

Aiken City Council MinutesREGULAR MEETING

February 24, 2014

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

Others Present: Richard Pearce, Gary Smith, Stuart Bedenbaugh, George Grinton, Kim Abney, Ed Evans, Charles Barranco, Glenn Parker, Alicia Davis, Sara Ridout, Maayan Schechter of the Aiken Standard, Andrew O'Byrne of the Aiken Leader, TV Channels 6 and 26, and about 40 citizens.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Councilwoman Diggs 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. He pointed out that citizens could only speak on the items on the agenda.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Horizons meetings of January 31 and February 1, 2014 and the regular meeting of February 10, 2014, were considered for approval. Councilman Ebner moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve the January 31, February 1, and February 10, 2014, minutes as submitted.

PRESENTATIONSWinter StormPAXResolutionState of EmergencyLand Use Agreement

Mayor Cavanaugh stated staff will update Council on the recent ice storm. Council will consider a State of Emergency Resolution and Land Use Agreement.

Mr. Pearce stated several key department directors will present updates and damage assessments after ice storm PAX visited us on February 12 and 13, 2014. Aiken County Council has declared a state of emergency in preparation for hopefully obtaining a federal declaration that PAX-delivered damages are severe enough to our area to constitute a major natural disaster to Aiken County and the City of Aiken.

We hope this presentation will prove helpful to Council. We will also have for Council's consideration a Resolution declaring a State of Emergency and authorizing budget expenditures of matching funds in anticipation of receiving Federal Emergency Management Agency funds (FEMA). A local landowner is also offering temporary use of a tract of land on Powderhouse Road to store storm debris, and we seek Council approval of that agreement, which is included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Pearce stated the city has over 260 miles of roadways in the City of Aiken. He said little did we know when Council met on February 10, 2014, that the storm that was brewing and on its way to visit us would bring over an inch of rain. He said he had had an opportunity to spend a great deal of time with staff, both in the middle of the storm and in the storm's aftermath. He said he was happy to report that city crews have picked

up over 12.5% of the total city's storm debris. He said Mr. Coakley is present and will talk to Council about our plan for picking up storm debris. Mr. Grinton is present to talk about some of our utilities and the impact on some of our utility buildings and fences as a result of the storm. We did have an opportunity to sit down with the advance team of FEMA officials on Friday. He said, as Council is aware, we will not have a state of emergency and disaster declared until the President signs off on it. We are encouraged that it will happen within the next few weeks. After we hear the presentations we would ask that Council declare a state of emergency in the City of Aiken. That will help us with procurement and also help us with the debris that we are handling as being handled within the state of emergency umbrella.

Mr. Pearce stated Council will hear from Chief Barranco about the various actions that the Aiken Department of Public Safety took throughout the winter weather event.

Chief Barranco stated he was present to talk to Council about their preparation, the events, and the response encountered. He said the storm was something we don't deal with every day, and they thought preparation was very important. He said late Friday afternoon, February 7, we started getting reports of a potential storm coming our way. The department monitored the storm over the weekend. Then on Monday, February 10, it seemed the storm was beginning to bear down on us. Staff began preparing ourselves by recovering equipment from storage areas, and establishing communication within the city, county and state levels to share information from Emergency Management. On Tuesday, February 11, preparations continued with making sure the 4-wheel drive vehicles were available to them, and working with other city departments to make that happen. The Emergency Operation Center was prepared and then adjusted staff schedules to make sure we had adequate staff during the event. The first wave of the storm started moving across Aiken on Tuesday. On Wednesday, February 12, the storm damage started and increased hourly as frozen precipitation continued. The severe cold weather continued on February 13 with ice and power outages and travel hazards increasing. On February 14 some thawing began, but still cold weather and many power outages persisted. He pointed out the storm is still affecting the city today with recovery continuing.

Chief Barranco stated the first emergency response that Public Safety responded to was on February 12, 2014. It was a structure fire at the Reserve at Woodside. Units found a hidden fire inside the wall. It was a result of trying to heat the home with gas logs. There were three calls regarding heating fires during the storm. These calls were when the icy conditions were at their height. He said we were very clear to staff to be careful on the way, as we had to get there to be able to help people. On Thursday, February 13, there was another structure fire at the Pine Acres Campgrounds. An elderly handicapped female was rescued unharmed. The fire was located in the fire place and adjacent wall. There was another rescue on February 13 as well. It was on Belair Terrace off Dibble Road. He pointed out trees were still down at this time in both directions. The response was to an asthmatic patient. He said Engineer and Utilities and Public Services sent two crews over. Also, Public Safety Officers were sent by foot to the residence to start assessing the patient. He said they had to cut substantial trees and push them to the side of the road to be able to get the patient. She was successfully transported to the hospital.

Chief Barranco stated on Friday, February 14, there was another structure fire that extended out of a fire place and got into some cracks of the mortar of the fire place and dripped down and started a fire in a very sizeable home. Crews responded and did an excellent job in being able to extinguish the fire from underneath the house. Then on Friday evening there was the earthquake. He said the department was inundated with phone calls as to what was happening. The dispatch center was able to find out that it was an earthquake. He said they answered a lot of calls, but did not find any damage as a result of the earthquake. On early Saturday, February 15, the department responded to another structure fire on Colleton Avenue which was determined to be electrical in nature. This displaced at least 10 people. There was significant fire damage to three of the six apartments. The other three apartments had smoke and water damage. The residents were taken to Smith-Hazel warming center until the Red Cross could find them a place to stay.

Chief Barranco stated on Saturday, February 15, there was another structure fire on Rosin Court which they believe was electrical in origin as power started to come back on.

Chief Barranco stated in order to be prepared there were staff meetings daily with the City Manager's Office, Public Safety, Parks, Recreation and Tourism, Engineering and Utilities, and Public Services to communicate throughout the city the different needs and concerns that everybody had. Extra fire personnel were assigned to the Engine Companies at Headquarters and Station 2. He said they expected downed trees and the large apparatus would not be able to get around to different areas. We also put supply lines on the forestry trucks, the four-wheel drive trucks, to be able to have a response vehicle to fight fire. In the field personnel prioritized response calls. They sent Public Safety Officers to some of the downed power lines to assess those situations without having to respond with fire trucks as the roads were so dangerous. There was additional staff on the streets throughout the event to help the shifts as needed.

Chief Barranco stated as part of the response the cooperation between the city departments was excellent. He pointed out staff met daily and as issues arose they were able to address them in a very timely fashion. It was felt one of the reasons the communications were effective is the recent upgrade to the radio system and being able to use a common channel to be able to communicate. He said on the rescue off Dibble Road staff used the channel to be able to communicate through all the city crews. He said they used generators on the main intersections to keep those up and running. With the power outage, the department was continuing to advise people to stay inside and off the roads. Although the roads were clear, there were still a lot of power outages, and only one lane on some of the two lane roads was clear. He said it was a concern for all to be able to have the emergency response. Later on, as the power needs decreased, the staff was able to reallocate some of the generators to neighborhoods that were still out of power just to shed some light in the neighborhood as well as some charging stations for cell phones or laptops, etc.

Chief Barranco stated in summary, as you could imagine, the Dispatch Center was inundated with phone calls. The week before the storm the incoming calls at Headquarters was 23,522. The week of the storm there were 10,000 calls in addition to what they normally get, with about 33,681 calls. In the two hours after the earthquake the Dispatch Center received over 300 calls at the Dispatch Center. Public Safety had three dispatchers on duty and others were called in at that time because we did not know when the calls would slow down. He said Public Services and Engineering & Utilities supplied personnel at the Dispatch Center to answer calls and get information regarding the downed lines and downed limbs to the crews. He pointed out again that the recently acquired radio system to communicate across city departments greatly enhanced response and made a huge impact on the response in the storm. He showed a picture of personnel from the Sheriff's Office and Public Safety joined together to put generators out in neighborhoods. It was a cooperative effort not only among city staff, but county agencies as well.

Mr. Coakley, Public Services Director, stated the first 36 hours for his department was pretty much cutting the limbs and pushing them out of the roads. He said they were trying to keep the roads open as quickly as the limbs were coming down. He said they deployed every backhoe in Public Services and Engineering and Utilities Departments. He said everybody who was certified to run a chainsaw was out there in the storm. He said many of his personnel worked from 20 to 22 hours the first day, slept for 3 or 4 hours, and came back. One of the big things they had to do was assess the damage as they were going along. He provided Council a picture of the 2004 ice storm. He said they were using that as a perspective on how much was out there. He said they met with a couple of utility guys from SCE&G in waiting for them to cut a line so the crews could cut the limbs. He said the SCE&G personnel told them that the damage was two to three times as bad as the 2004 storm. Mr. Coakley showed a picture of the debris collected in the 2004 storm. He said that was 100,000 cubic yards of debris. He said there was about a \$1 million request to FEMA for assistance. FEMA refunded the city \$756,688 for the work in 2004. Mr. Coakley stated they were trying to gain a grasp of how bad the damage assessment was. He said the crews started cleaning up the trees and limbs after the first 36 hours. He said the crews were deployed to different parts of the city and

started marking on a map the streets where debris had been collected. We asked the GIS Technician to put a polygon around the streets where debris had been collected and measure them in acres. That was done and that is how we were able to calculate that the crews had collected 12% of the city. He said we know the total acres of the city, and know how many acres we have picked up in the polygons. He said there are strict regulations to comply with FEMA rules on how the debris has to be picked up. He said he had made a copy of some load tickets for Council's information. He said they have to list who picked it up and what street it came off of. It has to be inspected by an inspector to make sure that the truck is completely full. He pointed out the next page in the handout was a list as they check in at the drop site. He felt of interest was the column that lists the time the trucks came through. He pointed out there is a truck coming past the inspector every three to five minutes non-stop all day long. He pointed out the last page in the packet. He said senior staff met with FEMA and tried to come up with some way to logically forecast what is out there to be picked up other than just they felt that it was two times bigger than 2004. He said they took the load tickets and totaled them as of Saturday night when they stopped working. He said that showed they had 14,872 cubic yards. He said we knew that was 12% of the city. He said they set up a simple ratio proportion and cross multiplied and came up with an estimate of 123,933 cubic yards of debris. He said that is what is out there now. He pointed out, however, as soon as the trucks go down the streets more debris is coming out. He said staff expects a second and possibly a third pass to get all the debris picked up. For the second pass we diminished the percentage to 75% of the original number and the third pass we diminished it down to 50%. We added the three passes and came up with a total projected cubic yardage of 278,850 cubic yards of debris. He said if that is true the SCE&G lineman who said it was two to three times as bad as 2004 was pretty close to being accurate.

