

Aiken City Council MinutesREGULAR MEETING

December 9, 2019

Present: Mayor Osbon, Councilmembers Brohl, Diggs, Girardeau, Gregory, Price, and Woltz.

Others Present: Stuart Bedenbaugh, Gary Smith, Kim Abney, Charles Barranco, Sara Ridout, Kym Wheat, Ryan Bland, Gary Meadows, Angela Hales, Tim O'Briant, Lex Kirkland, Jessica Campbell, Mike Przybylowicz, Colin Demarest and Shiann Sivell, of the Aiken Standard, and about 85 citizens.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Osbon called the regular meeting of December 9, 2019, to order at 7:01 P.M. Mr. Richard Johnson, led in prayer. The pledge of allegiance to the flag was led by members of Girl Scout Troop 1417.

GUIDELINES

Mayor Osbon reviewed the guidelines for speaking at the Council meeting.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Mayor Osbon recognized Mayor Pro Tem Lessie Price for any additions or deletions to the agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Price asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. There being no changes, Mayor Pro Tem Price moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs that the agenda be approved as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

MINUTES

The minutes of the work session and regular meeting of November 25, 2019, and the Executive Session of December 3, 2019, were considered for approval. Councilwoman Brohl moved, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that the minutes for the meetings of November 25, 2019, and December 3, 2019, be approved as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATIONGirl Scout Troop 1417Boy Scout Troop 421

Mayor Osbon stated City Council and the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department would like to recognize Girl Scout Troop 1417 and Boy Scout Troop 421 for scout projects.

City Manager Stuart Bedenbaugh stated City Council and the Parks, Recreation & Tourism Department would like to recognize the work of two scout groups.

Five girls in Girl Scout Troop 1417 completed a Bronze Award project by building and installing a bat box at Carolina Bay Nature Preserve. The girls are Allie Bennet, Grace Fellingner, Sophie Jaq Gadus, Emily Kirk, and Carol Ann Leach. The bat box was installed on April 6, 2019.

He said each of the girls has something they want to read describing the project for Council and the audience. They said bat boxes are artificial roosts designed to encourage bats into areas where there are few roosting sites. Bat boxes are important because they help keep bats safe. They want to keep bats safe in Aiken because they cut down on the population of mosquitoes and other bugs by eating them. A single bat can eat up to 1,200 mosquitoes in an hour. Each bat usually eats 6,000 to 8,000 insects each night. They

built bat boxes because they wanted to provide homes for bats and encourage them to live in Aiken and to reduce the population of mosquitoes and other pests. Having bat boxes will give them a proper home instead of living in people's chimneys and attics. Bats like to be near water because that is where mosquitoes are. It was noted that the bat box at Carolina Bay can hold up to 1,300 bats.

Ms. Jessica Campbell, Director of the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department, presented a certificate to each of the girls for their work in building and installing a bat box at Carolina Bay Nature Preserve.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Craver King with Boy Scout Troop 421 completed an Eagle Scout project by building and installing a cross-country trailhead kiosk, starting line base posts, and trail mile-marker signs at Generations Park. The project was completed the first of November, 2019.

Mayor Osbon stated he had seen the kiosk at Generations Park and that is quite an accomplishment. He congratulated Craver for his Eagle Scout award which is quite an accomplishment. Craver King stated he could not have done it without the help and support of the City, his dad, and a neighbor whose shop they used to build the kiosk. He said he was able to get funding for the kiosk. A certificate was presented to Craver King.

Mayor Osbon stated the City of Aiken appreciates the hard work and dedication each individual contributed to these projects which have enhanced our parks and will have a lasting impact on our community.

#### Women of Woodside

Mayor Osbon stated City Council would like to recognize the Women of Woodside and their contributions to the community. He recognized Councilwoman Gregory to read the proclamation.

Councilwoman Gregory stated a few months ago she went to a Women of Woodside luncheon. She said she was surprised by the contributions and impact that the organization has on the community and the selflessness that she had witnessed of the volunteers and the time the members put into giving back to the various charities in the community. She said she felt it was appropriate to recognize them and give them a moment to talk about their organization. She pointed out Ms. Chris Jakubec, President of WOW, Margie Robertson and Julie Brozowski, Community Outreach Co-Chairs, and Kathy Barr and Pat Dunlop, Member Support Co-Chairs, Susan Chappell, First Vice President, and Donna Horvath, Past President, are present.

Ms. Jakubec stated the Women of Woodside organization is in their 31<sup>st</sup> year. They are dedicated to the wellbeing of the community and their members. They are recognized by the State of South Carolina as a not-for-profit 501(c)4 organization. Since its inception they have contributed in excess of \$1.3 million back to the Aiken area. They assist in supporting 30 plus charitable agencies and organizations. Part of their mission is to provide a good time for their members and educational opportunities. Their mission is that they continue to serve the local community through fundraising and charitable giving and that they work to promote the enjoyment of the members through various social activities.

Ms. Robertson and Ms. Brozowski stated they are co-chairs of the WOW Community Outreach Program. They are responsible for raising the money for their charities and with Board approval decide where the money will go. Ms. Brozowski reviewed some of their recent fundraisers. She stated their year started in September. In October they participated in the Alzheimer's Walk and WOW walkers raised over \$4,300. They were honored by the Mayor for being the second year in a row largest volunteer organization to raise the most money for the walk. They participated in the Spooky to be Hungry, the school drive for Golden Harvest, and they raised \$6,025. Recently they had their Holiday Home Tour, Tea and Craft Boutique, and raised about \$9,000 for that charity. They sell mailbox huggies and raised \$500 with that money going to the Salvation Army. They also participated in the Angel Project where they shop for a specific person in certain

agencies such as Children's Place, Aiken Senior Life Services, Mental Health America, and Life Choices Pregnancy Center. She said they have a history of giving in the community. They give to about 30 to 40 charities each year. This year they launched their Inaugural Capital Campaign with a goal of \$25,000 which is to be given back to the community with a focus in three areas—health, education, and seniors. For the seniors they are giving money to the Community Medical Clinic; in the health category, the Child Advocacy Center of Aiken County, and in the field of education to Guide, Encourage and Motivate (GEM). GEM is a program for senior high school girls who are going on with their education, but who are disadvantaged young women. They lack the skills to know how to make this goal. It is a mentoring program as well as a scholarship program. Originally the Capital Campaign focused on donations from the WOW members, but they have now gone to the business world to help raise the funding. Even though they raise money, they also focus on donating their time. Presently they are delivering Meals on Wheels, have volunteered for the Festival of Lights at Hopelands Gardens, have volunteered at North Aiken Elementary School working with classroom teachers on reading and writing, and Heavenly Peace which builds bunk beds for children in Aiken County.

Councilwoman Gregory read the proclamation recognizing the Women of Woodside organization for their service in the community. Mayor Osbon and Councilwoman Gregory presented the proclamation to WOW.

### BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

#### Appointments

#### Brooke Thomas

#### Equine Committee

Mayor Osbon stated Council needed to consider appointments to various city boards, commissions, and committees.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Council has 38 pending appointments to fill vacancies on different City boards, commissions, and committees. One appointment is presented for Council's consideration and vote at the meeting tonight.

Councilwoman Gregory has recommended the appointment of Brooke Thomas, to the Equine Committee. If appointed, Ms. Thomas' term would expire January 28, 2021. Ms. Thomas would be eligible for reappointment upon approval of Council.

For City Council consideration is the appointment of Brooke Thomas to the Equine Committee.

Councilwoman Brohl moved, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that Council approve the appointment of Brooke Thomas to the Equine Committee. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Osbon asked if there were any nominations for appointments at the next Council meeting.

Councilman Woltz stated he would like to nominate Mike Naples for the Energy & Environmental Committee for the position formerly filled by Bob Brookshire.

Councilwoman Diggs stated she would like to nominate Dr. Stephen Simmons to the Planning Commission to fill the position of Susan DeBruhl.

Councilwoman Price stated she would like to recommend the reappointment of Charles Matthews to the Planning Commission.

Councilwoman Gregory recommended the appointment of Ron Dellamora to the Energy & Environmental Committee and the reappointment of Lucy Knowles to the Design Review Board.

ANNEXATION – ORDINANCE 12092019

Branchwater Lane  
The Oaks Subdivision  
TPN 089-20-07-002  
TPN 089-20-07-003  
TPN 089-20-07-005  
TPN 089-20-07-006  
TPN 090-08-06-001  
TPN 107-05-01-001  
TPN 106-17-20-002  
TPN 106-17-20-003  
TPN 106-17-20-005  
TPN 106-17-20-007

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to annex 10 lots on Branchwater Lane and zone them Residential Single-Family (RS-15).

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO ANNEX TO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF AIKEN CERTAIN PROPERTY CONSISTING OF TEN (10) LOTS AND 9.44 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR LESS, OWNED BY SEVERAL OWNERS AND LOCATED ON BRANCHWATER LANE AND TO ZONE THE SAME RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY (RS-15).

Councilman Girardeau moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to annex 10 lots on Branchwater Lane and zone them Residential Single-Family (RS-15).

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated properties along Branchwater Lane cul-de-sac in The Oaks Subdivision located south of Huckleberry Drive have requested annexation of their properties and zoning as Residential Single-Family (RS-15). They have also requested acceptance of Branchwater Lane by the City. This annexation petition should be considered under the 75-percent annexation method allowed by State statute and should include annexation of 10 lots on Branchwater Lane.

