Community Playhouse asking the City to participate in one-half the cost of upgrading the Theater marquee. Currently every time the marquee is changed one has to put the letters on the board by hand. The City and ACP have evaluated replacing the URS Center for the Performing Arts marquee in the past, but found the cost to be too expensive. Members of the ACP board have continued their efforts to find a way to upgrade the marquee and have suggested an alternate approach which uses a high quality, multi-colored, flat digital display that would fit into the current marquee space. The cost for the recommended display is \$26,752. The proposed sign would let people know about upcoming events, what is currently playing, etc. It is felt the proposed sign would be a great benefit to the Playhouse and the City in the future.

The ACP Board voted to approve and fund this project if the City would pay a minimum of one-half the cost which would amount to \$13,376.

The ACP Board has also requested that the City consider funding one-half the cost of a projector for the Theater. The existing projector is about 10 years old and has

malfunctioned several times at critical moments. The ACP Board has researched the purchase of a new projector and is requesting the City to partner with them in the purchase of a new and upgraded projector at a total cost of \$4,150. They are requesting the City to fund one-half of the cost which would be \$2,075.

If Council approves these two requests from ACP, funds could be available from Local Accommodations Tax Funds 007-8370-491.91-09. The total cost requested from the City for the updated Theater marquee and a new projector would be \$15,451. We currently have over \$200,000 in undesignated Accommodations Tax Funds. He said we are doing very well with Accommodations Tax funds this year. We are about \$30,000 over what we received this time last year in the first three months. Funding is available if Council would be willing to provide these funds.

Mr. LeDuc said one of the things we also discussed a couple of months ago, was the possibility of allowing a non-profit organization to use the Conference Center on a continuing basis. This would be good for them and good for the City from a financial standpoint. In the future we will be discussing the further use of the space on the first floor and possibly some space upstairs with ACP or any of the non-profit organizations that may like to enter into a long term use of the facilities. It is a way to find ways we can save money, or make money, and better utilize our facilities.

For Council consideration are two requests from the Aiken Community Playhouse, including the upgrade of the Theater marquee at a cost of \$13,376 and a new projector for the Theater at a cost of \$2,075, for a total cost of \$15,451 to the City of Aiken. If Council approves partnering with ACP for these two projects, funding would be available from Local Accommodations Tax Funds.

Councilman Ebner stated he had a couple of questions. He said a few months ago there was a lot of discussion about signs and the lumens. He asked if the proposed sign fits within the new sign regulations. Mr. Wade responded that was correct. Councilman Ebner asked how often the message on the sign could change. Mr. Wade stated the sign could change every ten seconds according to the sign regulations.

Mr. LeDuc stated the sign could change more often if we wanted it to, but there are regulations on how often the sign can change. Mr. Wade stated the sign could not change more often than ten seconds according to the sign regulations. Mr. LeDuc stated if we wanted it to change less often we could. The sign could be set to change every minute, five minutes, etc.

Councilman Ebner stated he just wanted to be sure Council is aware what is happening. Another question is when someone rents the building, is the projector included in the cost of the rental.

Mr. LeDuc stated currently the projector is included in the cost of the rental.

Councilman Ebner asked if there was a Memorandum of Understanding or an operating procedure between the City and the Aiken Community Playhouse and the two users—URS and the Playhouse.

Mr. LeDuc stated there is an agreement, and he thought it had been renewed recently. Councilman Ebner asked if it came to Council for renewal.

Mr. Thurmond Whatley, President of the ACP, stated the Aiken Community Playhouse exercised its option to renew, and it did not require redoing the lease.

Councilman Ebner asked if the lease had been updated as far as all the rules, etc. He pointed out that things change in 10 to 15 years.

Mr. Whatley stated from the side of the Aiken Community Playhouse Board of Directors, the Memorandum of Understanding (lease) was the same as was put in place originally. They did not ask for adjustments at the renewal date about two years ago. He said he did

not know about other renters of the facilities by the City. He said there is a rental contract that renters have to agree to and that can be updated. As far as the lease agreement with the Playhouse, it was not adjusted. They did not see a need for an adjustment.

Councilman Ebner asked if the lease agreement and the MOU are the same paper or two different things.