Mr. Coakley stated the city had received some mutual aid from several other cities. A crew was here from the City of Rock Hill, three crews from Lexington, a crew from Springdale, a crew from Clinton, and two crews from Greenwood were assisting the city in picking up the debris. There has been an offer from the City of Greenville, whom the City of Aiken helped in 2006. In 2006 they had a severe ice storm, and the City of Aiken sent crews for about a month to help them get through their first pass. He said the other cities are trying to help us get through the first pass.

Mr. George Grinton, Engineering and Utilities Director, said as the other departments, the Engineering and Utilities Department tried to prepare for the storm. He said the crews got our pump stations and the water tanks ready. They fueled the diesel generators and pump-around stations, filled all the water storage tanks to maximum, started the generators and emergency equipment to confirm operation, and obtained salt from SCDOT. We have an agreement that whenever there is storm event SCDOT does provide salt to municipalities. He said our two dump trucks and two flatbed trucks were filled with salt to be used on the main thoroughfares. We organized our emergency crew assignments into 12 hour / 24 hour coverage assignments. That included operators, dispatchers and equipment. We distributed some of our equipment to areas around the city as we did not want to have to take everything from the Kershaw Station over roads that might be hard to pass. He said they looked at north, south, east, and west quadrants of the city and then strategically located equipment on city property where it would be available for crews in that area. He said they then waited for the storm.

Mr. Grinton stated when the storm hit we divided our crews and combined them with Public Services personnel. He said the Public Services Department has tree removal equipment and Engineering and Utilities has the heavy equipment and personnel. Combining the two made sense, so the work could be coordinated and dispatched from one location. He said the utility dispatchers were located at the Emergency Operations Center to help the Public Safety dispatchers take the extra 10,000 calls. The utility dispatchers then could call to the Public Services dispatchers so we could send the crews to the locations. He said his dispatchers know where there are utility issues and what equipment we have. He said it was a very efficient way to help Public Safety and to better coordinate with Public Services. He said that was some of the cooperation that Mr. Coakley and Chief Barranco talked about. It was pointed out that this was tried for the first time, and it worked very well. That took a lot of the load off Dispatch because they could transfer the calls and go to the emergency calls. Mr. Grinton stated being side by

side at Dispatch made a real team. For the first 24 to 36 hours the crews focused on street clearing and salting of the bridges. The priority was to keep the main routes through the city clear and to have access to the hospital. Mr. Pearce pointed out that the road grader crew was Phil Berley and Harvey Stone, and they scraped the roads all night long and never stopped. Mr. Grinton stated the objective was to keep one lane through each way on the big roads and one lane through everywhere else.

Mr. Grinton stated power was lost intermittently on Wednesday, so the crews spent a lot of time visiting the water and sanitary sewer pump stations and restarting pumps and motors. He said Wednesday was when we started losing power to most of the city. At that point we started the main station. He said we have 5 big lift stations, and we started the generators and pumps. At Town Creek we kept a well and a booster pump running on the southside. Because we don't have elevated tanks we have to keep a booster pump running if we are going to maintain pressure. The water crews started also having to move the generators to the water tanks where the SCADA systems are. He said we have a system where we can see the status of all the pumps and motors, but we have to have small generators to keep the power going to the small systems so those were deployed.

Mr. Grinton stated the pump station crews started moving the portable generators and pump-arounds to the highest flow sanitary sewer lift stations to pump down the wet wells to prevent an overflow. He said the crews were going back and forth between the wells based on what we know is the rate at which they fill up. He said on Thursday, February 13, 2014, we obtained three additional pump-around units from Charleston. Those were put on the highest flow lift stations that did not have backup equipment. We obtained one generator from Atlanta so that gave us pump-arounds at four of the higher flow lift stations so we could move the other units around to other stations. On Friday, February 14, 2014, we obtained three vacuum tankers from Columbia. Because we had so many small stations out but still filling up, we had the vacuum trucks go around and vacuumed the wet wells and then we transported it to the stations where we had the emergency power running. We emptied it and then went back to another station and filled it. We just kept doing a circuit. He said power started coming back on Friday night and Saturday. We had one tanker on Saturday deployed. By Sunday we were able to move the generators to the locations that still had no power.

Mr. Grinton stated in the aftermath we cleared debris from right of way, access to the stations and cleaned the pump station overflows. He said eight stations had relative minor overflows, with two large overflows and six minor overflows. These were reported to DHEC. We cleaned up the areas. He said we are continuing to provide equipment and personnel to Public Services as they are still collecting debris and cleaning up and will be for a while.

Mr. Glenn Parker, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Director, stated he had some photos that he would like to show as to what staff is seeing out there. He said the first picture is of Hopelands and Rye Patch. Mr. Parker said he, Mr. Pearce, Lisa Hall, and Tom Rapp walked through Hopelands last week. He said it looked like a bomb had gone off. Trees are down everywhere. He said they did not think any buildings in Hopelands were damaged. There are big trees lying right beside buildings. He said their priority has been to reschedule and move events that were scheduled at Hopelands and Rye Patch. He said staff has been trying to find a place for them to have their events. He pointed out that the Horse of the Year Celebration is coming up March 16 for recognition of Palace Malice. He said that event has already been moved. He said things are at a standstill as far as cleanup at this point. He said he had been asked if Hopelands would be cleaned by the first concert in May. He said they are sure it can be cleaned by May, but no promises before that. He said there will probably have to be a special crew with a lot of bucket trucks to go in Hopelands to take care of the limbs. A lot of stuff is hanging. There is very little structural damage. He pointed out there was some damage to a fence. He pointed out that Citizens Park also took a good hit. He stated the fence which is down is at the original complex, the biggest field with the largest fence we have at Citizens Park. An estimate has been received for replacement of the fence. Bid specs are being drawn up to get that work done. He said this is the field where there is money in the Capital Projects Sales Tax to redo the area in the fall. They are trying to evaluate this so

hopefully whatever is done now to fix it, they can be planning for what is to be done this fall.

Mr. Parker stated Mr. Coakley had briefly mentioned the debris pile from 2004. He showed a picture of where the debris pile is now before they started bringing in debris at Citizens Park. He pointed out you can already see a pile starting to accumulate. He showed a picture of the Woodward House where his office is located. He said that area really took a hit and lot of the large trees are down. Mr. Parker pointed out a lot of the neighborhood parks took hits. We did not lose any equipment. There was some fence damage at Perry Park and at Crosland Park. He pointed out that the Smith-Hazel Center was a shining star through the storm. He pointed out that in the 2004 storm the Smith-Hazel Center was one of the only places that had power. It served as a warming center in 2004. He said it served as a warming center again for this storm. He said the maximum number of people at the center was about 75 to 80 people. He said they used the gym floor. We brought in mats. People were volunteering to feed the people. He said Betty Gyles probably spent 2 ½ days at the Center. He said the spirit there was very good at Smith-Hazel. He said Tri-Development was without power for some length of time. He said Tri-Development spent the entire time at Smith-Hazel.

Mr. Parker then pointed out PRT's timeline and preparation for the storm. Staff prepped on Tuesday, February 11, 2014. On Wednesday, February 12, 2014, PRT was closed. He said PRT staffed the motor grader from 9 a.m. Wednesday to 9 a.m. Thursday morning. He pointed out with the motor grader we had another vehicle following behind the motor grader to provide a buffer to keep those folks safe. He said PRT staff started being called in about 10:30 a.m. Wednesday morning, February 12, to assist with cleanup. He said on Thursday PRT had about 50 people on the ground helping clean up on Thursday, February 13. Smith-Hazel opened on Wednesday night as a warming station. The first night there were only 3 or 4 people, but on Thursday there were about 55 from Tri-Development and about 25 others who were without power.

Mr. Parker stated the PRT crews were sent to Woodside and then to Houndslake, Southwood and Town Creek to take care of issues. He said PRT crews took care of that section of the city. He pointed out that on Friday the weather was starting to warm up and people were hitting the walking tracks and the walking trails. He said crews had to make sure those were safe for everybody. On Saturday, February 15, the Weeks Center opened. The debris station at Pine Log and Centennial was opened on Saturday. That has been designated for city residents to bring their debris. He said crews are trying to keep the pile at Citizens Park for the city crews to take debris. He said PRT has kept a person there seven days a week pushing that pile, trying to keep it as compact as possible. On Sunday Smith-Hazel remained open with guests from Tri-Development and some others. On Monday, February 17, the city reopened and all the PRT programs started to reopen. He pointed out baseball registration is this time of year. He said staff was getting phone calls about extending the registration. He said registration was extended. Mr. Parker stated that on Monday, February 17, Smith-Hazel was closed as a warming center.

