

Aiken City Council MinutesWORK SESSIONMarch 28, 2005

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Cuning, Price, Sprawls, and Vaughters.

Absent: Councilmembers Clyburn and Smith

Others Present: Roger LeDuc, Gary Smith, Bill Huggins, Pres Rahe, Bob Pedde, and Jack Hermann, Sara Ridout, Philip Lord of the Aiken Standard, Krista Zilizi of the Augusta Chronicle, and about 5 citizens.

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 6:31 P.M. He stated Council had one item to discuss in the worksession, an update on the Savannah River Site.

SAVANNAH RIVER SITEWestinghouseSRSWashington Group

Mayor Cavanaugh stated that Pres Rahe, President of Washington Group Energy and Environmental, Bob Pedde, President of Westinghouse Savannah River Company, and Jack Hermann, Senior Vice President of Washington Group, are present to update Council concerning activities at SRS. He pointed out that one of Council's goals was updates and contacts concerning activities at SRS. Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council was always interested in getting updates and in knowing what is going on at SRS and how the City and community can help SRS.

Mr. Pres Rahe thanked Council for asking them to update Council on the status of the SRS, both present and future. He said the City of Aiken had always been supportive of the SRS, and they appreciate the support. He said the City's support had been the key to the ability to find continuing missions at the SRS. The missions are the result of vision, planning and cooperation between the Site and the City. Mr. Rahe stated during the cold war fall out days, SRS was fortunate to develop new missions. He reviewed some of the projects and missions of SRS and community projects, such as Aiken 20/20, WSMS, and the Washington Center for the Arts. He said with the accelerated closure of certain facilities on the Site, the plant is entering a new phase, and they have some defined thoughts on how they want to use the Site in the Washington Group's International Resources at the Site in order to diversify the economic base of the community while leveraging the capabilities of the Site to do so.

Mr. Bob Pedde, President of Westinghouse Savannah River Company, discussed the present situation at SRS. He also thanked Council for giving them the opportunity to update Council. He said the partnership with the city is very important. He said about 2 ½ years ago Westinghouse renegotiated with the Department of Energy where they were going with the Site and started Accelerated Clean up. He said after 2 1/2 years they are actually on schedule in every area where commitments were made with the exception of one, which is the Salt Waste Processing. He said that project is held up because of litigation and legislation that has not been resolved. He said that should be resolved in October, and that would allow them to get back on track. He said it is a good news story when you look at the amount of risk reduction that is going on and the amount of cost savings that are being made. He said the topography and the facilities at SRS are changing. He reviewed some of the facilities that had been deactivated, buildings removed, and cost reductions. He said the site was being cleaned up to get ready for new missions. He also reviewed the negative side of the cleanup, with workforce restructure and reduction. He said 1,200 employees would be released this year and another 600 to 800 next year, for a total in the range of 2,000 people reduction. He said there was a lot of cleanup to do at the plant, and it would take until 2025 to complete the Accelerated

Clean up Mission. He stated the construction of the first new facility, the Tritium Extraction Facility, is completed, and it will be in full operation by the end of 2006. He reviewed other missions which are in the design phase.

Mr. Pres Rahe reviewed future projects for SRS. He said since 1997 SRS has had a conscious plan in which about 2,000 new jobs had been created in the CSRA. He reviewed the efforts in creating new jobs. He pointed out that within the next 5 year period, because of the acceleration of the closure of certain facilities at the Site, coupled with the delay of the new missions, what was once to be a seamless transition between the environmental mission and the new missions, now appears that there will be a net loss of people during this period. He said their goal is essentially to create the same number of jobs in the next 5 year period as created since 1997. He said they were very committed to using the Site expertise to diversify the economic base of Aiken and the CSRA area. He said two weeks ago he had announced that the Washington Group has formed the Washington Energy Center, which will start with a small number of people and will be headquartered at Centennial. He said the SRS Technology Center had been designated as a new National Laboratory, and this is the first step in which the SRS National Laboratory technology will be expanded outside of the boundaries of nuclear technology that had been SRS's trademark. He reviewed other new projects and expansions.