State law allows property which is contiguous to a municipality to file an annexation petition signed by 75 percent or more of the freeholders owning at least 75 percent of the assessed value of the area to be annexed. Staff has reviewed the petition filed and verified that owners of eight of the 10 properties (80%) included in the petition, comprising 76% of total assessed value have signed the petition. This includes a parcel the City owns that contains a sanitary sewer lift station. The properties are in a partial "doughnut hole."

All properties currently have access to City of Aiken water and sewer, and would be required to annex upon sale of property under the current annexation policy. Two other properties on Branchwater Lane previously annexed under the transfer of property annexation policy. The properties currently have city fire protection and upon annexation would also receive city solid waste service.

City Engineering staff have reviewed the road and believe that it is appropriate for the City to accept into our road inventory.

The Planning Commission at their meeting on October 15, 2019, considered this request for annexation and voted 6-0 (Commissioner Klecker not present) to recommend approval of the annexation application.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the November 25, 2019, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to annex 10 lots on Branchwater Lane and zone them Residential Single-family (RS-15) and accept the Branchwater Lane road.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilman Girardeau, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to annex 10 lots on Branchwater Lane and zone them Residential Single-Family (RS-15) and accept the Branchwater Lane road. The motion was unanimously approved.

ANNEXATION – ORDINANCE 12092019A

327 East Pine Log Road

Carl L. Johnson

TPN 122-10-04-022

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to annex 327 East Pine Log Road and zone it Limited Business (LB).

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO ANNEX PROPERTY OWNED BY CARL L. JOHNSON AND TO ZONE THE SAME LIMITED BUSINESS (LB).

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilwoman Brohl, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to annex 327 East Pine Log Road and zone it Limited Business (LB).

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Mr. Carl L. Johnson, applicant and owner, is requesting annexation of 327 East Pine Log Road. He is requesting annexation because he proposes to change the use of the existing single-family home to a beauty salon. As required in the City Services policy (Resolution 01262015E), if a property is contiguous to the city limits and served by City utilities, then any change of use other than to single-family residential will require annexation. Mr. Johnson is requesting Limited Business (LB) zoning for the property. Currently the County zoning is Office/Residential (OR). Low intensity commercial uses, such as a hair salon, are allowed in the Limited Business (LB) zoning if the use is approved through the Board of Zoning Appeals Special Exception process. Limited Business (LB) zoning accommodates areas in transition that are adjacent to major thoroughfares and residential uses. The property proposed to be annexed is located in Virginia Acres Subdivision No. 3.

The Planning Commission at their meeting on November 12, 2019, considered this request for annexation and recommended by a vote of 5-0 (Commissioners DeBruhl and Reynolds were absent) that the property be annexed and zoned Limited Business (LB) with the following condition to be met prior to the annexation becoming effective:

1. That the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approve a Special Exception request to operate a beauty salon on the property at 327 East Pine Log Road.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the November 25, 2019, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to annex 327 East Pine Log Road owned by Carl L. Johnson and zone it Limited Business (LB) with the condition recommended by the Planning Commission.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilwoman Brohl, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to annex 327 East Pine Log Road and zone it Limited Business (LB). The motion was unanimously approved.

ANNEXATION – ORDINANCE 12092019B

1224 Williams Drive  
Karl R. and Sharon L. Bankert  
TPN 106-07-24-012

Councilman Woltz stated he would recuse himself as he owns property adjacent to 1224 Williams Drive. He left the Council Chambers.

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to annex 1224 Williams Drive and zone it Residential Single-Family (RS-15).

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO ANNEX PROPERTY OWNED BY KARL AND SHARON BANKERT AND TO ZONE THE SAME RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY (RS-15).

Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilwoman Brohl, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to annex 1224 Williams Drive and zone it Residential Single-Family (RS-15).

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated pursuant to the city's Water/Sewer Annexation Policy, Resolution 09122016D, Karl R. and Sharon L. Bankert, owners, are requesting annexation of property at 1224 Williams Drive and zoning as Residential Single-Family (RS-15). This property is located in South Conger Woods Subdivision which is in the Aiken Estates area.

The Planning Commission at their meeting on November 12, 2019, considered this request for annexation and by a vote of 5-0 (Commissioners DeBruhl and Reynolds were absent) recommended that the property be annexed and zoned Residential Single-Family (RS-15).

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the November 25, 2019, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to annex property at 1224 Williams Drive owned by Karl and Sharon Bankert and zone it Residential Single-Family (RS-15).

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilwoman Price, seconded by Councilwoman Brohl, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to annex 1224 Williams Drive and zone it Residential Single-Family (RS-15). The motion was approved by a vote of 6 in favor. Councilman Woltz recused himself from voting.

Councilman Woltz returned to the Council Chambers.

CONCEPT PLAN – ORDINANCE 12092019C

Woodside Executive Office Park  
Silver Bluff Road  
P & S Property Holdings LLC  
dba Woods Farm Market  
TPN 107-06-04-001  
TPN 107-06-04-016  
TPN 107-06-04-017

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to amend the concept plan for Woodside Executive Office Park on Silver Bluff Road.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CONCEPT PLAN FOR PROPERTY LOCATED  
AT THE INTERSECTION OF SILVER BLUFF ROAD AND WOODSIDE  
EXECUTIVE COURT.

Councilman Girardeau moved, seconded by Councilman Woltz, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to amend the concept plan for Woodside Executive Office Park on Silver Bluff Road with the conditions recommended by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated P & S Property Holdings LLC, DBA Woods Farm Market, applicant, is requesting approval of a revised concept plan for approximately two acres of undeveloped property that is part of the original Woodside Executive Office Park Planned Residential property. The property is located on Silver Bluff Road between Woodside Executive Court and Hidden Haven Drive. The request proposes a 3,500 square foot structure for a farm market and a café. The market would have produce, dry goods, flowers, and local art and craft items and light dining.

For any development in the Planned Residential zone, a concept plan must be reviewed by the Planning Commission and approved by City Council. The property is currently undeveloped with tree coverage. The building is proposed to be a modern barn exterior with a covered porch and second story window. The building materials would be wood and stone in an earth-tone palette. Eighteen parking spaces will be provided which is the amount of parking required by the Zoning Ordinance for retail sales and services. Additional parking spaces may be required based on the number of tables that are provided for the café. The concept plan indicates that the drive isles and handicap parking spaces will be paved. The remaining parking area will be gravel or other natural surface treatment to be determined during plan review with staff, the applicant, and the applicant's engineer. Parking surfaces other than asphalt will require approval by the City Engineer if not stipulated by City Council as a condition of approval. The issue about the parking area was a question from Council regarding the surface for the remaining parking area other than handicapped parking spaces. After discussion with staff and the engineer for the applicant, during site plan preparation, which is an accepted policy, staff and the engineer for the site's owner, would determine the material used for the remaining portion of the parking area. It has been suggested that the property owner of Woods Farm Market acquire a cross access and shared parking with Woodside Executive Office Park or designate an area on the parcel for overflow parking. Two access points are proposed with one ingress/egress from Hidden Haven Drive and the other ingress/egress connecting to the existing internal Woodside Executive Park road system with no access point for Silver Bluff Road. The developer says that 83 percent of the open space will be preserved. Due to the low average daily trip generation, it was determined that a traffic study was not required.

After review of the concept plan the Planning Commission voted 5-0 (Commissioners DeBruhl and Reynolds were absent) to recommend approval of the proposed revised concept plan with the following conditions:

1. That the development provide access off Hidden Haven Road and the internal driveway system of the Woodside Executive Office Park.
2. That a cross access and shared parking easement with Woodside Executive Office Park be recorded, and/or an overflow parking area with a grass reinforcement grid be installed.
3. That the site and landscape plan comply with the Landscape and Tree Preservation requirements in the Zoning Ordinance.
4. That the signage comply with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
5. That the applicant sign an agreement stating the conditions of approval within 180 days.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the November 25, 2019, meeting. For City Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to approve a revised concept plan for a portion of the Woodside Executive Office Park with the conditions recommended by the Planning Commission.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilman Girardeau, seconded by Councilman Woltz, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to amend the concept plan for Woodside Executive Office Park on Silver Bluff Road with the conditions recommended by the Planning Commission. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### BUILDING CODES – ORDINANCE 12092019D

##### International Building Codes

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to adopt the 2018 Editions of the International Building codes.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 10 SECTION 10-2 OF THE AIKEN CITY CODE TO INCORPORATE THE 2018 EDITIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE, WITH MODIFICATIONS; INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE, WITH MODIFICATIONS; INTERNATIONAL FUEL GAS CODE, WITH MODIFICATIONS; INTERNATIONAL PLUMBING CODE, WITH MODIFICATIONS; INTERNATIONAL MECHANICAL CODE, WITH MODIFICATIONS; INTERNATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION CODE; THE INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE; THE INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE, WITH MODIFICATIONS; THE INTERNATIONAL SWIMMING POOL AND SPA CODE; AND THE 2017 EDITION OF THE NFPA NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE.