Mr. Pearce stated we met with the FEMA advance team on Friday, February 21, 2014. We presented this information and other information as well. As of Monday, February 24, 2014, the City has issued 54 business licenses for folks that have come into the area to work on cleanup. When we met with FEMA there is a new pilot program, and we are looking at the feasibility of the City participating in the program. After Katrina and the storm in New Jersey FEMA has a pilot program that reimburses at a higher rate if you clean up your debris in 30 days. A next higher rate at 60 days and a third tier for what is cleaned up in 90 days. All of these levels are higher than their standard 75% reimbursement. He said we have made amazing progress with the out of town companies. Mr. Coakley's crews have been admirable, and Mr. Parker's crews and their willingness to go to Woodside and the other neighborhoods on the south side have been wonderful. He said he could not say enough high praises about Phil Berley and Harvey Stone keeping the roads open Wednesday night when everything was going very, very badly and continuing to get worse. He said he knows all those have made a major difference not only in our ability to get around to clean up, but also to make sure

emergency vehicles have access. We set up in the EOC, but did not activate the EOC because staff was staying on top of what was happening. The Sheriff issued his directive that vehicles stay off the road. He said he tried to stay in touch with Council and provided about a dozen updates. The people from FEMA were very complimentary about our documentation and record keeping so far. With 12% of the first pass done, we believe that Mr. Coakley's estimates of about 277,000 cubic yards of debris to pick up is a very good estimate. That estimate is something that we will work from. With the damages that we have, with the overtime we are paying, with the crews that we have fed, with the lift stations being without power and the remedial measures we had to take with the additional equipment we brought in and several other areas, we are very comfortable that we have about a \$2 to \$3 million effort in the city limits. He felt FEMA validated the estimates on Friday. He said he sat down with the Finance Director and took a look at our reserves. Depending on our success of the participation with the pilot program, we believe we have adequate reserve funds on hand to handle the expenses that we will have to cover as our share. He said we were very fortunate that FEMA reimbursed at 75% for the ice event in 2004, and the State of South Carolina stepped up with another 12.5%. Along with the FMEA advance team, we had a representative from the South Carolina Emergency Management Department, and they are not making any commitments at this point about any percentage reimbursement. He said he would keep Council informed. He said we may need assistance with contacting the State and encouraging them through our Legislative Delegation to make a full reimbursement so we don't suffer any unnecessary impacts to our budget. He asked if at this time Council had any questions. He said he has a couple of action items for Council.

Mayor Cavanaugh thanked staff for their leadership and the superb job they did. He said he was out and about checking on the storm. He said it was wonderful to see everyone working together that is so important on anything we do. Mayor Cavanaugh asked if there were any city staff or employee injuries. Mr. Pearce stated he was aware of some minor injuries, but nothing serious.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he was sure there were some lessons learned as not all staff members were with the city when we had the 2004 ice storm. He asked if each could say that they had lessons learned that could improve the next time.

Councilwoman Diggs stated she was impressed with the preparation that staff made before the storm. She said she was thankful for the response during the storm. She said it could have been much worse than it was, but we came through and again we proved that we go on. We pull together, and we go on. She said that is what all the departments did. She thanked staff for all their work.

Councilman Dewar pointed out that in the neighborhoods he has seen some very large sized logs and long branches. He asked if the trucks would have the capability to chain saw and cut the longer branches. He pointed out that people are not cutting the debris into 4 foot pieces as we would like for them to do. Mr. Coakley responded that every truck we have loading has a chain saw in the truck and a certified operator. He said they have the capability of taking the big logs. Mr. Pearce stated it would be helpful though if the citizens could help by cutting the debris into the 4 foot length. Mr. Coakley stated the truck is strong enough, but the 4 foot length helps keep from banging into mailboxes, etc.

Councilwoman Price asked what we plan to do with the debris that the city has collected. Mr. Pearce stated Mr. Bedenbaugh has helped with that as Purchasing Agent. He said we are in conversation with several vendors, and depending on our ability to chip the debris up, they may be interested in purchasing the debris. He said we have talked with contractors at the site as well as some people in the vicinity in the Augusta, Newberry areas. He said we are already having that discussion.

Councilwoman Price stated another question deals with business license. She said it had been mentioned that the city has issued 54 new business licenses for tree work. She asked if these are small or large business and if there are any within the city limits. Mr. Pearce stated he thought the majority of the businesses that purchased a business license were from out of the area. He said there had been tree businesses from as far away as

Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Texas, Florida and others. He said he was happy to see as he rides around town that our local tree services are out in force, and they are working very hard.

Councilwoman Price stated her third question had to do with the thousands of phone calls that Public Safety received. She pointed out that people were working long hours. She asked how many shift hours they worked and what Chief Barranco would say most of the calls were related to. Chief Barranco stated staff had estimated about 300 hours of overtime for Public Safety only. He stated Bennett Tucker and Jason Rabun are in the audience. They are two volunteers who spent a night at Station 2. He thanked them for their assistance. Chief Barranco stated the shifts were adjusted so we did not have to accrue all that additional overtime. He said most of the calls were related to broken limbs, power lines down, and there were concerns when the power started coming back on as the people were concerned about their houses. Mr. Pearce pointed out there were calls for safety checks, wellness checks on senior citizens, and transportation to move senior citizens around. He said it was fortunate that while we were receiving those calls the incidents of crime occurring went way down so Public Safety was able to help with providing service. Chief Barranco stated they transported a good many to Smith-Hazel and to relatives to help take care of their elderly. Chief Barranco stated we did not want people on the road, so Public Safety was helping people to get to where they needed to be.

Councilwoman Diggs stated she also wanted to thank staff for clearing the route for the Black History parade on Saturday, February 15, 2014. She said she passed the direction early on Friday morning and felt there was no way the city staff would be able to get the area cleared, but was told by her daughter that on Friday afternoon that crews were clearing the debris for the parade. She thanked the crews and said that meant a lot to many people.

Mr. Coakley pointed out that Ms. Harm, Tourism Director, had given them dates for events so they are trying to clear the areas. He pointed out the horse races are coming up soon so they will deploy crews in the area this week to clear that area.

Mr. Pearce stated he had met with Mr. Coakley's crews at 6 a.m. on Saturday morning. The street sweeper was out at 4 a.m. to make sure that the route was swept.

Councilman Dewar stated regarding overtime, he knew that sometimes it has been our policy to ask people to take comp time instead of getting paid for the overtime. He said he hoped we were not going to do that this time. Mr. Pearce stated the city is paying overtime for working this event. He said the event is much more serious than other events. Councilman Dewar pointed out people are doing a lot of hard work, and they want to see that fat pay check. Mr. Pearce stated several mentioned that in the field. Councilman Dewar stated he felt it was our job to support them in this case. Mr. Pearce stated the overtime is FEMA reimbursable. He said we are anxious to get the Presidential declaration because that will help guide us on our path forward. He said we knew we had a mess. The threshold for the entire county is about \$500,000. He said as it stands right now that the City of Aiken is going to be between \$2 and \$3 million.

Councilwoman Price stated it takes patience in this kind of effort. She asked if there was a speculated time frame as to when we will have most of the debris cleared. She pointed out in terms of what Mr. Pearce had said with the involvement of FEMA, what can we expect. She said she did not mean to put anyone on the spot and hold someone to the date. Mr. Coakley stated he did not know, as things change every day. He said they think they have set up the perfect team and scenario and then we move into a different neighborhood and it is a different kind of debris and stacked differently, etc. He said he would predict that the first pass through the city to service every resident one time will take about a month. He pointed out seeing that they have only done 12% for the first week, they are already behind schedule.

Mr. Pearce pointed out that the crews are getting better and better each day. He said the numbers went up significantly as the week progressed. He said with the other cities

appearing and providing support, some of those cities were packing 10 to 12 trailers a day. He said when you talk to people in the debris removal business that is a lot of trailers in a day. He said they have not been sitting around; they have been working. Councilwoman Price stated the crews have done an exceptional job, and she appreciates the time and effort of the staff.

Councilman Dewar asked if the utility companies will send letters of appreciation and thanks to the states who have provided assistance. Mr. Pearce stated they do. He pointed out that some neighborhoods have put signs up thanking the power company. He said on Saturday morning there was a chance to talk about some of the things that happened throughout the week. He said there have been citizens who sent their children out with bags of cookies, water, etc. to the crews. Mr. Pearce stated he had taken donuts on Saturday and Monday mornings to the crews. He said the crews have to be tired, but they don't act tired. They are very excited, and they are very much unified in having this common goal of cleaning up their city. He said that is the whole mindset. He said it is inspiring. The folks know what they need to do, and they are committed to getting it done.

Councilwoman Price stated there were so many people that played in this event in terms of partnership. The hotels accommodated the crews coming in and other people who opened their doors so the people would have a place to stay. It has been a team effort.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated with a lot of the lights out from time to time at the intersections, he did not see any accidents. He asked if there were any accidents during the storm time. Chief Barranco stated there were a few accidents. He said they had advised people to treat intersections as a four-way stop. He said they appreciated the citizens' cooperation with that. He said he did not know the number of accidents, but there were not many. He said there were fewer accidents during the ice storm than what we have on a normal day of operation. He said that was due mostly to the low volume of traffic on the roads.

Councilwoman Diggs stated she appreciated the daily alerts, which were very helpful. Mr. Pearce stated when he sent out that there were 48,000 people out of power, it occurred to him to ask how many accounts they have, which was 52,000. He said that is a significant event.