Mr. LeDuc stated they are two different things. There is a Memorandum of Understanding (lease) with the Aiken Community Playhouse that allows them to use the facility on X number of days and the City to have X number of days. Through the years the dates have pretty much stayed the same with the Playhouse on when performances have been added. The major difference with the Playhouse over the last few years, is the Youth Wing and the development. Changes are happening there. It was felt that the agreement we had with the Playhouse originally did not need any major changes. He pointed out that on the days that the City has use of the facilities, the City has a contract for the rental, and this has been updated over the years as we looked at prices and hours of operation, etc. There is a separate contractual agreement with the Playhouse. We have a separate contractual agreement with URS as to their use of the lobby and their use of the Theater. URS has so many days available for use of the Theater each year. In turn generally URS helps decorate the lobby at Christmas time and do some other things such as contribute to helping keep the facility cleaned up. The lease has worked out fairly well over the years to his knowledge.

Councilman Ebner stated since his time on Council as these agreements come up Council typically looks at them. He asked if the MOU and lease were automatic renewals. He said he could understand the lease being an automatic renewal.

Mr. Whatley stated the lease was an automatic renewal unless the Playhouse asked to renegotiate, and it was renewed last year.

Councilman Ebner asked if the MOU had to come to Council for review every ten years. He said when the MOU was done for the Friends of the Railroad there was a time frame for renewal.

Mr. LeDuc stated he did not know if it had to come before Council, but it was renewed. Councilman Ebner stated he would check on that later.

Mr. Whatley stated the last time he was before Council was to speak in favor of going ahead with the downtown facility. He said he had been on the Playhouse Board most of the time. He said they often tour theaters and those from other communities come in and look at our facilities. Their comments are how did the ACP merit such a great, great theater.

Councilwoman Price stated that the marquee has needed to be upgraded for some time as well as the projector. She pointed out currently they have to take a pole stick and remove and replace the letters for the current event.

Mr. LeDuc stated if he had been here when the MOU came up for renewal, he would have wanted to bring it to Council not for changes, but to recognize the fact that we have such a great relationship. He pointed out anytime you have a partnership with another agency, non-profit or a for-profit, there are some pitfalls that can happen. He said there were some pitfalls, but we were able to work them out and take care of the details and the relationship while he was City Manager was an excellent relationship. He thanked Mr. Whatley and the Board for their cooperation. Mr. Whatley stated it had been a model relationship from everybody's point of view.

Councilwoman Price stated the only concern she had was utilization of the theater which is why we are looking at use of the facilities downstairs in terms of maximizing use of the theater space because there are more people who would like to have events at the Theater,

but the stage is set up for rehearsal, etc. Depending on what is done with the Conference Center that will allow some relief for the theater.

Mr. Whatley stated that is possible although there are contractual dates that allow the Playhouse to have two weeks before a production. He said they are good about working with dates as long as they do not have a show on stage. He said it is cooperation that has made this work extremely well.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated it amazes him how many productions the Playhouse has and how wonderful they are.

Mr. Whatley pointed out that Jimmy Moore was present with him. Mr. Moore is the Playhouse Technical Facilities Manager this year.

Councilman Merry moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve the expenditure of \$15,451 from Accommodations Tax funds to partner with the Aiken Community Playhouse for one-half the cost of upgrading the Theater marquee and purchase of a new projector. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### EMPLOYEE POSITIONS

Unfreeze

Finance Department

Accountant I

Parks, Recreation & Tourism

Facility Assistant

Maintenance Mechanic

Public Services Department

Maintenance Worker I

Vehicle Operator

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider a request to unfreeze some employee positions.

Mr. LeDuc stated when Council approved the 2014-15 budget one of the conditions was the freezing of all existing and proposed positions. To unfreeze these positions department heads could request Council to open up these positions on a case by case basis. We have nine open positions for Council to consider unfreezing. This would allow the departments to fill these positions through the normal hiring process. He said these positions were in the previous year's budget, and are vacancies that have occurred within the last few months.

The following positions are requested to be unfrozen:

#### FINANCE DEPARTMENT

1. Accountant I - 1 vacancy. Full-time position. The Accountant processes all accounts payable for the City and writes checks every Tuesday and Thursday as well as processing purchasing card transactions.

#### PARKS, RECREATION AND TOURISM

1. Facility Assistant - 1 vacancy. Part-time position. The Facility Assistant works mostly weekends at tournaments keeping facilities maintained and fields prepped.

2. Maintenance Mechanic - 1 vacancy. Full-time position. The position serves all the PRT Division and facilities as work requests are made for repairs.

## PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT

1. Maintenance Worker I - 5 vacancies. Full-time positions. These positions are needed in 4135 Building and Grounds, 4141 Garbage, and 4143 Recycling Divisions.