Councilwoman Brohl moved, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to adopt the 2018 editions of the International Building codes.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated the International Building Code Congress updates and amends the International Building Codes regularly. When it does so, the South Carolina Building Code Council reviews these amendments and directs adoption of them by local governments.

It is time for us to adopt the most recent revisions to these building codes as well as the administrative chapters of the codes according to Building Official Mike Jordan.

Since Council adopts these codes as part of our City Code of Laws, an ordinance is necessary to enact these recent revisions for construction occurring within the City limits of Aiken. Implementation of these codes would take effect on January 1, 2020.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the November 25, 2019, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to adopt the 2018 editions of the Building Codes, the 2017 edition of the Electrical Code, and the 2018 edition of the Swimming Pool and Spa Code, a new code, as presented by the International Building Code Congress and mandated by the State of South Carolina through its Building Code Council, including the administrative chapters of the codes.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilwoman Brohl, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that Council approve on second reading of an ordinance to adopt the latest editions of the international building codes approved by the State Building Code Council. The motion was unanimously approved.



BUDGET – ORDINANCE 12092019EPublic Safety Vehicles  
FY 2019-2020

Mayor Osbon stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to approve a budget adjustment for replacement of six Public Safety vehicles.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET OF THE CITY OF AIKEN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2019, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2020, FOR REPLACEMENT OF SIX PUBLIC SAFETY VEHICLES.

Councilwoman Gregory moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to amend the 2019-20 budget for the replacement of six public safety vehicles..

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated the current South Carolina State contract price for Ford's Public Safety utility vehicle has increased almost 20 percent since last year, with a new state contract price for FY2019-20. Six vehicles were approved in the current budget for replacement; however, with the new pricing, the budget is short by \$26,500. The funds are available in depreciation funds to be able to purchase all six of the vehicles this year.

The funds will come from Public Safety Vehicle Depreciation Funds available, so we will increase the Depreciation Transfer In revenue account (001-0000-391-30-30) and increase the Vehicles expense account (001-2120-421-74-02) in the General Fund by \$26,500.

The vendor awarded the state contract is Santee Ford of Manning, South Carolina.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the November 25, 2019, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to adjust the budget for the purchase of six Public Safety vehicles.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilwoman Gregory, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to approve a budget adjustment for replacement of six Public Safety vehicles. The motion was unanimously approved.

ANNEXATION – ORDINANCE

Concept Plan  
Owens Street  
Woodford Trace SC, LLC  
VSL Development, LLC  
TPN 122-13-02-024

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to annex 4.56 acres near Owens Street and zone it Planned Residential (PR) and approve the concept plan.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO ANNEX TO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF AIKEN CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNED BY VSL DEVELOPMENT, LLC AND LOCATED NEAR OWENS STREET AND TO ZONE THE SAME PLANNED RESIDENTIAL (PR) AND TO APPROVE A CONCEPT PLAN.

Councilman Girardeau moved, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to annex 4.56 acres near Owens Street and zone it Planned Residential (PR) and approve the concept plan.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated Woodford Trace SC, LLC, applicant, is requesting an annexation and concept plan approval. They propose to build an affordable housing community on 4.56 acres near Owens Street. The project would be a multi-family complex with amenities consisting of 48 units; 30 of the units would be two-bedroom apartments of approximately 1,000 square feet, and 18 of the units would be three-bedroom apartments of approximately 1,200 square feet. The community amenities would include a clubhouse with a playground and picnic area, a business center, community room, and on-site laundry facility.

In 2006 Council adopted a policy that development of tracts of four (4) acres or more being rezoned, annexed or requesting city utility services and used primarily for residential purposes would be annexed and required to comply with the Planned Residential (PR) zoning. The Planned Residential zone requires a concept plan to be reviewed by the Planning Commission and approved by City Council.

In reviewing the concept plan, it was noted that multi-family apartments should provide 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit. The proposed plan would require 72 parking spaces and 99 parking spaces are in the plan. A sidewalk system is shown within the complex, but does not connect with the existing sidewalk along Owens Street to provide a connecting sidewalk system to surrounding areas. The main entrance for the complex would be constructed as an extension of Owens Street/Hamilton Drive. The developer has indicated that they will have 41 percent open space. A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) was required. The consultant has recommended approval of the TIA with the condition that the developer coordinate the access points and connections to the future Pawnee/Neilson Connector with City staff.

The Planning Commission reviewed the annexation request and the concept plan at their October 15, 2019, meeting. They voted 6-0 to recommend denial of this application on the basis that transportation facilities, specifically the road network, are inadequate to serve the project at this time.

This request for annexation and approval of a concept plan is now before Council for consideration. The following are suggested conditions for Council in considering this request.

- a. Additional sidewalks should be included on the site plan to provide access to Owens Street and potential Hamilton Drive extension to the Pawnee Neilson connector;
- b. That a gated emergency all-weather road be constructed to Neilson Street as a secondary access prior to approval of a Certificate of Occupancy.
- c. That approval of the TIA is conditioned on the developer coordinating the access points and connections to the future Pawnee Neilson Connector with City staff as part of the site plan review process.
- d. That any additional easements needed for the Hamilton Drive and Pawnee Neilson Connector be designated for the City of Aiken prior to approval of a site plan.
- e. That the site and landscape plan comply with the Landscape and Tree Preservation requirements in the Zoning Ordinance.
- f. That the signage comply with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
- g. That an annexation plat be recorded within 180 days.
- h. That the transfer of ownership be completed within 180 days.
- i. That the applicant signs an agreement stating the conditions of approval within 180 days.

For City Council consideration is first reading of an ordinance to annex 4.56 acres near Owens Street, zone the property Planned Residential (PR), and approve a concept plan.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mr. Kevin Pethick, stated he was speaking on behalf of Woodford Trace SC, LLC and would like to review the proposed project for City Council and explain why the project is

very much needed. He said Aiken has a shortage of affordable housing. The study that the Chamber presented a while back, showed there is currently a need for 658 units of affordable housing in Aiken. There are 1,420 income qualified renter households in the market area that would benefit from housing. In the Chamber report Meybohm Realtors reported that the majority of their rental requests are for the south side of Aiken. Currently Aiken's five Affordable Housing complexes report zero vacancies and long waiting lists among the 244 combined units. The Affordable Housing demand is increasing every year by 14 units and will continue to be a problem. The Woodford Trace proposed project of 48 units would only satisfy 7% of the current need. He pointed out that Affordable Housing need goes through a state-wide process where sites are reviewed and rated to determine which of the community projects are strongest. The Woodford Trace site was one of two sites in the state to receive a perfect score for site location. Based on that rating the site has been approved and the tax credits have been authorized. This is a project with which we can move forward. The rating criteria they use are things such as proximity to schools, the services, jobs, grocery stores, etc. that make the proposed site a good site. He said we should be careful about substituting any judgement that we would have on the best location. He noted there is traffic in this area. These funds come from the state. When they have identified the site as an A+ location we need to take that very seriously. In this case, we can't go backwards on the project. If this is turned down, then we are back to ground zero which means it would be about another two to three years in the pipeline trying to get to the next project.

Mr. Pethick stated the proposed project offers Affordable Housing for Aiken's workforce. He said sometimes there is confusion about public housing, Section 8, or Affordable Housing. The housing is designed to offer incentives for the developer to be able to provide the housing at a lower cost so they can also take the rents to a lower price. This project would offer affordable housing to our work force. In order for Aiken to grow, we need to increase our inventory. The project would allow for income ranges of \$22,000 to \$40,000. In looking at the website there are currently 11 positions posted by the City of Aiken. All 11 of those would be within the affordable range for the project. It would enable Aiken to offer affordable accommodations to the employees that we are trying to bring to our community. New jobs at SRS and the Cyber Headquarters at Fort Gordon are creating even more demand. What is being predicted is that as the senior population retires, they are going to be replaced by millennials. Those millennials will fall more into the category of needing affordable housing; whereas they don't really predict there will be a huge leaving of the population from the retirees because we have such a wonderful retirement community. He noted the new SRS job estimates for 2019 – 560/ 2020 – 570/ 2021 - 580 which do not account for the cyber jobs. He said he would like for Will Williams to say something about the community needs for Affordable Housing.

Mr. Will Williams, President of Economic Development Partnership, stated he wanted to speak to the fact that we do not have enough apartment stock in the City of Aiken. He noted that the City, the Economic Development Partnership and the Chamber of Commerce commissioned a study in 2018 which focused a lot on the downtown, but it spoke to the overall lack of affordable or workforce housing in the area. When we get a request for information from companies who are looking to potentially locate within our county, they ask about housing and its availability. The two newest developments outside of the one constructed not long ago, were in 2008 and 2012. The Haven which was constructed in 2008 is at 97% occupancy. The other unit built near Aiken Tech is at 100% occupancy. SRNS last fiscal year which is October 1 – September 30, 2019, hired 1,100 new employees. He pointed out that a majority were backfills. Of that number 51% of those new employees reside within the City of Aiken. However, he knows from personal experience from friends who live outside the area, that one of their children got hired this summer at SRNS in a full time position, and was not able to find housing. There are rental houses within the City of Aiken, but not housing that meets the workforce demand. He noted that if you look at the numbers \$40,000 per year is basically a \$20 per hour job which many of the manufacturers in the area have. He said we need more Affordable Workforce Housing within the City of Aiken.