Councilman Merry stated he just wanted to make a few comments. He said we talked about leadership and inspiration. He said there are a lot of memories from the ice storm. He said three of the most significant was that on Thursday morning as we all woke up to see the level of damage and devastation, he walked down South Boundary. He said the first vehicle making the first set of tracks weaving through South Boundary had Chief Barranco and Mr. Pearce in it. He said as he ventured out on that Thursday morning and went down the Bypass, Hitchcock Parkway, he saw someone wearing their OSHA vest dragging a tree off Hitchcock Parkway by himself. He said as he got closer he realized it was none other than Glenn Parker, Director of Parks, Recreation & Tourism, and he was there with a chain saw single handedly pulling a tree off the road. He said inspired by Mr. Parker he and his son saw a tree lying across Gregg Avenue so they got out of the car and proceeded to try to take the tree off Gregg Avenue. He said two police officers and a Public Service truck pulled up immediately and took care of the tree. He said the leadership and the inspiration was there. He said he was very proud of what the crews did. He said he was really grateful for what they had done.

Mr. Pearce pointed out that he had to add that Mr. Parker had a tree on his house so he had personal damage to his house. Mr. Coakley's wife woke up and had a tree limb 18 inches from her nose. However, they came out and were on the job. He said he has to brag on city staff. Everybody was ready to work, committed, focused, and he said he would put the inter-departmental cooperation up against any other city in the state of South Carolina. He said they did an excellent job.

Mr. Pearce stated there were a couple of action items for Council. He said the first is a resolution to declare an emergency and allow us to make emergency purchases. He said

staff is keeping up with those purchases and will provide updates to Council at subsequent Council meetings. He said we need Council's vote to approve the resolution.

Councilman Dewar moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs that Council declare the city in a state of emergency and also approve a resolution declaring an emergency and allowing for emergency expenditures from the budget for needs to deal with the ice storm cleanup. The motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION 02242014

A RESOLUTION FOR EMERGENCY EXPENDITURES BY THE CITY OF AIKEN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2013 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2014.

LAND USE AGREEMENT

Palmetto Pride Trust, LLC
Powderhouse Road
Reiter Corporation
Arborteam Manufacturing
Steeplechase Track

Mr. Pearce stated as part of our debris collection and abundance of precaution, we have been approached by the principals of Palmetto Pride Trust LLC-- that is Ken Ingram, Chad Ingram, Chase Ingram and Clay Ingram. They have a 30 acre tract. Most of the northern portion is wooded, but there is approximately 20 acres of usable space with the three parcels. The tract is south of the Steeplechase Track and Lisa Handy's veterinary office. It is also north of what used to be called the Reiter Corporation. The Ingram's have offered to lease the space to the city on a temporary basis for any overflow debris that we need to store. Only City of Aiken vehicles will use this space once we fill up the location on Old Airport Road at Citizens Park. The Ingram's are willing to be paid the FEMA approved rate. He said he had hoped to have that rate for Council, but he does not have that amount. He said the fee would be the FEMA reimbursement rate. He said staff had talked with them, and they are doing the research. It is not in the FEMA rate schedule. He said he would ask for Council approval for entering into the Land Use Agreement.

Councilman Ebner moved, seconded by Councilman Dewar, that Council authorize staff to enter into a Land Use Agreement for use of land owned by Palmetto Pride Trust, LLC by the City of Aiken for the temporary storage of debris from the recent ice storm with the fee for use of the land to be the FEMA reimbursement rate. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Pearce stated there was a request from SCDOT regarding a mutual agreement to work with them. He said staff was not recommending entering that agreement at this time based on some subsequent conversations he has had with SCDOT officials after the agenda packet was sent out.

Councilman Ebner stated with his past experience with emergencies, he suggested that the Human Resources Director read the current labor laws. He said as FEMA and others are involved someone will ask the question as to whether the labor laws have been checked. He said it is always good to be able to say that you have read them. He said he has had to do this before. He said it might be something that the City Manager might have the HR Director read through.

Mr. Pearce stated he was not sure the Davis-Bacon Law would apply as the city is doing the work in-house. He said at this time the city does not have any contractors doing work. He pointed out the County and State have contractors doing work, but the city is doing the work in-house. Councilman Ebner asked about the out of town contractors. Mr. Pearce pointed out the crews helping the City of Aiken are city crews from the City of Greenwood, City of Clinton, City of Lexington, City of Springdale, and City of Greenville. Councilman Ebner asked who is hiring and paying all the private haulers.

Mr. Pearce responded that the State and County have hired private vendors. Mr. Pearce stated the other cities have been very clear that they will accept the FEMA reimbursement as full pay for their services in helping the City of Aiken. The City of Aiken has helped them in the past. Councilman Ebner stated he appreciated Mr. Pearce doing that because six months from now a lot of time people forget what they said they would do. Mr. Pearce stated staff is working on that and studying the pilot program. We also have auditors and folks that are keeping inventory as far as anything we are purchasing.

THE MILL ON PARK

Cati Rabun

Entrepreneurial Incubator

Park Avenue

Laurens Street

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the next presentation is on The Mill on Park.

Mr. Pearce stated Cati Sacks Rabun and her dad David Sacks have entered into a venture at the corner of Park Avenue and Laurens Street. It is a very exciting project.

Ms. Rabun pointed out that Caradasa, LLC, the University of South Carolina Aiken, and the Aiken Small Business Development Center (SBDC) have officially joined forces in a unique new partnership for downtown Aiken, with the creation of "The Mill on Park." This project involves the redevelopment of an infill site at the corner of Park Avenue and Laurens Street, one of Aiken's most prominent intersections. The Mill on Park will feature more than 17,000 square feet in a combination of traditional office space as well as micro-office/incubator space to create a unique office community focused on promoting the vitality of small business in Aiken. In addition to the formal partnerships that have been formed, the Mill on Park is the result of the convergence of many efforts and visions by several key groups in Aiken, including the City of Aiken, by means of their Strategic Plan, the Greater Aiken Chamber of Commerce by means of the Blue Ribbon Panel and their focus on Economic Vitality in the coming year, the Aiken Young Professionals, the Aiken Downtown Development Association, and SCORE, amongst others. This project is not possible without the guidance, support, and partnerships that have been created between these entities.

Ms. Rabun thanked Council for giving her the opportunity to present the Mill in part. She stated the Mill is across the street from the Municipal Building at the corner of Park and Laurens Street. She said this is happening in the heart of downtown Aiken. She said she would review what the project is about. Talk about some of the partnerships formed, and give an update on the status of the construction. She had power point slides.

Ms. Rabun stated there are several trends both nationally and locally that were studied. She said there was the influence of other groups as well. She said this is something that the City had thought about in the Strategic Plan. The Chamber has focused on it in terms of their focus on Economic Vitality this year. Not only are these national trends, but they are also local trends. Some of those things include more efficiently used office space, that is, areas for easy expansion and contraction. People are very sensitive to overhead costs, especially now as we are recalculating from the recession. She said these are hopefully useful tools that will help get people back to work and support them. She said half of the project is traditional office space, with the first floor being traditional office. The second floor is dedicated to micro-offices and incubator space for growing or start up businesses. The idea for the second floor, which makes it a little bit different from traditional space, is that the tenants who would be in the building would only lease the amount of space they need to do their work that they will spend 80% of their time doing. Then everything else is shared, even down to the kitchen, the bathroom facilities, a copy center, internet services, and any other type of amenity or utility there might be in a traditional office. She said you actually share that amongst the other growing small businesses that may be floundering a little bit to get their feet underneath them to get going and growing.

Ms. Rabun said the facility is at the corner of Park and Laurens Street. There is 145 feet of frontage on Park Avenue and 211 feet on Laurens Street. It is a 17,000 square foot building. It is situated between two historic buildings of which they want to be very conscious, especially as they redevelop the façade and work with the City on that. She said there are 52 parking spaces on site. She said on a day to day basis the parking is great for the tenants, but it is also something that they will be able to open up for any public uses during the weekends or after hours. As the building existed before construction started, it was pretty much a blank building. It was very dated. It was built in the 1980's. Not a lot has happened there since. The configuration of the upstairs was not in a condition where it was easy to bring in another use. She said they really wanted to salvage as much of the building as they could. She said they reused walls and corridors. She said they did have to do some reconfiguration, but for the most part they tried to repurpose most of what already existed in the building.

She pointed out the slide shows the proximity of the building. There are some positive features, such as being downtown, near all the existing restaurants and retailers. It is hoped that having a concentration of office users in the building during the day may cause some to linger at night. She said the Mill might have between 70 and 80 people working in this office at any given time. She said currently there are about 33 people working on the first floor. The second floor will bring in another 30 to 50 people, depending on the size of the businesses that come in.

Ms. Rabun stated she appreciated reading the Zoning Ordinance for what they had to work with and the language that the city chose to describe this type of business. She said according to the City of Aiken's Zoning Ordinance, the Downtown Business (DB) District focuses on the commercial and civic functions in the city in a compact area. It is intended to be walking-scale, and a place you can go and be able to visit a lot of other things. You can have people come to you and go to other places. She felt that helps create activity in the city that is very necessary for vitality and vibrancy. The integration of retail, service, entertainment, government, and residential uses is encouraged. She said most everything on the list, except residential, they hope to integrate into the Mill.

