

Aiken City Council Minutes

January 30, 2004

## Aiken's Horizons

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Clyburn, Cuning, Price, Smith, and Sprawls.

Absent: Councilwoman Vaughters

Others Present: Roger LeDuc, Bill Huggins, Gary Smith, Ed Evans, Anita Lilly, Pete Frommer, Larry Morris, Glenn Parker, Richard Pearce, Kenneth Cook, Sara Ridout, Steve Hale, and Philip Lord of the Aiken Standard.

The Aiken City Council met at Rose Hill Estate at 221 Greenville Street NW for their annual Council retreat, called Horizons 2004, beginning at 12 noon with lunch.

BUDGET

Roger LeDuc, City Manager, and Anita Lilly, Finance Director, presented an update on the budget expenditures and revenues for fiscal year 2003-2004 for the General Fund, Utilities Fund and for the Interfund Loan Status. Mr. LeDuc discussed the revenue sources and future losses in revenue, including vehicle taxes and telecommunications fees. He reviewed the city's health insurance costs and the city's Wellness Program and the city's partnering with Aiken Regional Hospital for health screenings. He also reviewed the Utility Fund revenue and expenses. He pointed out the water consumption for July through December 2003 was at the lowest level compared to the same period over the last 10 years, which resulted in an overall 25% decrease in consumption. He then discussed the status of the Interfund Loans and the Special Holding Reserves as of December, 2003.

GARBAGERoll Cart  
Curbside Pickup

Larry Morris, Public Works Director, pointed out that the number of residential garbage customers has increased, and that the present four trucks must service approximately 600 homes per day in order to service all homes on a weekly basis. He pointed out that in the last nine months the garbage crews had to work overtime at a cost of \$27,921 to finish the routes. He also pointed out that the garbage crews had had 45 injuries in the past year. He stated the crews were at their max, and the city needed to expand the present workforce at a cost of \$95,000 for a new truck and \$92,500 per year for personnel. He suggested that in order to reduce injuries and provide additional time savings, a new voluntary program involving roll cart use on a volunteer basis is proposed. In the roll cart system, curb side pickup of garbage rather than backyard pickup would be provided.

Council discussed the proposal and the present cost of providing backyard garbage pickup. The general consensus of Council was that the city provide a voluntary roll cart service for garbage pickup at the curb. Council discussed requiring new annexations and new subdivisions to have roll cart garbage service. They also discussed that in the future the city may have to go to mandatory roll cart pickup for all garbage service with special assistance for the handicapped.

PUBLIC SAFETY CADET PROGRAM  
LITTER PROGRAM

Pete Frommer, Public Safety Director, reviewed for Council the Public Safety Cadet Program and the proposed incentive program to encourage the Cadets to become Public Safety Officers.

Mr. Frommer then reviewed for Council the activities Public Safety has been promoting in an effort to reduce litter.

#### NORTHSIDE DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Mr. Larry Morris and Mr. Bill Huggins reviewed for Council proposed incentives for encouraging development on the northside of Aiken. Council asked that the incentives possibly include openscape or other incentives besides water and sewer.

#### YARD TRASH

Larry Morris, Public Works Director, presented to Council four alternatives for changing the policy for pickup of yard trash. Currently yard trash is picked up on a weekly basis from the entire city and can be placed at the curb in front of the property at any time. The ordinance requires yard trash to be separated rather than mixed, but is unenforceable. He pointed out that presently the crews have to work overtime to cover the city and the crews have a lot of injuries while doing their job.

Mr. Morris reviewed the four alternatives for Council. The first alternative was to add a fifth trash route at a cost of about \$345,000. Alternative 2 was special pickup crew with quarterly pickup at a cost of about \$110,000 and provide a charge for the special pickups more than once a quarter. Alternative 3 would create a special pickup crew with quarterly pickup. However the ordinance would be changed to require trash to be placed at the curb side no more than 24 hours prior to pickup day. Cost for Alternative 3 would be about \$110,000. Alternative 4 there would be no change in trash operations with the exception of adding an ordinance provision that would limit trash being placed on the streets to no more than 24-hours prior to pickup.