Mr. Pethick stated a lot of the discussions at the Planning Commission related to problems and complaints with the next door property—the Palmetto Crossing. He noted

that these problems are correctable through proper property management. He said we have seen that in places like Dupont Landing where a really strict and diligent property management company has done a good job of keeping a very safe community and one that we can be proud of. He said the proposed project is not that property. He said Palmetto Crossing uses third party managers. The proposed project developer self-manages properties. A lot of the issues raised at the Planning Commission were hard to see. He said he drives by there very frequently and has not seen nearly the problems that were suggested. He said the residents he had spoken with have indicated there are no issues with the property manager. He said they recognize that some of the problems can be resolved with good property management. The developer of Woodford Trace owns and manages over 10,000 through its own management company. They self-manage. It is not a third party management.

Mr. Hollis Fitch, with the development company for Woodford Trace, was born and raised in Aiken, and wants the project to be a real source of pride. He said he currently lives in Charlotte, NC. He said a lot of complaints had come up. He said he had seen the information that was brought up during the Planning Commission meeting. He said he saw the reference that the plans should not be approved based on infrastructure. He pointed out that the property for the project is in the County. He noted that they employ a traffic engineer for every project they work on. In Aiken they had to use an approved traffic engineer from the City of Aiken. They could not use the traffic engineer that they have a relationship with for other projects. The traffic impact that the study indicated was negligible. Traffic was not a major issue. He said in thinking about infrastructure he thinks about water and sewer. He noted that a few years back a connection was made to the Walgreens on the corner of Dougherty Road and Whiskey Road. He said there is an infrastructure bank that they will have to contribute to. He said that is part of the project. He said he grew up in Aiken and understands the traffic issues which have been there for 20 years. He pointed out that the state agencies that score the projects put an emphasis on the projects' locations being near schools, jobs, retail shopping, and groceries. That is why the site was so appealing in their system. He said he can't guarantee that there will not be a single problem in their development. Even with the rigorous vetting and screening techniques that they do, there will be a problem with a tenant at some point. He said, however, their property management company has been in business for 28 years. In that time they have a sterling history. It has never had an uncorrected violation. They have passed inspections with multiple government agencies. He said they try to do the right thing.

Councilwoman Diggs stated she has questions for informational purposes for the audience and will ask some of the questions that she asked in the work session. She said she agrees there is a need for affordable housing. She said she had seen the problems that have come up with Palmetto Crossing—the lack of a good manager, overflowing garbage cans, and debris thrown in the woods. She said one of the main concerns is safety of pedestrians crossing Whiskey Road and the congested traffic situation for which we have not been able find a solution. She said she was at Aiken Motorcycle about two months ago at 4 p.m. and was stuck for about 45 minutes trying to get out to Hamilton Drive or Dougherty Road. She said her concerns are the problems at Palmetto Crossing and the traffic problems in the area. She wondered why the project could not be in another location.

Mr. Fitch stated he appreciated the traffic issue. He pointed out the funding for these types of development are highly competitive. The state takes into account the location of the property. He said they could not find another location in Aiken that would have met and scored "perfect" under their system. He pointed out that retailers want traffic. He pointed out that Walmart is located in the area because they want traffic. He noted that once you build a Walmart you have other businesses that want to locate next to it, and you end up with a traffic cluster. There are some positives with that in that other businesses are benefitting from the traffic coming from the other retail. The tenants would benefit from having jobs in the near proximity to where they are living. For folks in this income range that is a huge benefit to them, being close to work and to the schools.

Mr. Pethick stated the proposed project is one of the least dense uses that could be on the property as far as what is already there and how it is zoned. He noted that the project is designed to start to build the sidewalks and to start to create the connectivity that is badly needed and can offer a connection over to the adjacent roads that run by Neilson. He said this starts to offer some solution to that problem.

Councilwoman Price asked Mr. Fitch to state the level of investment for the project in the community. Mr. Fitch stated it is in the vicinity of \$8.8 M.

Mayor Osbon stated the calls he received and the individuals he spoke to were concerned about traffic in the area. He said all felt there is a need for workforce housing. He said traffic was the grounds on which the Planning Commission recommended denial of the project. He said in the work session there were conversations that in order to develop the project the developer would be willing to work with staff to come up with a proposal to actually connect a road to Neilson or other road to get another ingress/egress to the area. Mr. Fitch stated they would be amenable to that, but there would be details to be worked out. He said they are in favor of a connector road in the area to help with traffic. Mayor Osbon stated he understands the Planning Commission vote. He said, however, if we have a connector road to ease traffic not only for the proposed development, but for other developments in the area, he could see a path forward. Mr. Fitch stated they are on board for working for a solution with a road connecting to Neilson subject to the adjacent property owners being on board. It was pointed out that they already have a path without having to get approval from the adjacent property owners that allows for connectivity. He pointed out that with respect to the proposed project, he did not think it will ever experience traffic worse than it is now with the holiday season and a road construction project going on. He pointed out that they feel they already have connectivity, but they would like to look at suggestions that Council and staff may have and explore it better.

Mayor Osbon asked that Mr. Fitch speak to sidewalks for pedestrians and walkability. He noted there is a lot of traffic through properties in the area because there are no sidewalks on Whiskey Road. He asked if the proposed project would connect to the Walmart property. Mr. Fitch stated they do not currently connect to the Walmart property. He said they are amenable to connecting to it, but they would have to get an easement from Walmart to add connectivity. He said if the City wanted to pursue that they would be on board and would be happy to make the connection. He pointed out that within their property part of the requirements from the state are that they have to have sidewalk accessibility throughout the site. They have to have an ADA accessible route to the property edge and would hope to be able to connect to a sidewalk system from there.

Councilwoman Price stated she would like to make some comments. She said she benefitted from the presentation. She pointed out what she garnered from that and what needs to be emphasized is that the housing is for working class people. We should not prematurely determine that these are reckless people coming in and that their children are going to run wild. These are people that care about their families. They will not make \$30, \$50 to \$70 per hour. These are working people and the working class person who wants to get a head start in life. All of us have been there at one time. We just grew into our income level that we are in now. We need to make provisions for working class families. We talked about the safety issue and sidewalks for people walking and making provisions for that. No one wants to place children in unsafe conditions. Between the City and the Planning Department we will work out the details to try to make it work in terms of insuring the safety of pedestrians.

Mr. Pethick stated he felt this is an opportunity. He felt the requirement that the city made that requires annexation to receive city utilities is the right direction. He said they welcome annexation to the city. They have been given the opportunity to speak to Council and to have the dialogue to create the safest environment that we can. He pointed out; however, the safety that we are talking about has existed for a long time. He felt that rather than trying to force a project like this that is trying to connect and solve the problem, we need to invite the other business in and see if we can get sidewalks that need to exist now. He said the community needs affordable housing, and we need connectivity and safety. He said we should all work towards that.

Mayor Osbon stated a lot of people are present and have opinions and want to express those. He said he was going to open up for comment from the audience.

Mr. Dan Fishburne, 1004 Owens Street, stated he is part of Glass Works which is on the corner of Owens Street and Dougherty Road. He noted that the gentlemen had been talking about affordable housing, but we have to live with the consequences of congestion every day. It does not take a traffic study for people to understand the congestion on the south side. He pointed out that Councilman Dewar had noted the lack of infrastructure in 2016 when Palmetto Crossing was proposed. He noted that the infrastructure in the area of Whiskey Road-Dougherty Road corridor has not improved. He said he wanted to talk about Owens Street. He said Owens Street was designed in 1950 to service single family residential homes. It is not very wide or long. It has no sidewalks and it empties into two of the busiest streets in Aiken County--Whiskey Road and Dougherty Road. There are no emergency exits, and there are no alternatives to relieving the congestion off of Owens Street. It is a connector road and was not designed to handle the traffic from Palmetto Crossing much less the construction detours, of Whiskey Road and Dougherty Road detours. He felt it is dangerous there and not safe. He felt Owens Street is a disaster waiting to happen. He said one will see on Owens Street during certain times of the day, school buses, trucks, emergency vehicles, etc. He said we have promises of infrastructure, but it is not there. He asked what infrastructure would look like that could handle more development, not just affordable house, but anything in this corridor. It would be a four lane exit to Whiskey Road which is currently under construction. It would be the Dougherty Road widening which was promised to them in 2020, but he understands there is no funding for that. He noted that in the neighborhood meetings that they went to the Dougherty Road widening is actually like three lanes and two sidewalks. He said sidewalks are desperately needed to keep pedestrians safe. He pointed out that drainage and utilities would be needed to support this. He said in looking at the construction it took to widen the road by 30 feet, to move the utilities is very hard. He also noted that the Pawnee-Neilson connector would be great and would relieve the congestion, not just on Owens Street, but it would relieve the congestion on Whiskey Road. However, this takes time and money. He said he understood from the Planning Commission meeting that the connector that would end up at the back of the Mall would cost \$120 million. He said he was not opposed to affordable housing. There is a demand for affordable housing. He said he was not opposed to landowners and developers making money as that is business. What he is opposed to is unsustainable congestion brought on by improper development executed without the infrastructure to support it. He said it is true that we have had the safety issues for 20 years. He said if the proposal goes forward we will have the safety issues for another 20 years. He asked how long will it be before Dougherty Road is widened and sidewalks constructed. How long will it be before the Pawnee connector is built to relieve the traffic congestion off of Owens Street. He said he hoped that City Council can see they can better serve the needs of the people by denying the request and adopting the Planning Commission's recommendations and further encourage developers to relocate these affordable housing and apartments to another location which already has the infrastructure to support it. He said we don't have the infrastructure, and we live it every day. It has gone from traffic is good for business to congestion is bad for business and it is unsafe. He said they are in an unsafe area and something bad is going to happen.