2. Vehicle Operator - 1 vacancy. Full-time position. The position is a driver for a recycling truck.

For Council consideration are requests to unfreeze one full-time position in the Finance Department, one part-time position and one full-time position in the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department, and six full-time positions in the Public Services Department.

Councilman Dewar pointed out that the headlines in today's Aiken Standard newspaper were not good for the City of Aiken as we are losing our long term manager of the Hall of Fame and Hopelands Gardens, Lisa Hall. He said this matter was discussed several months ago and Council expressed concerns about Ms. Hall's departure and the workload that she has. He said he would suggest that we work hard to get a suitable replacement because the Hall of Fame and Hopelands Gardens is a one person shop.

Mr. LeDuc stated staff has discussed bringing someone in before Ms. Hall leaves because we don't want there to be a gap in the operation. We want to bring someone in before she leaves so we can have that new person shadow her for a while before she leaves.

Councilman Ebner stated he understood Mr. LeDuc to say that there will be requests for other positions at the next meeting to be unfrozen. He pointed out that in May, 2012, Council authorized five new positions for Engineering and Utilities. Those positions were to be working on fixing water pipes. He asked if those employees were in the system now.

Mr. Grinton stated the process they use is that they hire from temporary agencies to fill the positions. When we have had them for a certain amount of time and are convinced they are good applicants, then we process them into the workforce. He said we have people on board who have not been hired permanently into the City yet. They do not show on the reports as they are not employees of the City of Aiken yet.

Mr. LeDuc pointed out that in the current budget there are several positions that Mr. Grinton had asked to fill concerning some additional crews to look at some of the sewer and water systems and to work on some of these areas, and more exercising of the valves, etc. These positions have not been filled. At some in time we will bring those back to Council. He said he wanted to wait to see how the water and sewer revenue was going to come in during the summer months. He said the revenue has come in. He said those positions have not been filled, because those positions have not been released in the budget.

Councilman Dewar moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council unfreeze the positions requested by the Department Directors and allow them to be filled. The motion was unanimously approved.

ANNUAL REPORT2013-14

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the city's annual report had been prepared for Council's information.

Mr. LeDuc stated each year all the departments prepare a summary of their previous year's activities highlighting the results of the various goals and objectives. This Annual Report includes a tremendous amount of information which can be used over the next year as you discuss various issues and projects. Each of the departments have compiled information and recapped many accomplishments of the City. He said normally the report would have been ready about a month earlier, but we have been dealing with other issues. He said a lot of work and time has been spent by the departments in getting the

report to Council. He said it does contain a lot of great information. He thanked staff for their efforts every day and especially for the annual report.

For City Council consideration, is acceptance of the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2013-14. City Council would receive this report as information.

Councilman Dewar stated he wanted to thank the Aiken Standard for their work in getting the Council meeting televised. He said it is a good effort to get news to the public. It is difficult for some people to attend the Council meetings so this will be an opportunity for people see what Council does and how it is done. He said he would like to see the public feedback on televising the Council meetings. He said he hoped the people appreciate the efforts to become more and more transparent. He said Aiken is one of the leading municipalities in transparency and televising the meetings is another step in that direction. He thanked all who made it happen, including staff.

Councilman Ebner pointed out that in the Issues and Updates memo Mr. LeDuc covered this matter. He pointed out that Mr. LeDuc stated once we get the bids in from the Citizens Park fencing, he would bring that to Council for edification if we need anything on financing. He asked about Rye Patch Stables which is in Capital Sales Tax III.

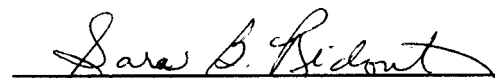
Mr. LeDuc stated there are a number of projects that staff will recap for Council. He said we will probably have a work session at the October 27, 2014 meeting at 6:45 p.m. During that work session we will take all the projects for which we have had interfund loans and others that we feel we will need loans for sometime between now and February or May and list those for Council. He pointed out that we will get Capital Projects Sales Tax Funds from the County in cycle in November, 2014, February, 2015, and May, 2015. He said he would make that listing for Council. He pointed out that The Alley would be on the listing. There would be some money spent on the Senior/Youth Center, and other projects that we will also be looking at. He said he would try to outline how much and when the money needs to be borrowed.

Councilman Ebner stated he felt that is important because we need to keep up with the cash flow. Also, we need to be sure the projects we are doing follow the order that we said they would.

Mr. LeDuc stated we would have a work session to recap the CPST funds at the next meeting at 6:45 p.m.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 P.M.



Sara B. Ridout  
City Clerk