Council discussed the alternatives. Council stated Alternate 3 providing quarterly pickup with a special pickup crew, with trash not being placed at the curb side more than 48 hours prior to pickup day should be considered.

#### RECREATION

##### Tourism

Glenn Parker, Recreation Director, discussed with Council the Recreation Department's role in taking over tourism from the Chamber of Commerce. He said as of July 1, 2003, the City of Aiken Recreation Department became the provider of tourism services for the City of Aiken. He said they had researched how tourism in Aiken is currently operated and what needs to occur in the future.

He said to better determine the role of tourism in Aiken the following criteria are being examined: 1) define a tourist and tourism; 2) determine what tourism resources Aiken has; 3) decide what should be marketed and to whom and how; 4) discern the role of the Arts Community; and 5) develop a marketing plan for Aiken. He said Council had approved the purchase of a trolley for the bus tours of Aiken, which are conducted on Saturdays. It is proposed to prepare a resource guide of available resources in Aiken. He said a visitors center will need to be established and additional staff will be needed. He stated that Liz Stewart and Doug Rabold are working with the city in determining the role of the city. He said the city was taking a slow approach, trying to find out what we need to market, get the resource data and then hire a person.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 P.M.

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January 31, 2004

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Absent: Councilmember Vaughters

Others Present: Roger LeDuc, Bill Huggins, Gary Smith, Ed Evans, Anita Lilly, Pete Frommer, Larry Morris, Glenn Parker, Kenneth Cook, Sara Ridout, Jim Wetzel, Kay Brohl, Wade Brodie, Reverend Doug Slaughter, Harvey Ramseur, Wilkins Byrd, Mike Anaclerio, and Philip Lord of the Aiken Standard.

The Aiken City Council met at Rose Hill Estate on Greenville Street for continuation of their annual Council retreat called Horizons 2004, beginning at 8 A.M. with breakfast.

PLANNINGPlanning Commission

Ed Evans, Planning Director, stated that the Planning Commission faces many complex issues. The consensus of the Planning Commission in January at their regular meeting was that the issues were not being addressed as quickly as they should be. The Commissioners are looking for ways to accelerate the process. The Commission has agreed to consider having more meetings, longer meetings, begin work sessions earlier before the regular meeting, hold more special meetings, and use subcommittees in order to try to complete some of the issues that Council has asked them to consider.

Mr. Evans reviewed the 2004 Action Agenda of the Planning Commission and the progress made on the issues.

Mr. Jim Wetzel was present and asked that he be allowed to address the traffic ordinance and traffic impact fee issue. He reviewed for Council the actions on the traffic ordinance and impact fee when it was first brought to Council for consideration. He stated he felt Council needed to take care of Whiskey Road traffic first and then go to the other problems. He felt Aiken needed a traffic management ordinance and a traffic impact ordinance.

CAPITAL PROJECT SALES TAX

Mr. LeDuc presented a list of proposed capital projects to include in a referendum for continuation of the 1 cent sales tax. He pointed out the list totaled \$42,360,000 and Council needed to review each of the projects and help cut the projects to total \$28 million, as he figured this would be the amount available for projects from the sales tax. Council reviewed the list and suggested amounts to cut the proposed projects.

Reverend Doug Slaughter asked that he be allowed to make a presentation to Council regarding the proposed project for the Historic African-American Cultural Center. He proposed that the building at 120 York Street NE be purchased for this project. He reviewed the history of the building and the proposed project for the building. He asked that Council include the project in the 1 cent sales tax.

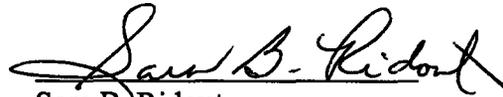
MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Cavanaugh briefly reviewed his concerns about the telecommunications fees and other revenues being cut and state mandates on cities. He pointed out to Council the importance of contacting the legislators and reading the Legislative Bulletin published by the Municipal Association of S.C.

GOALS

Mr. LeDuc stated each year at Horizons Council reviews the programs and operations of the city and sets goals as to what they would like to see accomplished next year. He asked that Council review last year's goals and set goals for budget year 2004-05. The goals proposed will be presented to Council for formal adoption.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 P.M.



Sara B. Ridout  
City Clerk