Ms. Marsha Hopkins stated she owns Aiken Motorcycle Sales & Service at 2129 Whiskey Road as well as 2101 Whiskey Road which is in the City of Aiken. Ms. Hopkins stated for anyone to think the traffic problem that we have today is the same as the traffic problem that we have had on Whiskey Road 5 or 10 years ago or when we were growing up, is not thinking right. The traffic when we were growing up in Aiken was different from what it is now. She said she had been on Whiskey Road all of her life even though her house was not on Whiskey Road. She said she had lived in a motorcycle shop on Whiskey Road for the better part of her life. Prior to being at 2129 Whiskey Road, the motorcycle shop was at 1009 Whiskey Road. She felt the traffic was not that bad back then on Whiskey Road. The difference is that she is still there and still in the area. She has seen the problem get worse year after year. She said she was opposed to the Planned Residential and annexation concept plan. The current infrastructure we have is not conducive for any new builds. The need for pedestrian and vehicle traffic relief needs to be considered prior to any more new builds in the area of Owens Street and

Dougherty Road. She said she has watched the accidents and watched the emergency vehicles have trouble getting there. She said she is there six days a week. She said from what she understands the current construction for Dougherty to Whiskey is only going to be improved from a level of F to a D during peak times. We still don't know how well the intersection will flow once the new restaurant at the intersection gets built. Until that happens we don't know what the new level of service will be. We still have the problem where Owens goes out of Dougherty Road and where Owens goes out of Whiskey. On November 28, 2016, at the Council hearing when the first apartment complex in the area was approved, there was a lot of discussion of roads being built. On December 6, 2016, WRDW reported that a new road was in the works. The report also stated the road would take 13% of the traffic off of roads in the area—Owens, Dougherty, and Whiskey at the corner with Dougherty. It was further stated in the article that other road improvements were being looked at that would bring an additional 23% relief. When added together we were looking at a 35% reduction of traffic relief on the most heavily traveled road in Aiken. That did not happen. She said we don't need any more false promises of connector roads coming or relief coming. It did not happen before. At the Planning Commission hearing on October 15, 2019, she inquired about connector roads. One of the responses was that there will be no Whiskey Road relief or Whiskey Road connector roads as it was an all or nothing project and the project cost was \$125 million and funds were not available for the project. She said Whiskey Road needs relief before any new builds of any type should be approved in this area. The drawing on page 88 of the work session agenda shows a potential driveway at Neilson and a completed Hamilton connector. She said Whiskey Road needs relief before there are any new projects approved in this area. She pointed out the driveway for the proposed new project is shown coming out to Owens Street. She said it looks as though it is coming out where Owens Street makes the 90 degree bend. She felt that is the worst section of Owens Street. There is a blind spot there and people have told her they almost hit someone. She pointed out that working class people drive cars. She said she is not against affordable housing, nor any things that are needed. She said she did not understand how the Traffic Impact Study is correct if we are talking about working class people driving to SRNS, schools, hospital and doctors' offices, police department, fire department, etc. They are going to get there in cars. Folks who do not have cars will walk. She noted that the infrastructure for the area is over capacity and it cannot hold the current load that is placed on it and that was before the Dougherty Road construction started. We could not handle the load we had before that construction started. Owens Street has a blind spot with a terrible level of service exiting at Whiskey and Dougherty. Pedestrian travel on Dougherty is not safe. Any type of travel on this end of Whiskey Road is ridiculous between Wendy's and Target. It is impossible at times. There is no safe passage way for walking or driving to get to local jobs on Whiskey Road during peak times. Whether you are in a car or whether you are a pedestrian, there is no safe way to get to work. Ms. Hopkins stated she felt that routing pedestrians to the Walmart parking lot is not a solution either. The Walmart parking lot is also a crowded area. She pointed out that the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend not to approve the annexation and concept plan on Owens Street. She urged Council to consider the request seriously before voting tonight.

Mayor Osborn stated he wanted to correct some statements. He said there is a plan for the connectivity, the Powderhouse connector. Because of a hold up of the Infrastructure Bank of South Carolina, nothing to do with the City, we were not able to place that petition in until the last cycle. We do have a petition there with the projects to be funded as well as a local match for the projects. He said the project is not dead and is a priority of Council. It was noted that the \$125 million project includes expanding Dougherty to 3 lanes from Whiskey to Silver Bluff, Pawnee Neilson connector, the Powderhouse connector, connecting Tyler Street to East Gate/Mall, Hamilton Street extending from Neilson to Owens.

Mr. Bob Besley, 733 West Rollingwood Road, stated he frequents many businesses on Whiskey Road and goes back and forth to work that way every day. He said we all know there is a traffic problem. He said his concern more than the traffic is the infrastructure. He said if these folks want to build new affordable housing and Aiken continues to grow, we need to keep up with other communities. However, we don't have the infrastructure there so why would we put the cart before the horse.



Mayor Osbon noted that Mr. Besley was a former Planning Commissioner with a lot of experience. He asked if the developers are talking about building the road from Owens to Neilson would that be fair consideration in his opinion. Mr. Besley responded that when the first complex which is there now came before the Planning Commission he was a member, and they were led to believe at that point that a lot of the infrastructure that does not exist today would be in place, including enhancements to Owens Street and to other driveways, etc. He said he has yet to see that. He said he had been out there a couple of times and walked around there. He said he just recently saw the sign that the request was going to the Planning Commission. He said it does concern him that we want to do another project in that same area although we still have not addressed issues that were brought up several years ago. Mr. Besley stated he would encourage the City of Aiken to please put things in place that hold these developers from the very beginning that if it does not happen they cannot put the first person in the housing.

Ms. Susan Joyce, 130 Champion Pine Lane, stated her concern is not necessarily the number of cars that would be added to the situation, but the pedestrian traffic. She pointed out that the first article she read said that most of the residents of the complex would be walking to jobs and services within a mile of the residence. She pointed out that no one can safely walk in that area. It is hard to get across Whiskey and Dougherty. She said unless they all walk to Walmart for everything they are stuck if they don't have a car as there is no public transportation.

Mr. George Clare stated he was present as a representative of the Aiken County Homeless Coalition. He noted that representatives came before Council a few weeks ago and introduced themselves as a new organization in town. He said the organization tries to support homeless folks by coordinating the existing service providers to make sure there aren't gaps or overlaps in the way services are provided. They not only look at the homeless themselves, but they also look to prevent homelessness and to help folks come out of homelessness. He said housing is an important part of what they look at in their organization. He said considering annexation of Woodford Trace clearly falls into the category of preventing homelessness and there is clearly a gap as was pointed out by the developers that Aiken has a real need for affordable housing. He said the organization does not take a position on the annexation of this project as they are not experts on infrastructure or traffic, etc. However, they are concerned about affordable housing. He said they would point to a fact and ask some questions. He said the first fact is that many of the people living in this development are expected to be low income. If they are trying to raise a family, have a job that requires them to have a car, and they are paying insurance and for the kids to go to school, they will be on the edge and have a difficult time making ends meet. And, if they lose their job, at that point they would be homeless. He said failure to provide more affordable housing in Aiken is in fact condemning members of our community at some point to homelessness. He said the first question is that if Woodford Trace project is built, and he understands that it can be built with or without annexation, would it be better for the property to be annexed or not annexed. With annexation there is trash pickup, local law enforcement, better code enforcement, and as heard at this meeting the developers are agreeing to cooperatively help establish the connectors, both the sidewalks and the streets. The second question is if Woodford Trace is not built, what will the Planning Commission do to identify better locations for affordable housing for the folks in Aiken who need it. He said we have a developer stepping up to the plate to do that. If the developer does not do it, what will the City do to step into the breach. He said he would like to address his friends and neighbors in Aiken who feel a sense of loss. He said he would say to his neighbors that we understand they feel a sense of loss whether it is a longer commuting time or foot traffic through their property or whatever and that is difficult for anybody. He said he would ask that they consider this situation with an open heart. He noted that all the great religions of the world say that we should love our neighbors and look after our neighbors. He said it just may be that the challenges of Woodford Trace is somebody's challenge that God has laid before them to prove out their faith and it may be not just the construction and the infrastructure issues are a challenge, but maybe there is an opportunity for the local residents to help mentor some of those folks, to help take care of their kids, to truly look after their neighbors with the love that God intended for us to have.



Ms. Diane Penzo, a resident of Palmetto Crossing, stated she wanted to address the matter about traffic. She said if we connect Owens Street through what is now a fire road that goes between the two properties, and it is connected to go in front, you will create a "sneak" street. She pointed out that it would not just be residents using the road. It will not take long for people to figure out they can get off Dougherty Road and sneak over to Walmart. She said this will create a terrible amount of traffic going through the area.