Councilman Cunning stated that at Council's Horizons meeting it was brought up that there was a move to split up the contract for operation of SRS. He asked Mr. Rahe about his thoughts on splitting the contract. He pointed out SRS had all been under one contractor since 1950.

Mr. Rahe stated many of the sites in the Department of Energy have had their missions fragmented. For some sites without continuing missions that may be all right. He said, however for SRS he felt it would be potentially deleterious from a number of standpoints. He said he felt it would be less efficient to operate the site if it were parceled into different pieces. He felt that holding regulatory accountability, given the materials that flow across the site from one mission to another could be difficult. He said because of new missions it is important for Westinghouse to maintain the capability for those new missions on the site and to maintain the intellectual capability. He said many times people are moved from one area of the site to another in order to maintain intellectual capability on the site. He said if the contract is fragmented we would probably lose that ability. He said another aspect is that the City and CSRA have always looked to one contractor to serve as the focal point not only for planning new missions, but also for private-public partnerships.

Mayor Cavanaugh said at times Homeland Security has been mentioned as a possibility at SRS in terms of having the Homeland training at the site for the whole country. He asked if that was still being discussed. He also asked about a reactor for training purposes for college students who might be taking nuclear engineering.

Mr. Rahe stated the site has many capabilities, particularly in the areas of radiological weapons and mass destruction. He said the detection capability and the emergency response capabilities would make this a logical place to headquarter a training center for emergency response. He said they had had a number of initiatives in that area. He said the area has been underfunded by the federal government. He said, however, they continue to look at this area as a possibility. Mr. Rahe said there is an existing initiative that the Site is involved in with Economic Development Partnership to bring such a mission of that nature to the site.

Council again thanked Mr. Rahe and Mr. Pedde for providing information about the SRS site for Council's information.

MEETINGS

Mr. LeDuc called to Council's attention that several meetings had been scheduled. He said Council would be talking about Design Guidelines at the next Council meeting work session on April 11. On April 14 a meeting has been scheduled to discuss the Business

License change at 5 P.M. On Tuesday, April 19, 2005, a meeting has been scheduled to discuss the Planning Commission Action Agenda at 6:30 P.M. On May 2 the budget review has been scheduled and on May 5 the Volunteer Luncheon has been scheduled.

Councilwoman Vaughters stated she could not make the Business License meeting on April 14. Council asked that the Business License meeting be rescheduled if possible on April 13 or 19.

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REGULAR MEETING

March 28, 2005

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Cunning, Price, Sprawls, and Vaughters.

Absent: Councilmembers Clyburn and Smith

Others Present: Roger LeDuc, Gary Smith, Bill Huggins, Ed Evans, Glenn Parker, Anita Lilly, Richard Pearce, Mary Ann Burgess, Larry Morris, Sara Ridout, Philip Lord of the Aiken Standard, Krista Zilizi of the Augusta Chronicle, and about 60 citizens.

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M. Mayor Cavanaugh led in prayer, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to approve the agenda. Councilwoman Vaughters moved that the second item under New Business, First Reading of Ordinance Regulating Tours, be moved to Number 1 under New Business. The motion was seconded by Councilman Cunning and unanimously approved, that the agenda be approved with the change suggested.

MINUTES

The minutes of the work session and regular meeting of March 14, 2005, were considered for approval. Councilman Sprawls moved that the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Price and unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION

- Recognition
- Doctors' Day
- Proclamation

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council would like to recognize and present a proclamation celebrating Doctors' Day. The proclamation proclaims March 30, 2005, as Doctors' Day. This allows Council to publicly show their appreciation to the role of physicians in caring for the sick, advancing medical knowledge and promoting health. Mayor Cavanaugh read the proclamation. He said he would be presenting the proclamation on Wednesday night to a gathering of doctors.