Ms. Rabun stated she would discuss the local trends. She said the City had thought about it through the Strategic Plan and other things the city has worked on. The Chamber has been very focused on this as a hot topic at the Blue Ribbon Panel which she served on as a panelist this summer. She said this was a recurring theme they heard. She said Greenville has done a project similar project to this, but it is quite a bit larger than the Mill. She said it was very inspiring to see what other cities are doing to foster the same type of development and growth in businesses. Aiken Young Professionals have talked about this and having something that is fun and a little bit different. It may be somebody who wants to open a business, but can't afford traditional office space downtown. It might get some young people started as entrepreneurs. Also, the quality of life and having another opportunity to have a mix of use and have an activity is a trend. For the green space, having somewhere to go and sit and enjoy being outside with possibly some free entertainment is a desire. She said connecting downtown and the Aiken community to the USCAiken is important. She said the University is a little over 3 miles from downtown, but there seems to be a psychological separation between the University and Aiken. She said Aiken is a college town with two colleges in Aiken, but it does not always feel that way. She said her project has formed a partnership with USCAiken. She felt this was a very important element and critical to the success of the Mill. She pointed out the Small Business Development Center is also a key element.

Ms. Rabun reviewed some national trends. She said it involves basically streamlining and the "mobile work-force." People are out there interacting with other people. They are on their cell phones. They are in their cars. They are not always at their desk. She said people don't need the large executive offices that they once did. She pointed out that up to 40% - 60% of the time desks are empty so why pay a lot of money for desks that stay empty most of the time. Adaptability is a trend. She said it is built in a way that as trends and demands change, it will provide flexibility to change the spaces inside the building. She said presently we are seeing a lot of one and two person businesses that are most interested in being in The Mill. As they grow they may be hiring more employees. She said she wants to create space that is highly adaptable so we can accommodate a

growing business, a change in business, or new businesses that might come in to fill a space of someone who has left. There will be space in the Mill that will be more of the traditional incubator space. It will be co-working space, open desks. These are places where interaction amongst other businesses is really encouraged. She said this is something that the University and the Small Business Development Center have been very active in pursuing and maybe getting some recent college grads in a place where they can share some work space, work at a desk, be in a professional environment, have a conference room, have a professional presentation and get a business up and running before moving into what would be a private office.

Ms. Rabun stated the results of these trends have narrowed them down to what they were planning to offer which is the micro-office suites which are basically what you would see in any corporate office but they are all different businesses. She said it might be a one room office that might have one or two people. It might be a two room office that houses two to four people. She felt they will see businesses from one person up to 10 person offices at the Mill. She said that will adapt and change as the years go by. She pointed out the co-worker and shared desk for merging entrepreneurs. She said these are for people who don't have a lot to work with, but they are trying to get started. She said these would be for short term leases. They might only have a desk on a weekly or monthly basis, but it gives them flexibility and ability to come in and not feel pressured by a three or five year lease that you find in the traditional office space. This gives them the ability to test the waters, test the model, or whatever might be entailed. She said the Office "Communities" and Mixed Use is very community driven. Every square inch of common space in the building is geared toward encouraging interaction amongst the businesses. She said she works in an office where she shares space with another small business. She said they bounce ideas off each other all the time, and she felt that is important when you are trying to get started.

Ms. Rabun stated anyone who might be in a Micro office would be anyone who wants a small space. They might be a startup. They might be a larger firm trying to downsize and save some overhead. It could be the introduction of a branch office or a project team that might be coming in from elsewhere and needs a landing spot for a short period of time to have a professional space to do business in Aiken. She said the Co-Working Space would be for travelers or project teams, people who might work at home normally but would prefer professional space but don't have the money. These might be true startups or freelancers and networkers.

Ms. Rabun stated the Office Community is a place that we want to encourage interaction. She said they have the concept of opening a coffee shop/restaurant. This would be a place that she likes to call "third-place." She said you have your home, your work, and the "third place" is the place you just really like to be. It is hoped that this place will be that hub of activity, have event space, and a possible Saturday market, etc. right in the heart of downtown Aiken.

Ms. Rabun stated the main partnerships that they have formed have been with the University of South Carolina Aiken and the Small Business Development Center. These partnerships were formed basically by happenstance. She said there are a lot of converging trends locally. One of those was several different groups trying to accomplish the same thing. She said she was looking at several pieces of property and saw the property at Laurens and Park. She said she had studied this type model and started putting a business plan together. She said David Jameson of the Chamber knew what was going on, and also knew that the University and the Small Business Development Center were interested in doing the same thing. She said the Aiken Downtown Development Association put her in contact with the Small Business Development Center. She said they met to exchange ideas to see how in line their visions were. She said at the first presentation they were mirroring each other's conversation. Everything they said was a follow up to what we had thought about, and they aligned perfectly. She said they decided to explore what it would take to get a project like this up and running, not only successful but authentic. She said they really wanted to accomplish their mission, which was to get out there and get businesses started in Aiken. She said Dr. Priest is here from the University and Laura Disano from the Small Business Development Center. She said they would be happy to answer any questions.

Ms. Rabun stated she wanted to walk Council through the vision. She said it was not something that had been run through the Planning Commission of the City, but something for her to get an idea of what she would like to see and what they expect this place to look like. She said the building is brick, structurally sound, a little modern, with a nice green space out front. She said it is an empty green space surrounded by prickly bushes that are not friendly to walk by and no place to sit. She said that was the first thing they wanted to change when it came to the look and feel of the building. She showed a mock up of what could be anticipated. She said many people don't know where the building is. She said they want to draw attention to the building. She said she had mentioned mixed use. She pointed out the store front. She pointed out the space is underutilized and a little bit institutional-looking store front now. She said they hope to make it inviting. The slide shows retractable garage doors that slide up and could serve as a store front in inclement weather, but if the weather is nice the doors could be opened and it could be an open air coffee shop or something else. She pointed out three windows that overlook the existing park. They might cut some of the short windows and install French doors and have the shop open into what would be a plaza where there could be dining. She showed the park in a conceptual landscaping plan. She said the plaza is a semi-circular plaza where 90% of the time there might be dining, but on a Friday afternoon or Saturday night there might be live music. She pointed out retaining walls that step up back into the park. She said they are low, but they basically create a mini-amphitheater. During the day when it is not used, it is beautiful and landscaped. She visions a place in the heart of downtown where you could seat possibly 100 people and the area could alternate between uses. She said the idea is that there could always be something that could go on in the space.

Ms. Rabun showed a version of the floor plan to give an idea. She said if one came in the elevator, the first thing you would see is the store front that provides space for USCAiken and SBDC. They will be on site at the Mill with a presence amongst these tenants and businesses that are trying to get started. She pointed out the areas proposed to be Micro-Office space to be used by the one to two person offices. She pointed out the purple colored space, which is presently blank space with wide open rooms. She said these would probably become the five to seven person offices. They would be subdivided in any way. They could be flexible space. In the middle of the floor is what would be the Co-working space where they might have a lounge, a little meeting space, etc. She then pointed out the lobby, conference room, bathrooms, kitchen which they would all share. She said if anyone would like a tour she would be happy to give a tour at any time.

Ms. Rabun stated the building would have a very polished, but have an urban vibe which is something that has been toyed with in Aiken a little bit. It won't be too rustic, but it will be fun. It will be a little bare bones. Upstairs there are exposed ducts and exposed brick walls. She felt it would be a place where people will be proud to do business and bring people into their offices to conduct their business. She said presently they are scheduled to open in early April. They are working on the website now. The Small Business Development Center and the University of SC Aiken are helping her. She said it is actually a finalized version of what would be an application for businesses. She said pretty much any small business doing real business and wants to do real business would be approved. She said it would give us an idea of the sense of the tenant and whether they are a stem type business, marketing or PR, or consulting business. She said it would give us the ability to get a broader view of what these businesses will bring to Aiken.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked how many people are in the building already and how many businesses are represented. Ms. Rabun responded there are about 33 people on the first floor and that represents one business. She said upstairs not counting the Co-working space, but for true businesses that are seeing customers come in, they will probably have anywhere from 13 to 16 businesses.

Councilwoman Diggs asked if the Small Business Development Corporation would be able to assist the businesses that will locate in the Mill and if there is a cost for their assistance.

Ms. Rabun pointed out the SBDC is not fee based. They will not only service the people working at the Mill, but they will be open just like they would be anywhere else for any business. Any business could come in for help or for guidance or a workshop. She said it is a place where any business owner could come in and perhaps just have a dialog, not a presentation or anything formal, just a casual opportunity to connect with other businesses.

Ms. Laura Disano, of the Small Business Development Center at USC Aiken, stated the Aiken office is the top performing Small Business Development in the state of South Carolina this year. It was nominated for the regional center of excellence in innovation. She said working with Cati Rabun and her dad, David Sacks, on this project as well as the Chamber, SCORE, and the University of SC Aiken is an example of that type of innovation. She said the SBDC is funded through the Small Business Administration. Dollars come into the State of South Carolina. If the state matches those funds, then they have access to them. In addition they are funded by County Council and other private people who help a bit with offering some of the courses, etc. The USCA provides space in-kind. She said when she looks at this project she sees something that combines the best of education, business in the private sector, government, city government, and the business community. She said that is the forces coming together. In terms of what the SBDC provides, they are noted for providing technical assistance which means helping new entrepreneurs develop their business plan, their financial projects, and figure out how to be sustainable. What that does for the State of South Carolina, but more importantly in Aiken, is they help startups form, help jobs to be created, help jobs to be retained, and help businesses secure capital from banks or private investors. She said they helped small businesses in Aiken County to acquire \$4.5 million in funding. She said they will be valuable to this site because they will be on site. They will be able to ensure that they help the small businesses receive the technical assistance they need in order to succeed. She said business is risky. There is never a guarantee for anything, but she felt with their support and the support of the Chamber and SCORE they can ensure that these folks will have the best shot at succeeding. She said they will be looking at a lot of businesses with innovation—stem businesses, science technology, engineering and math. She said there are a lot of scientific types that are out of work that can do things like bring patents here and unique things to our city to really help to develop it economically. She pointed out people look at SBDC as being for new businesses. She pointed out, however, that 40% of their clients are new businesses; 60% are existing businesses. She said they work with things that succeed. She felt they will provide the support to those businesses they need to have the best shot at succeeding in Aiken.