Ms. Ann Kitchings stated she grew up at 911 Dougherty Road. At that time Whiskey Road was a two lane road, and they went across to Bonnieview to visit their friends which was when she was in first grade. She said she would not cross the road now on Dougherty Road to get to her mailbox on the other side. She said she came home from work one day to find a cross painted on the road in front of her mailbox. Someone had been hit and killed. She said she has major concerns about traffic. She pointed out a lot of work had been done on Dougherty at the intersection of Christee Place. She said a lot of work had been done on their front yard, and she felt the improvements will help the intersection, but if we add 48 more units with 48 more cars, she is concerned about what will happen to traffic coming onto Dougherty off of Owens when she can't get out of her driveway because traffic is bumper to bumper. She said she was concerned about traffic and safety for other people in cars, and safety for walkers on Dougherty Road. She said that does not include what is happening on Whiskey Road. She asked that Council please consider the traffic.

Mr. John Dirgins, 203 Pine Hill Drive, stated he had been in Aiken 13 years now. He said he was retired and has nothing to do all day long but ride around. He said over a period of time with his riding all over town in the area from Park Avenue to Richland where the old hospital (County Office Complex) was and down to the bypass and around to where the new County Office Complex is located, and back into town, he had counted at least 100 houses that are empty. He said he wondered why the houses were empty and if they could be used for low income people. He said he had been told that some of the housing had been inherited. He said they have been empty since he came to Aiken and they are slowly deteriorating. He felt that some contractor could look at these homes and renovate them for low income people. He said this would improve the homes, provide some housing, and not increase traffic because the housing is spread all over town. He said he hates to see the homes deteriorating when there is a housing problem and these houses could provide some housing for low income persons.

Mayor Osbon stated we know those properties well, and we try to encourage them to be renovated. He said there are some individuals who are starting to renovate some of those houses.

Mr. Billy Putnam stated he is a partner with VSL Development who sold the land to Palmetto Crossing. He said he is the owner of the property for consideration for Woodford Trace. He said he understands the concerns and everybody in the room has the same concerns, and we want those resolved. Those can be resolved by working with connected businesses and working with the City and coming up with a solution for sidewalks. He said he also understands that traffic in our town on Whiskey Road is bad. We also know that everyone there in business has chosen to be there for the traffic. He said for the five businesses that have come in to the area during the last 18 months on Whiskey Road from Krispy Kream to Taco Bell, they are all here for the traffic. He said we understand that the traffic can be positive and negative. He suggested that we work on a solution for sidewalks and road connectivity. The developer has expressed their interest in doing that and being proactive. He said he felt the proposed housing is a positive project. He noted that Mr. Pethick had said there are 600 families that need affordable housing now. He said when Palmetto Crossing opened, 800 families applied for the 48 units. He said we know there is a need, and he felt that needs to be considered. He said we know we have infrastructure issues, but we know that we can address them.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from Council,

Councilman Woltz stated this is a tough project. We need this housing and could use three times this number of units. He said there is no question in his mind that we need the housing, but the question is do we need them in that location. He said he understands

why this location was picked, but we know what the real reality is. We have a traffic problem. He pointed out that the Planning Commission voted unanimously to deny the project because of the infrastructure. We have put those people on the Planning Commission because we trust their judgment. He said the developer has stepped up to the plate and offered some solutions, but at this particular time we don't have the solutions worked out. He said there could be a second reading on the ordinance. What is decided tonight is not the final word, but the question is how do we go forward with it. He said he would have to side with the Planning Commission on this matter at this point. He said he would have to see what the developers come back with to resolve the problem. He said we have a traffic issue. He said we promised a lot, and nothing has happened out there. He said until we can make some assurances that something is going to happen with the traffic, he worries about kids there going to school trying to cross Whiskey Road.

Councilwoman Brohl stated she tends to agree with Councilman Woltz. She said she believes the developers are in good faith, and they have made some great strides and suggestions as discussed in the work session. Some offers were made, but we don't have that in concrete yet, but they are going to help with the connector road to help alleviate some of the traffic. She said until we have something signed that we can look at, she can't support it at this time.

Councilwoman Gregory stated she had heard a lot, and she cannot say anybody is right or wrong. She said she had heard the comment that we have had the safety and traffic issues for 20 years. She said that does not make it okay. Regardless of how we move with this project, we need to be good stewards to the citizens and the potential residents of this development. She said she lives on the south side, and it took her an hour to get from point A to East Gate today because of construction going on. She said that was not really her concern. Her concern is the pedestrians, and she had made that clear to many parties. She said there are zero avenues for pedestrian traffic. She pointed out the state granted this project a super A+ rating. She said she struggles with that because there are schools, jobs and other things that attract this particular demographic, but she felt we would not necessarily be good stewards of their safety if we have people walking in the area. She said many of the residents of the project may have cars and that would affect the traffic, but the traffic is not putting too many people in danger as much as pedestrians walking. She said she also worries about emergency vehicles. She said there is a retirement community on that side of town. She felt it is a concern when an emergency response can be affected by safety. She pointed out on the flip side there is a need for this particular project and affordable housing in general. She said we would be depriving families and children of a proper living condition and quality of life if we deny the project. She said she was thinking again who is right and who is wrong. She said she would like to see the request go to second reading, not because she thinks she is all for the project as she had made that point clear. She said at some point Council and the citizens of Aiken need a starting point and maybe this is it. She said maybe we get people to bring it to a drawing board and assume the responsibility of the sidewalks, the roadways, the connectivity, the decongestion approach. She said pushing these types of projects off, or approving projects where we as a city are not holding people accountable to provide these basic human rights, is also wrong. She said she would like to see the ordinance go to second reading so we can bring it to the table and talk to the developer and talk to the City and possibly the County to see what we can do to make sure this project installs the proper sidewalks, roadways, and potential connectivity that they have in good will and faith suggested. She said she would like to hear what they have to say. She said if Council does not approve the ordinance on first reading they would not hear the potential option. Instead we would be stuck with a current traffic situation with a few sidewalks we have on Whiskey Road that lead to nowhere with no potential of these sidewalks that lead to nowhere eventually connecting to somewhere. She said she would like to see the ordinance go to second reading.

Councilman Girardeau stated in listening to others talking about Dougherty Road and it being dangerous, he can think of two friends that he went to high school with who were killed on Dougherty Road, with one walking and the other in a car. He said traffic is bad. He said 20 years ago he ran for City Council and Roger LeDuc took him to each end of Dougherty Road and said we are going to fix this. He said the Silver Bluff side of

Dougherty Road was fixed, and it works pretty well. He said finally we are getting to the Whiskey Road end of Dougherty Road and that is getting done. He said he hears the pain of talking about things, and then not getting them done. He said from his perspective he would like to see the ordinance go to second reading, but he would also like to see the plan for moving the traffic up Pawnee Connector to the back side which is in the plans. We have a plan for it. It is part of the \$125 million plan. It goes from Cracker Barrel to Powderhouse Road which is a huge plan. We are in the process of doing this, but it is painstakingly slow. He said this is the opportunity to move some things forward that need to be done. Now is the time to get it done.

Councilwoman Price stated Council has talked about traffic for 25 years. She said this is nothing new. Saying no to the plans and doing nothing is not a solution, and that is what we have been doing. We would approve and say we are going to do things and nothing happened. We can come up with some solutions, and we have some suggestions for solutions. She said she suggested a bridge many years ago to help with traffic on Whiskey Road, but others did not think we needed a bridge. She said if we had built a bridge 20 years ago, we could have solved a lot of the problems in terms of relieving Whiskey Road of some of the traffic concerns. She said she supports those who want to move the proposed ordinance to second reading.

Councilwoman Diggs stated she would support a second if we could get something in writing ensuring us that the road situation would be taken care of and that we could have sidewalks and connecting roads in the area.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilman Girardeau, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to annex 4.56 acres near Owens Street and zone it Planned Residential (PR) and approve the concept plan with the condition that the developer work with the city on construction of a connector road in the area. The motion was approved by a vote of 5 in favor and 2 opposed. Opposing the motion were Councilmembers Brohl and Woltz.