Councilwoman Price pointed out that Cati Rabun did an excellent job with her presentation. She stated Cati is so young with innovative ideas, and had some help from her dad. She said what she views is Cati's being so receptive to call in a more mature generation for expert help. She said with all that blended in what emerged was Cati's creativity. She said it seems Ms. Rabun is continually embellishing it more. She said she also sees more young people being more inspired. They have a dream to do this, but don't know how to get started. With the Mill, Ms. Rabun will afford them to have a space, and with the help of USCA and SBDC they can build upon those dreams. She said the project is great. She said she is looking forward to many young people coming downtown which is the dream of AYP and that group to see more infusion of the younger generation enjoying the downtown and the things that we have to offer.

Mayor Cavanaugh thanked Ms. Rabun for her excellent presentation.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Appointments

Linda Purdy

Arts Commission

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

Mr. Pearce stated Council has 20 pending appointments to fill vacancies on different City boards, commissions, and committees. One appointment is presented for Council's consideration and vote at your meeting tonight.

Councilmember Merry has recommended the appointment of Linda Purdy to the Arts Commission to represent the at-large category. If appointed Ms. Purdy's term would expire April 11, 2016.

For Council consideration is the appointment of Linda Purdy to the Arts Commission.

Councilman Homoki pointed out that the city has changed its Council districts and now has six districts rather than four as in past years. He asked why we would have an at-large appointment to a board, commission or committee. He wondered if the appointments should be made from a Council district.

Councilman Dewar pointed out that to be qualified for some boards, commissions and committees, such as the Senior Commission, Council drew straws to see what Councilmember would have an appointment from business, medical, at-large, etc. He said that applies to some, but not all boards and commissions.

Mr. Glenn Parker, Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Director, stated Councilman Dewar had answered the question. He said on the Arts Commission there are certain appointees that have to represent certain areas such as business, education, performing arts, visual arts, arts organizations and at-large. He said at-large means any one for the position, not representing a specific area on the committee.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if Council could receive a list of the committees, boards or commissions that require appointments in a special field.

Mr. Pearce pointed out that information is in the Handbook for Committees, Boards, and Committees. He said the Design Review Board has specialty groups as well as the Arts Commission and Accommodations Tax, and there may be a few more listed in the handbook.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Dewar, that Council approve the appointment of Linda Purdy to the Arts Commission representing the at-large category with the term to expire April 11, 2016. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked for any nominations for the next meeting.

Councilman Dewar stated in his email that he sends out he used the memo that the City Manager provided in the agenda and indicated that there were openings available on the boards, committees, and commissions listed. He indicated that if anyone was interested to contact the City Clerk. He said he knows that some of us struggle to find the right people for an appointment.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he has two nominations. He said he would like to reappoint Peggy Penland to the Accommodations Tax Committee and Hank Moormann to the Building Code Appeals Board.

Councilwoman Diggs stated she would like to reappoint Todd Lista to the Accommodations Tax Committee.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the nominations would be on the next agenda for Council's consideration.

EMPLOYEE SURVEYSurvey Monkey

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to review the Employee Survey and approve the online survey provider.

Mr. Pearce stated this was a discussion that Council had the January 27, 2014, meeting and the February 10, 2014, meeting. He said he had included that memo again in this agenda packet. He said we talked about the employee survey. He said that he had some confusion. He said he went back to the approved minutes from January 27, 2014. The motion that was made was that the City Manager would identify a qualified company to perform an employee research survey. There was some discussion about whether or not that would have to be approved by Council. He said when he looked at the vote from the minutes, the vote was that a qualified company be identified to perform an employee research survey. That motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Pearce stated he had a discussion with staff. He said, as he had mentioned to Council before, we did a survey in 2008 and the Department Directors felt that it would help them in their operations if we could take that survey and resubmit it. Staff has found an online survey provider, Survey Monkey, that is used by several state-wide and national organizations to conduct surveys. He said for \$200 we could have a survey that covers the questions that were provided to Council. He said staff did check with various surveying entities, and contacted local academic campuses. There would be a significant delay if we went with the academic campuses. They would not be able to do it until next fall which we felt was an undue delay. When staff talked with the private companies, they typically use online survey providers. They would be happy for a fee of between \$2,000 to \$4,000 to analyze the results. He said it is our understanding from the discussion by Council that Council wanted a survey conducted, compiled and delivered to Council for review. Survey Monkey will accept all the input from the survey. They develop their report. Staff does not touch it. It would be anonymous, and it would be compiled by Survey Monkey and provided to us so we could share that with Council and staff for review. He said with the motion being the way it is, staff is ready to go forward. He said it is lined up, and staff is ready to go as soon as tomorrow if Council is comfortable with it. He said Ms. Davis is present to answer any questions. He said we wanted to honor the discussion and go beyond just the mere contents of the motion to, hopefully, have this resolved so staff can go forward with the survey.

Mayor Cavanaugh pointed out in the agenda there seems to be different levels from which to select. Mr. Pearce stated the "Select" is \$204 annually. It provided unlimited questions and unlimited responses. He said staff did not see any particular benefit in the Gold and Platinum service. He said it is felt that the "Select" service would provide what we need.

Councilman Dewar stated when he made the motion he thought he recalled using the words that it should be the same process as the audit. He said the audit firm is chosen by Council and delivered to Council. He said he had looked at Survey Monkey as well; it was one of the companies that he had looked at. He said he had responses from two or three survey companies that he is in the process of studying. He said quite frankly given the situation that we find the city in now, he was planning on recommending that we defer this item until we get back to a normal state of affairs. He said he did not think we have time at this time to be worrying about surveys, etc.

Councilman Dewar said with regard to the exit interview as he had mentioned to the City Manager after the last meeting, the examples that we have certainly can serve if the City Manager chooses to add to the existing form. He said he felt the difference we have, and we probably should defer discussion of it, is that he thinks the exit interview should be done by Human Resources and not require a supervisor, and the City Manager feels that a supervisor should be there. Councilman Dewar stated he felt the results of an exit interview would be more productive to the city if the employee were free to make comments either positive or negative. He felt the items should be deferred until we get through the disaster situation.

Mr. Pearce stated we have been discussing this for several months. He said as per the directive from Council in January, staff did go out and do the research. He said he provided that in the agenda packet two weeks ago. He said he had not had any input with any specific information from Council. He said as far as the exit interview questionnaire, staff thought there was a helpful question that the City of North Augusta included in their exit interview which reads: "Was the job properly described in your pre-employment interview? Yes or No. If no, how was it misleading." He said staff thought that would be helpful information. Mr. Pearce stated one thing he had not mentioned in our prior discussion about exit interviews is that there are just resignation circumstances where the Human Resources Department Director is not comfortable sitting alone in a room with someone to do the exit interview. To limit the HR Director to just the director doing the exit interview, we feel places her in an uncomfortable position, and we would like the option of having appropriate folks in the interview. The Department Directors have shared with him that they would like an opportunity to have one last discussion with the employee. They are not adamant that they be in the entire exit interview. He said we feel it could be potentially very helpful to us, particularly with the North Augusta question, if the Department Director could have an opportunity to be in the room and then leave at an appropriate point and make sure Ms. Davis is comfortable finishing the interview whether she has someone else, another neutral party, in the room so there can be a frank discussion. He said we want everybody to be comfortable with the exit interview taking place. He said staff is ready to go forward with it.

Councilman Ebner stated in his experience and in talking with several other people that deal with HR as a full time job none of them have any type of supervision as a backup. He said he concurs that there are cases that you may want a neutral third party, but he did not feel that a supervisor is a neutral third party. He said it could be another employee or an administrative type person in the interview. He said that is mainly for the security issues and anything else that goes on as a witness. He said in his experience with two companies, the supervisor was not involved in the exit interview. There were neutral third parties involved which were typically a designated administrative type person. If the supervisor has an issue, they could handle that outside the meeting. He said he was troubled by wanting to have the supervisor in the exit interview. He said if there needs to be two separate exit interviews that could be done. The supervisor could have an exit interview as well as the HR Director.

Mr. Pearce stated that was the point he was trying to make. He was not saying that the Department Director would need to be in the exit interview the whole time. He said the current policy reads the Department Director. He said he does not feel that the Department Director needs to be in the exit interview the entire time. He said he thought Councilman Ebner was saying the same thing. He said Councilman Ebner was saying two different meetings.

Councilman Ebner stated that should be two separate things. He said in his own personal experience with two companies he had done that. He said he had also discussed this with other corporate HR people in the last couple of months. He said if anybody in supervision or the City Manager on down, if they want to talk to the employee that is fine, but once they do they need to turn the exit interview over to HR. The HR person is the last person to see the employee. He said that had been his experience with very large corporations which he had been in. He said Councilwoman Price is in a large corporation and Councilwoman Diggs in a smaller one. He felt the exit interviews with a supervisor or Department Director and the HR Director should be two separate entities. He said he did not disagree that the Department Director or supervisor could have a meeting with the employee, but the last interview should be with the HR person.

Mr. Pearce stated he and staff do not have a problem with that approach.

Councilman Ebner stated he felt that is the independence we looking for. He felt Mr. Pearce's suggestion to have an administrative person appointed to meet with the HR Director and the employee for an exit interview if the HR Director feels they need someone in the meeting would be good. They could call that person to come in or pre-arrange to meet at a certain time.

Mr. Pearce responded that staff would like to have the flexibility, understanding folks' schedule and scheduling, to not just have two people designated. He said staff would like the flexibility of being able to have folks in the room.

Councilman Ebner stated that is okay as long as it is a neutral person and not a member in the line of supervision of the employee. In a lot of cases the exit interview is an employee retiring or an employee leaving for another job at a higher pay. Those interviews go very well, but you also have the disgruntled employee which Mr. Pearce had alluded to, which is when you want to have a neutral person in the room. Councilman Ebner stated in his past working career an employee leaving was just as important as the one being hired because that person is leaving for a reason other than retirement.

Mr. Pearce stated staff felt the North Augusta question goes to the heart of that issue.

Councilman Dewar stated he felt it was important to review again that we are talking about an employee who has decided to leave the city for whatever reason. It could be a good or bad reason. He felt we all should want to know exactly that employee's views on his or her employment with the city. It is a simple process. He said he objects to a supervisor being in the exit interview because he felt that would be intimidating. He said if we want to have a supervisor exit interview and an HR interview that is fine. The point of the process is let's find out why we are losing that employee. He felt it was clear that everyone on Council wants our employees to stay with us. We hired them; we trained them; we have an investment in them, and we should all be disappointed when we lose an employee for whatever reason.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he felt Councilman Ebner had hit it on the head. He felt if someone else is to be in the room other than the HR Director and the employee leaving, it should be a neutral person. He pointed out it had been said the employee can talk with the Department Head or supervisor any time, but the last interview should be the HR Director.

Councilman Ebner stated he thought that is pretty well standard, especially for commercial and industrial companies. He said he was not familiar with municipalities, but would suspect that a lot of municipalities do it that way.

Councilman Merry asked if the questions on the Employee Questionnaire were standard on some form or if the questions were what staff came up with. Mr. Pearce stated the questions on the Employee Questionnaire were based on what staff did in 2008. There were about 100 responses to that survey. It was felt as far as 2008 versus now would give us a good baseline comparison.

Councilman Merry stated his understanding of the reason for the Employee Questionnaire is to try to help determine if there is a morale problem and if so try to ascertain the causes. He said he would agree with Councilman Dewar that if we ask the employees how they like their job as they are in the midst of overtime, hauling debris, etc. the morale might be low. The timing might be bad. It might make some sense to defer the Employee Questionnaire temporarily. He said the other thing is if we are going to do this, and we are on the hunt for the question of morale, there might be some questions that might be better suited to get those answers. He said he was not particularly in favor of asking the annual salary range. He felt that might narrow down who the employees might be.

Mr. Pearce stated he appreciated that, but we are trying to find out entry level, mid-level, supervisor, etc.; we are trying to get levels. We are not trying to identify people. He said the salary range was helpful to us when we did the 2008 survey. He said there are as many different ways to do a survey as there are people. He said we have a baseline based on 2008. He said we would like to start somewhere, and the Department Directors felt using this questionnaire since we have the 2008 baseline would provide us a good comparison of then versus now. He said that does not prevent us from doing another questionnaire.

Councilman Dewar asked how many people are employed now that were employed in 2008. Mr. Pearce stated he did not have the exact figure, but he felt it was at least half. He said if he knew what the questions were before the meeting, he could get the answers.

Councilman Dewar stated with all due respect he had twice told Mr. Pearce that he was in the process of getting survey companies that he would get to him. He said he was still in that process. Mr. Pearce responded that with all due respect that it had been over a month. Councilman Dewar stated yes it has. Mr. Pearce said and he had not heard anything from Councilmember Dewar, nothing, zero. Councilman Dewar stated it hasn't been over a month. It was not discussed at the last meeting. He said he only had one company. Mr. Pearce stated Councilman Dewar had discussed it with him for over a month. He said he had asked that he please submit names of companies. He said staff would like to address the concern of Council and go ahead and address this so it can be a completed item.

Councilman Ebner moved that Council continue this item. The motion was seconded by Councilman Merry. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Pearce stated he would like to put on the record that Council had directed him to do something as the City Manager, and he was attempting to complete that action item.

Councilman Ebner stated Council also said they wanted to discuss the matter. He said he felt it was important using a direct mail type thing versus using the city email. He said city email can be perused by anybody in the city. Mr. Pearce stated we would not have access to Survey Monkey. Councilman Ebner asked if the employee would use city email or private emails. Mr. Pearce stated they could use either one. It is an account. It is an online survey.

Councilman Dewar asked if the motion only had to do with deferring the Employee Questionnaire survey, but not the exit interview.

Councilman Ebner stated the exit interview and Questionnaire Survey are two different issues. He asked if a motion was needed on exit interview.

Mr. Pearce stated he felt Council had been very clear on the exit interview.

Councilman Ebner asked when the exit interview procedure has been rewritten that Council have a chance to review it. Mr. Pearce stated staff can provide Council with any information they desire. Councilman Ebner stated he would like for Council to get a copy of the exit interview procedure to see how it is set up with the independent parties.

CROSLAND PARK SEWER – ORDINANCE

Capital Projects Sales Tax III

Advancement of Funds

Mayor Cavanaugh stated an ordinance had been prepared for Council's consideration to advance funds from CPST III for the Crosland Park Sewer Upgrade Project.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING BORROWING FROM THE CITY OF AIKEN GENERAL FUND RESERVE ACCOUNTS AS OUTLINED IN THE ORDINANCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF FUNDING SEWER SYSTEM UPGRADE IN CROSLAND PARK.

Mr. Pearce stated as part of ongoing work in Crosland Park, Engineering and Utilities Director George Grinton has bid out Phases 6 - 10 of much-needed sewer infrastructure upgrades in Crosland Park. A winning bid of \$1,608,319.50 has been obtained for this work. Once completed, we will then be able to proceed with paving the Aldrich Street entrance into Crosland Park beginning at the Burger King location. In tandem with our Safe Routes to Schools work in this neighborhood, we believe upgrading this

infrastructure will visibly show our continued commitment to improving the quality of life for residents in this key northside neighborhood.

Mr. Pearce stated the specific targeted General Fund Reserve Account is actually the CPST II funds and General Funds that are available. In effect what we are doing is advancing the CPST III funds. The amount we put in the ordinance is \$1,608,319.50. Councilman Ebner called our office today and alerted us to the fact that back on October 14, 2013, staff had come to Council seeking \$230,108 to cover the cost of the Boardman Road water line replacement as well as the Southwood sewer replacement. We obtained approval for that. We have not done an ordinance for that. In order to clean up the housekeeping on how we are using the CPST III funds advance, it would actually be \$1,608,319.50 plus the \$230,108.10, making a total of \$1,838,427.60 to advance from the funds. That would cover all three projects. He said he had checked with the City Attorney, and since this is first reading, it would be appropriate to amend the motion to make sure we have documented for accounting purposes all three loans.

Our Round III, Capital Projects Sales Tax, has \$8,000,000 committed to water and sewer system upgrades. We believe sufficient CPST III funds will have been collected by April, 2015 to cover these advanced funds in full.

For Council approval is first reading of an ordinance to advance funds for Sewer Infrastructure Improvements in the Crosland Park Neighborhood, with the addition of the Boardman Road and Southwood Sewer Projects, making a total of \$1,838,427.60. On second reading we would make sure the ordinance is appropriately amended and documented.

Councilwoman Diggs moved that Council approve on first reading an ordinance as amended for the advancement of \$1,838,427.60 from the CPST III funds for Sewer Infrastructure Improvements in the Crosland Park Neighborhood, and the Boardman Road and Southwood Sewer Projects.

Councilman Ebner stated he would like to amend the motion by Councilwoman Diggs. He pointed out the ordinance has the sentence that we would repay the funds at least by the conclusion of the 7 years. He pointed out this statement had been taken out before, and he would like to take it out of the ordinance again.

Mr. Pearce asked Councilman Ebner if he wanted to take out part of the sentence: "But in no event later than 7 years." Councilman Ebner stated the sentence says: "The funds shall be repaid by the conclusion of the CPST effective period, but in no event later than 7 years from reimposition of a capital projects sales and use tax in Aiken County." Mr. Pearce asked if Councilman Ebner wanted to leave in the words "repaid by the conclusion." Councilman Ebner stated he wanted the wording to be that the funds would be repaid when the money comes in. He said we have to remember that we have already committed \$1.5 million at the end of this year because we would have sufficient funds to pay for this as well as to repay the Crosland Park loan. He said we should not be authorizing any more loans until after the end of the year if you do the finances right.

Mr. Pearce stated to be sure we present the ordinance to meet Councilman Ebner's concerns, he understands the wording should be: "The funds shall be repaid as funds become available." Councilman Ebner stated that is the wording used in October, and he has a copy of those minutes. He pointed out at that time Council also eliminated the interest on the loan because we are paying ourselves interest. He said we may be losing a little money, but we eliminated that before. Mr. Pearce stated that would be about \$15,000. Councilman Ebner stated if we state that the loan will be paid back when the funds come in, then that will get it equal to what Council voted on in October, 2013. Mr. Pearce asked if Councilman Ebner was asking that the sentence regarding interest is to be removed as well. Councilman Ebner responded that is correct, as that is what Council did in October.

Mr. Pearce stated the sentence that would be removed as he understands the motion is: "Interest shall be charged at the average month's interest rate of the South Carolina Local Government Investment Pool as of the date of the loan." Councilman Ebner responded

that is correct; that sentence would be removed. Councilman Ebner stated the loan would be paid back as the funds come in. Councilman Ebner stated he thought Mr. Pearce had mentioned to him earlier today that the last payment from the sales tax funds was a little over \$1 million. Mr. Pearce stated the city had just received a payment for a little over \$1 million. Councilman Ebner stated if the funds keep coming in like that, by the end of the year with this and the \$1.5 million that goes back to Crosland Park we would be on a cash basis. We would have paid off the loan for the other things which he felt was very appropriate.