#### CITY CODE – ORDINANCE

##### Residential Yard Trash

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to make changes to the residential yard trash ordinance section 32-3.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

#### AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 32-3, THE CODE OF THE CITY OF AIKEN TO SET FORTH YARD REFUSE AND MATERIALS COLLECTION PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

Councilwoman Gregory moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to make changes to the residential yard trash ordinance section 32-3.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated at the work session on November 25, 2019, Public Services Director Lex Kirkland presented some suggestions to amend the yard trash ordinance Section 32-3 to help the process be more efficient and effective for our customers. One section has also been added to improve safety by requiring piles to be clear of overhead electrical lines. Changes discussed at that meeting include:

- Defining yard trash as those items created by normal and routine residential property maintenance
- One stop per residence
- One Pile per residence
  - Pile is limited to 12 feet in length
    - If the size exceeds the maximum, additional charges will apply with no delay in pick up
- Yard trash must not be placed under utility lines or tree limbs with less than twenty feet of overhead clearance

- Any charges accrued when there is no active water account will be billed to the property owner and levied on their taxes
- “Leaf season” will be defined yearly by the Public Services Director

For Council consideration is first reading of amendments to ordinance section 32-3 to include changes to residential yard trash service.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Councilwoman Brohl asked how the City would let the public know about the changes to the ordinance. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated there are several ways: through the website, social media, the water bill newsletter, and where needed we will have some material for property owners, but that is more of an issue if they are not in compliance. We will also be working with the media to get the information out.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilwoman Gregory, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to make changes to the residential yard trash ordinance section 32-3. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### BUDGET – ORDINANCE

Emergency Sewer Repair  
Medical Park Drive  
Aiken Regional Hospital  
Babcock Construction  
Arcadis

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading approving a budget adjustment for an emergency sewer line repair at Medical Park Drive.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

#### AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET OF THE CITY OF AIKEN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2019, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2020, FOR EMERGENCY SEWER REPAIR AT MEDICAL PARK DRIVE.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilwoman Brohl, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance approving a budget adjustment for an emergency sewer line repair at Medical Park Drive.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated on November 19, 2019, a City-owned sewer line failed at Aiken Regional near Medical Park Drive. The failure necessitated the need to repair a small portion of storm water line as well. We made emergency excavated point repairs on both the sewer and stormwater pipes. Due to the critical situation and the location, this repair was treated as an emergency purchase. This line break was reported to DHEC as required and got the necessary clean up work done. The fiscal year budget for 2019-20 did not include funds for repairs to the sewer system that were necessary, so a budget adjustment is requested. The cost was over \$25,000.

We used Babcock Construction since they were in Aiken working with Arcadis and were able to complete the repairs by November 25, at a cost of \$26,000. The funds will come from Water & Sewer System Depreciation Funds available, so we will increase the Depreciation Transfer In revenue account (002-0000-391-30-30) and increase the Sewer System expense account (002-3182-468-76-02) in the Water & Sewer Fund to pay for this project.

For Council consideration is first reading of an ordinance to adjust the 2019-20 budget for the emergency repairs to the Medical Park Drive Sewer system.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilwoman Brohl, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance approving a budget adjustment for an emergency sewer repair at Medical Park Drive. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### INCENTIVES – ORDINANCE

Aiken Steeplechase Association

Tourism

Economic Development

Bruce's Field

Aiken Horse Park

Richland Avenue E

Old Wagener Road

Rudy Mason Parkway

SC 118

TPN 137-10-01-001 (portion of)

Mayor Osbon stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to authorize the City of Aiken, South Carolina to provide certain incentives to Aiken Steeplechase Association, Inc. to encourage tourism and economic development benefiting the City.

Mayor Osbon read the title of the ordinance.

#### AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF AIKEN, SOUTH CAROLINA TO PROVIDE CERTAIN INCENTIVES TO AIKEN STEEPLCHASE ASSOCIATION, INC. TO ENCOURAGE TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BENEFITING THE CITY; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to authorize the City of Aiken, South Carolina to provide certain incentives to Aiken Steeplechase Association, Inc. to encourage tourism and economic development benefiting the City; and other matters related thereto.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated the Aiken Steeplechase Association, Inc, has conducted spring and fall race events at the facility now known as the Bruce's Field at the Aiken Horse Park for many years. Recently, the Steeplechase Association contacted us about an opportunity they had to purchase approximately 145 acres of property bordered by Richland Avenue E, Old Wagener Road and Rudy Mason Parkway [SC 118]. They have asked us to provide money to assist them in the acquisition of the property. Their agreement with the property owner calls for them to pay \$15,000 an acre for the property, for a total purchase price of approximately \$2.17 million.

After several sessions of discussion and periods of due diligence with staff and the Steeplechase Association, Council has for consideration assistance in the following amounts:

TOTAL: \$1,500,000 of City funds towards the purchase of the property by the Aiken Steeplechase Association.

FUNDS APPORTIONMENT: a. \$1 million would be in the form of a grant to the Aiken Steeplechase Association, which would not require any repayment to the City of Aiken. The sources of funds are: CPST II Greenspace money [\$500,000] and Hospitality Tax funds [\$500,000].

b. \$500,000 would be in the form of a loan. The terms of the loan would be interest only payments for the first five years after the transaction occurs, then payments at least on an annual basis for 20 years at an interest rate equal to the rate quoted by the State of South Carolina's Local Government Investment Pool [LGIP] plus one percent [1%]. Currently, using this formula, the interest rate would be 2.978% [LGIP rate is 1.978% plus 1% = 2.978%]. The sources of funds are: Local Accommodations Tax funds [\$300,000] and Hospitality Tax funds [\$200,000]. Simple interest would begin to accrue at the beginning of the transaction, which we expect to take place in January, 2020.

The property would be required to annex into the City of Aiken once it becomes contiguous to our corporate limits.

For Council consideration is first reading and public hearing of an ordinance authorizing the City of Aiken, South Carolina to provide certain incentives to Aiken Steeplechase Association, Inc. to encourage tourism and economic development benefiting the City and other matters related thereto.

Mayor Osbon asked if there could be requirements for use for other events on the property. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated currently it stands that the City could have up to five days of use of the property in a calendar year provided the use does not interfere with preparations for the Steeplechase events that would be held in the fall and spring.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mr. Jim Rhodes stated personally he did not want to lose the Steeplechase. He felt it is a staple of Aiken, and he is very much supportive of the Steeplechase. He said he was glad the City was stepping up to give some help. He said he had asked the question as to what is "greenspace" as it has been suggested to use some CPST II Greenspace allocation. He said he had looked up the definition of "greenspace" and the proposed use of "greenspace" money he felt falls within the code for use of the funds. According to the dictionary "greenspace" is an area of undeveloped landscape such as a park, land left within the city during planning and zoning while other surrounding areas are being developed. He noted there is no developed on that part of the bypass. He asked if there is water and sewer service to the land that is proposed to be purchased.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated there is limited access to sewer. Depending on the type of development and sewer needs for the property, the cost would be between \$200,000 to \$500,000 to provide sewer service to the property. He said there is water access to the property. He said in the recent past there have been developers look at the tract, and when they see how much it would cost to get sewer service to the property, they are not interested.

Mr. Rhodes pointed out that the money that would be borrowed and loaned would not cover the sewer service. It was noted that the City would have to have bond money to provide sewer service to the property. Mr. Rhodes asked if the property proposed to be purchased is contiguous to city property or would other properties have to be annexed for the proposed park to be able to annex. Mayor Osbon stated currently the proposed park is not contiguous to the city. Mr. Rhodes stated he personally felt that the City should step up and lend the Steeplechase Association the entire \$2.17 million to purchase the property and hold the first note on the property. He pointed out when a bank is involved, they will have the first mortgage. He said if something happens in the future in the equine industry they are all judged. He said he was in the flat racing business, and they are all judged completely across the world. Something that happens in California affects us in Aiken when it comes to the equine industry. He said if something happens somewhere else in the Steeplechase industry, it will affect Aiken. He said he feels the City should take control of the entire property and the entire loan, and let the Steeplechase Committee borrow the money for the infrastructure that they need to make the track and if something happens, the taxpayers money is not wasted and given to the bank. He said the way it looks to him is that the bank has the best end of the deal. He said he does not want to lose the Steeplechase, and he appreciates the City helping. He said he feels the County needs to help. He noted that the City does have the funds, and it will not hurt the City to come up with \$600,000 more.

Mr. Paul Sauerborn, President of Aiken Steeplechase, stated those present are primarily board members. He pointed out that for the benefit of Mr. Rhodes, he wanted to point out that they have looked at this project from several different angles. One of the positive impacts of the Steeplechase event for the community is to reinforce the City's vision that the Steeplechase will stimulate additional economic development in an area that currently does not have that capability. He said he felt the location for the Steeplechase would create a new corridor of development in that area. He felt the project would increase the

tax base, and there would be revitalization in the surrounding areas while preserving the greenspace. There would be increased property values. The project can cause new business to locate nearby. The project would increase tourism. In the long term it will allow us to provide long term returns for Aiken and the CSRA. He pointed out that the Steeplechase is over subscribed for the spring race. That race is at a point where they can't put more people on the property where they currently have the Steeplechase. He said the move is appropriate, but the timing is never perfect. He felt now is the time. He pointed out that Steeplechasing in Aiken started in 1930. He said they are preserving a very historical element, quality of life, and tradition for the community which he felt would be a terrible loss if they could not get support. He pointed out they intend to host other special events at the proposed location. He pointed out that he could give Council another rendition if they desire, but he noted that they have dialoged on this project for a long time. He said he was present to answer questions.

Councilman Girardeau stated he had heard from several people who had asked him about the finances of the Steeplechase Association. He said he had been told that the Steeplechase Association had plenty of money, and why should the City give them any money. He asked if the Steeplechase had financials that they could share.

Mr. Sauerborn stated they are a 501(c)3 organization. They are not for profit. They are also unique in the sense of being a non-profit, they give to other non-profits in charitable ways. He said they have given over \$1.5 million in monies that have been given over the years to various local needy community businesses, etc. He said he could make the financials available. He said the point is that they want to have races and do this for the community's best interest. At the same time all the indirects that he had mentioned earlier will come to life. He said when you look at the amount of money that the City would invest, that is not the whole ticket. The total cost is actually \$3.9 million plus. He said the Steeplechase Association is trying to handle a debt service on that amount which is about 62%. He said that is pretty significant and without the City's help he felt they could not proceed with the project.

Councilwoman Price pointed out that the consensus of Council was for \$1.5 million support. She said they are hearing \$2.1 million now. Mr. Sauerborn stated the Steeplechase Association is very satisfied with what was read in the ordinance. He said that would help them get to where they need to be. He said if Council wants to go in another direction, he could not stop that. He said he felt the board is very satisfied with what is in the proposed ordinance.

Councilwoman Price pointed out the question is that the \$1.5 million leaves the City with nothing versus \$2.1 million would mean the City owns the property. Mr. Bedenbaugh responded that it would depend on how that would be structured. Mr. Sauerborn stated they could not do that on their own. They have to have something for collateral to get their balance of funds for the improvements.

Councilwoman Gregory pointed out that with the \$1.5 million proposal, the City would take a second position. She said in her personal opinion, she felt that the City should go the \$2.1 million. She said she also feels that the City should take first position on the property. However, she felt through discussions whether it is the current financial institution or somebody else, if the City gifts the \$1 million and we are able to not borrow that part, the equity would be there. She said she knew that they had discussed the Steeplechase having additional funding currently possibly as security, but if we add those monies and the Steeplechase comes in as a second lien with the improvements valuing the property even more, that could be a possibility. It would set the organization up for more success because you would have more money to do the improvements you need to do to become race ready, etc. She said she felt the potential is grand. She said she is a major fan of Steeplechase. She felt this is a sure shot investment for the City because the Steeplechase is non-profit. She said the Steeplechase organization is driven by reputable volunteers and board members. She said the Steeplechase is cultivating Aiken culture in a parkway venture which City Council should emphasize. In addition, it is the City working with an organization that if there are non-obligated funds, they can distribute that back into our community charities. She said after Council discussed this she started thinking that we need to set up the right model when we set the Steeplechase up and put

the City in the right position to where the taxpayers feel comfortable too. She said there is that opportunity here. She said as it stands now we gift the \$1 million, and the Steeplechase borrows \$500,000. Steeplechase would need to find \$600,000 and then find whatever is needed to address the improvements. She said that is messy to her. She said this is an investment that is ideal. She pointed out there are two entities—the City and ASA that are not-for-profit. She said we are just out to do the right thing, a solid investment, if we can find the right approach. She said in her opinion if the City is able to do the \$2.1 million, which she felt the City could, and set the Steeplechase up to do the improvements and allocate that money to make the property race ready and improve it from there on out, it will only build on our investment as a City. Then we will bring it back to the City to see if we negotiate to give it back.

Councilwoman Price stated she wanted to make sure she was hearing correctly. The City would allocate \$2.1 million for buying the land. The City would own the land, but Mr. Sauerborn has stated that they need the land as collateral. Mr. Sauerborn stated he needs the land as collateral to be able to get the other \$1.7 million plus to do the improvements on the land. The whole time the improvements are being made the value goes up.

Mr. Sauerborn stated the point is that if the City were to give them \$2.1 million on a payback basis, the deal proposed by Councilwoman Gregory sends a different twist which would require him to go back and dialogue with the bank. He noted that time is working against them as far as their decision.

Councilman Woltz stated the deal on the table would work. Mr. Sauerborn stated the deal in the proposed ordinance would work, but he was concerned about the proposal by Councilwoman Gregory. He said he could not give an answer. He would have to go back and dialogue with the bank. He said he did not want to slow things down in the process.

Councilwoman Gregory stated she was suggesting that because it seems cleaner. Mr. Sauerborn said it is something he could go back to the financial institution to see what they say. It was suggested that he discuss the proposal with the bank and let the City Manager know if it is a possibility before second reading on January 13, 2020. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated if it is a possibility staff can prepare any necessary adjustments to the documentation for Council's review with the next agenda packet.

Mr. Don Houck stated he volunteers to help the Steeplechase acquire the property and found this property for them. He said basically the property is great property for the Steeplechase as far as access. He said as far as the City trying to help the Steeplechase, he thinks it is a great thing. He said as far as Mr. Rhodes talking about the taxpayers being covered, the property is a valuable piece of property. He said there could possibly be some negotiations as far as the City having a portion of the property as security and the bank could have security so they could get their money. He said because of the value of the property there is something that could work for the City and the bank knowing they have some security as well.

Councilman Woltz stated he thought the acquisition of the triangle piece of property to make the property proposed to be acquired by the Steeplechase Association a part of the city was part of the deal. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated that acquisition is being done through a third party realtor. He said he thought an offer was in the process of being made. Councilman Woltz stated the property proposed to be acquired by the Steeplechase Association needs to be a part of the city. It was thought being a part of the city was a contingency. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated it was discussed that the proposed Steeplechase property would need to come into the city once it is contiguous. He said the property to make the Steeplechase property contiguous to the city involves a different entity. Mr. Bedenbaugh noted that the proposed ordinance for first reading was for providing incentives to the Aiken Steeplechase Association. It is correct that we want to get the property purchased so it can be contiguous to the city, but before Council at this meeting is only the ordinance authorizing money for the Steeplechase Association. Councilman Woltz asked if Council would want to provide the incentive if the Steeplechase property did not come into the city. Mr. Bedenbaugh stated that is a Council question.



Mayor Osbon stated purchase of adjacent property is being negotiated now so the proposed Steeplechase property could be annexed. He said possibly something could be given to Council before second reading of the ordinance providing incentives for purchase of the Steeplechase property.

Councilman Woltz stated he thought the understanding with the Aiken Steeplechase was that the property to be purchased would be annexed to the city. If they can't be annexed, what happens.

Mr. Gary Smith, City Attorney, stated there is a contingency in the ordinance that requires them to annex once they become contiguous.

Mayor Osbon stated he thought there would be clarity on the annexation matter by second reading of the ordinance.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion made by Councilwoman Diggs, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to authorize the City of Aiken, South Carolina to provide certain incentives to Aiken Steeplechase Association, Inc. to encourage tourism and economic development benefiting the City. The motion was unanimously approved.

### BANNERS

Aiken Steeplechase

Spring Steeplechase

Savannah River Site

70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Savannah River Site

Mayor Osbon stated Council needed to consider requests for permission for banners.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated we have received the following requests for banners to promote events in Aiken in 2020:

1. **Aiken Steeplechase.** A request has been received from Jessica Miller, Event Coordinator for the Aiken Steeplechase, requesting permission to hang four banners on the traffic arms in the downtown promoting the Spring Steeplechase which is to be held on Saturday, March 21, 2020. They are requesting permission to hang banners in the downtown from March 9 - 23, 2020, promoting the Spring Steeplechase. They understand that staff will determine where the banners will be placed since there are other requests for banners for other events at this time.

2. **Savannah River Site.** A request has been received from Angie Benfield, SRNS Business, Technical & Employee Communications, asking for permission to hang five banners on the traffic arms in the downtown promoting the 70th Anniversary of the Savannah River Site. They are requesting permission to hang banners in the downtown from November 14, 2020, to November 30, 2020, promoting the 70th Anniversary of the Savannah River Site.

For Council consideration is a request for permission to hang four banners from March 9 - 23, 2020, promoting the Spring Steeplechase and a request for permission to hang five banners from November 14 - 30, 2020, promoting the 70th Anniversary celebration of the Savannah River Site.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon asked for a motion. Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilman Girardeau, that Council approve the requests for banners to promote various events. The motion was unanimously approved.

MEETING SCHEDULE 2020City Council Meetings

Mayor Osbon stated Council needed to set the City Council meeting schedule for 2020.

Mr. Bedenbaugh stated each year City Council needs to set the schedule for City Council meetings for the calendar year. A proposed listing of City Council meetings for 2020 was provided to Council. Council can always call a special meeting if needed.

For City Council consideration is the setting of the 2020 City Council meeting schedule.

The meeting schedule is as follows:

CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2020

January 13  
January 27 [State of the City]  
February 10  
February 24  
March 9  
March 23  
April 13  
April 27  
May 11  
June 8  
June 22  
July 13  
August 10  
August 24  
September 14  
September 28  
October 12  
October 26  
November 9  
November 23  
December 7

No meeting on May 25 [National Memorial Day Holiday]; one meeting each in July and December.

Councilman Girardeau moved, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that Council approve the listing for City Council meetings for 2020.

Mayor Osbon asked for comments from the audience and Council.

Mayor Osbon called for a vote on the motion by Councilman Girardeau, seconded by Councilwoman Gregory, that Council approve the listing for City Council meetings for 2020. The motion was unanimously approved.

ISSUES AND UPDATES

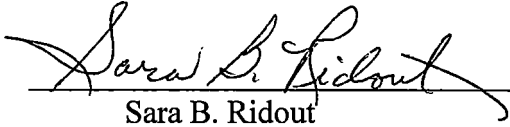
Mr. Bedenbaugh stated he would like to remind Council of the Employee Awards Program and luncheon on December 13, 2019, at 12:30 p.m. at the Weeks Center.

Mr. Bedenbaugh also pointed out that city offices would be closed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and New Year's Day for the holidays.

Mr. Bedenbaugh also pointed out that the Risk Manager position had been filled with the individual starting December 23, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Councilman Girardeau moved that the meeting adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Gregory and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.



Sara B. Ridout  
City Clerk