Mr. Pearce stated he thought what he had included in his memo is that we believe the funds will be sufficiently collected by April, 2015, about a year from April, 2014.

Councilman Dewar stated he would second the amendment.

Councilman Merry pointed out that in his memo Mr. Grinton had stated that the winning bid was \$1,608,319.50 and he also recommended a 10% contingency. Councilman Merry asked why we were not including the extra 10% contingency in the loan. Mr. Pearce stated we would look at our other reserve funds, not the Capital Projects Sales Tax funds where we are borrowing money. He said that would not require an ordinance.

Councilman Dewar asked if the CPST III money for the two other areas mentioned is \$4 million for sewer and \$4 million for stormwater. Mr. Pearce stated the actual ballot question was \$8 million for infrastructure improvements. Mr. Pearce stated the ballot said \$8,095,000 for water and sewer system infrastructure upgrades. He said it is not broken out in the ballot. He said that was done as an accounting matter. Councilman Dewar asked if the City Manager was tracking the loans and asked if the \$1,838,427.60 was the amount off the \$8 million.

Councilman Ebner pointed out the previous two things are taken from the \$8 million. Councilman Dewar pointed out Council would be approving the three items from the \$8 million. Mr. Pearce stated there would be three things from the \$8 million. He said that will be on the yellow sheets that Council gets. Councilman Ebner stated we have spent \$330,000 as of the end of December, 2013. He said yours truly keeps the books.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked Councilwoman Diggs if she would accept the amendment by Councilman Ebner that the sentence regarding repaying the loan no later than 7 years and the sentence regarding charging interest be removed from the ordinance. Councilwoman Diggs accepted the amendment. Mayor Cavanaugh called for a vote on the motion to approve the ordinance to allow the three loans totaling \$1,838,427.60 as an advancement from CPTS III with the two sentences discussed being removed from the ordinance. The motion was unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Price stated she wanted to add a comment to Mr. Grinton and Mr. Pearce expressing her appreciation for their accelerating the project in Crosland Park based on the Horizons discussion.

MUTUAL AID – RESOLUTION 02242014A

Lexington

Police Department

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider a resolution to approve a mutual aid agreement with the Lexington Police Department.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the resolution.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AIKEN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO RENEW A MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF LEXINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Mr. Pearce stated Terrence Green, Chief, Lexington Police Department, has requested our assistance. Specifically, he has asked that the Aiken Department of Public Safety be

authorized to renew our Mutual Aid Agreement with them. We have benefitted from mutual aid agreements in the past. We have them with several agencies. Whether dealing with our *Safe Communities* work, cleaning up from natural disasters, or working on special events, these agreements have helped law enforcement show a united front and stretched much-needed resources so they are available for key incidents. He said we did work on this about a year ago, and have had a conversation with the Lexington Police Department. They feel they need to renew the agreement on an annual basis for their needs. He said not that we are indebted to the City of Lexington, but they did help with the storm damage by sending two crews down. It is required by state law that Council approve any mutual aid agreements. He asked that Council approve the resolution to renew the agreement.

For Council approval is a Resolution to renew our Mutual Aid Agreement with the Lexington Police Department.

Mayor Cavanaugh pointed out in the agreement with the Lexington Police Department there is reference to "he" being transferred. Mr. Pearce stated the "he" is generic, and the word could be changed to "officer." Mr. Pearce pointed out the City of Aiken did not prepare the agreement, but Lexington did, but we will make the change pointed out by Mayor Cavanaugh.

Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilman Merry, that Council approve the resolution to renew the Mutual Aid Agreement with the Lexington Police Department. The motion was unanimously approved.

SIGNS

Councilman Ebner asked if Council needed to rule on the matter regarding amendment of the Zoning Ordinance concerning signs and review by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Pearce asked Mr. Evans, Planning Director, to address the matter as he thought he had some questions about electronic signs and a concern about the scope of what Council wanted the Planning Commission to do.

Mr. Evans stated the Action Agenda for the Planning Commission which Council approved in September, 2013, had an item to address electronic signs and the visibility of signs and obstruction by trees. He said the Planning Commission is working on both issues. He pointed out in a couple of recent City Council meetings there was mention of other sign issues that Council might want addressed. Mr. Evans said his question was did Council want to address the other signs issues now or if Council wanted the Commission to go ahead and deal with next item on the Action Agenda.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked what the other issues were regarding signs. Mr. Evans responded that election signs was one of the issues.

Councilman Dewar stated he had expressed some concern about the election signs and wondered if there is a better way to regulate their displays.

Mr. Pearce stated Mr. Smith has a legal opinion about content of signs and whether we can regulate them.

Mr. Smith, City Attorney, stated we would prefer to address these signs as temporary signs. They are signs that are not going to be permanent in nature. He said an example is signs that advertise political campaigns; signs that advertise the sale of real estate, etc. He said it is okay for the signage to address the time, manner, and size of those signs. He said it is not okay to talk about content. He said if you point out you are doing something for political signs only, then you have restricted the signs. He said he did feel it was appropriate to address overall temporary signage in the City of Aiken.

Mr. Pearce stated we did not have a vote from Council on the Action Agenda item for that item. He said that is why Mr. Evans had the concern that while they were looking at

the electronic signs should the Planning Commission also be looking at other signs too. Mr. Pearce pointed out Council had given the Planning Commission the Action Agenda, so it would take a vote of Council to change the Action Agenda.

Councilman Ebner asked if Councilman Dewar was only talking about the political signs. Councilman Dewar stated that was his initial comment, but apparently it has to be temporary signs.

Mr. Smith stated Mr. Evans was asking if Council wanted the Planning Commission to hold up discussion about the two items that are on the Action Agenda and consider the other signage issues that could be more involved.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he felt these are two separate issues. He said it is not only the election signs, but a lot of little signs that go up.

Councilman Dewar stated we have not looked at the sign ordinance in about 10 years. The question was should we be looking at the whole ordinance now.

Mr. Smith stated he had suggested to Mr. Evans that he felt it would be appropriate to bring in a person who is a sign expert and knows about the laws that have come out over the years regarding signs. He said there are issues such as offsite advertising, billboards, etc. He said that is a much longer discussion than just the digital signs.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the Planning Commission had done so much already on the digital signs. Councilman Dewar stated they have had expertise on digital signs, and feels they are ready to go on digital signs.

Councilman Ebner stated he thought the discussions went well with the electronic signs and getting the trees out of the view of signs.

Mr. Pearce stated there needed to be a motion if Council wanted to change the item on the Action Agenda. Presently the Action item the Planning Commission is working on is Item 4 which is "Review of sign regulations regarding electronic signs and trees blocking visibility of signs." If that is to include other items regarding signs, Council would need to make a motion to change the Action Agenda.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he felt the other sign issues should be separated from what the Planning Commission is considering at this time. He said if we change the Action Agenda and ask them to consider other items, we will be holding up what has been done already. He felt the other sign issues should be a separate item for the Planning Commission to consider.

Councilman Dewar stated we can do it either way. The process could be doing it once. He said doing it once would be delaying the Planning Commission and asking them to go back and look at temporary signs. He said we could do the electronic signs, and then separately go back and look at the temporary signs. He pointed out there is not an election until next year.

Mr. Pearce pointed out the Planning Commission would be looking at all temporary signs, not just signs with a particular content.

Councilman Ebner suggested that Mr. Evans put together a memo for Council and staff information as to what would be entailed to look at temporary signs. He pointed out the City Attorney made a suggestion about how we might go about looking at the whole sign ordinance by getting an expert on signs, like getting an expert traffic survey person to do traffic surveys. He said that would give us information as to what could be done.

Mr. Pearce stated in addition to what Mr. Smith had said about a sign expert, he was aware from the Managers' meetings that there are specific consultants, and that is all they do is look at sign ordinances, and they can advise. He said that could be an Action item

for next year. He said the Planning Commission could work on the electronic signs and visibility of sign issues and complete that study. Then they could do a comprehensive review of the sign ordinance if that is what Council would like to have done as part of the next set of Action Items.

Councilman Merry stated that is the way he would like to do it. He said the Design Review Board had a person from the State Department of Archives and History come down and make a presentation about signs. He said he was not sure she was an ordinance specialist, but she was certainly a sign specialist. She had a great slide show program. He felt that presentation might be a worthwhile thing for the Planning Commission as well as some other consultants or experts that might know the ordinances better. He said that presentation alone opened the eyes of a lot of the members of the DRB, and might be helpful to the Planning Commission as well.

Mr. Pearce stated that could take place, and it was a good suggestion. It could set the stage to be an Action Item.

Councilman Merry stated he did not feel that Council should hold up the conclusion of the Planning Commission on the electronic signs and visibility issue.

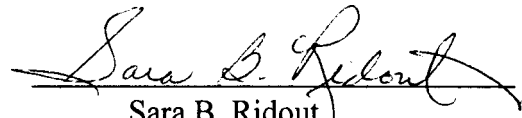
Mayor Cavanaugh also felt Council should not hold up the Planning Commission on their current item regarding electronic signs and visibility of signs. Councilman Dewar stated he was fine with that.

Councilman Ebner stated then in other words when the Planning Commission finishes Items 3 and 4 regarding signs, they will go to Item 5 on the approved Action Agenda.

Mr. Pearce responded that is correct as the Action Agenda presently stands.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:03P.M.


Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk