

Aiken City Council Minutes

September 12, 1994

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Anaclerio, Clyburn, Papouchado, Perry and Radford.

Absent: Councilwoman Price

Others Present: Steve Thompson, Jim Holly, Frances Thomas and Sara Ridout.

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M.

Councilwoman Papouchado moved, seconded by Councilman Anaclerio, and unanimously approved that Council go into executive session to discuss contractual matters. After discussion Councilman Anaclerio moved, seconded by Councilwoman Papouchado and unanimously approved, that Council end the executive session and hold a work session and pre-Council discussions. The executive session adjourned at 6:30 P.M.

REGULAR MEETING

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Anaclerio, Clyburn, Papouchado, Perry, Price and Radford.

Others Present: Steve Thompson, Jim Holly, Frances Thomas, Anita Lilly, Roger LeDuc, Ed Evans, Carrol Busbee, Terry Rhinehart, Andy Anderson, Sara Ridout, Philip Lord of the Aiken Standard, Rolanda Hatcher, of the Augusta Chronicle, and 50 citizens.

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 7:35 P.M. Mayor Cavanaugh led in prayer which was followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

The minutes of the regular meeting of August 8, 1994, and the special meetings of August 18, August 29, and September 8, 1994, were considered for approval. Councilwoman Papouchado moved that the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn and unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION

Cullum, William E.
Downtown Development Corporation

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council wanted to recognize Bill Cullum for his service as Executive Director for the Downtown Aiken Development Corporation since the formation of the organization in 1989. He stated Bill is leaving the Development Corporation to take another position, and Council wanted to recognize Mr. Cullum's contributions to Aiken's downtown.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated that under Bill's assistance, the Corporation and the city have developed and started construction on the new streetscape plan. Bill has also actively recruited businesses and tenants for the buildings in downtown, been a supporter of historic preservation, reasonable code and building regulations and has helped with different components of Aiken's Strategic Plan. He said Bill had been a very active supporter of the city and the community and helped establish guidelines that will ultimately make Aiken's downtown a strong center for Aiken's shopping and residential life.

Mayor Cavanaugh presented a plaque to Mr. Cullum and thanked him for his contributions to the Aiken community and downtown.

Mr. Cullum thanked the City and Council for having the wisdom and vision over five years ago to build a public-private partnership with the Downtown Aiken Development Corporation and giving him the opportunity to work with the Downtown Development Corporation. He said this was an opportunity to work with wonderful people throughout all segments of the community. He said he was pleased to see Council moving forward with the Aiken 20/20 program to implement parts of the strategic plan. He said it had been his privilege to be a part in serving the community. He said he had found the community at every level to be a community of love and caring. He said he hoped he had in some small way given back some of that love to the community.

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Mr. Thompson pointed out Mr. Cullum was the driving force behind putting the Aiken 20/20 program together which will benefit the entire Aiken community for many years.

WOODSIDE PLANTATION SUBDIVISION

Lot 120, Phase II, Section 7

Silver Maple Court

Silver Bluff Road

Mayor Cavanaugh stated that the appeal to Council from the Planning Commission's denial for minor subdivision approval of Lot 120, in Phase 2, Section 7 of Woodside Plantation had been withdrawn from the agenda.

WHISKEY ROAD

Study

Four Lanes

Widening

Wilbur Smith & Associates

Mayor Cavanaugh stated that in the pre-Council session there was a consensus of Council that Council did not want to proceed with consideration of a proposed contract with Wilbur Smith & Associates to study the four laning of Whiskey Road.

Mr. Thompson stated that in 1984 Aiken went through a series of public hearings regarding the widening of Whiskey Road and expanding outside the boundaries of Whiskey Road, making it into a four lane corridor. At that time everyone agreed that the physical widening of Whiskey Road would be too negative and that the issue should be reconsidered.

Mr. Thompson stated that at this time Wilbur Smith & Associates is conducting a traffic signal study for the South Carolina Department of Transportation, with the review of the downtown traffic signals and ultimately a complete review of the traffic signals throughout the City of Aiken. During the traffic signal study, the engineers with Wilbur Smith concluded that there is a possibility of implementing a four lane section on Whiskey Road using narrower traffic lanes. They felt Whiskey Road itself offered the width for four lanes without much expansion beyond the present curb lines. The Highway Department has tentatively stated that narrower traffic lanes may be acceptable in this area. Wilbur Smith & Associates would like to conduct a feasibility study of widening Whiskey Road to provide a four lane traffic corridor. He said the recommendation was brought to Council as an issue that had not been resolved. He said the recommendation was that if Council is interested in four laning Whiskey Road then the study would be necessary to make a judgement on whether the city should address the issue. If Council is not interested in four laning Whiskey Road, then the issue could be decided at this time.

Councilman Radford moved that Council deny the contract with Wilbur Smith & Associates for a study of four laning Whiskey Road. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Papouchado and unanimously approved.

THE OAKS SUBDIVISION - ORDINANCE 091294

Gem Lakes

Huckleberry Drive

Utilities

Dedication

Water Lines

Sewer Lines

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for the second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to accept the remainder of the water and sewer utilities in The Oaks Subdivision.

Mr. Thompson read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NUMBER 052394A SO AS TO ACCEPT THE DEDICATION OF VARIOUS ADDITIONAL UTILITY SYSTEMS AND EASEMENTS THEREFOR LOCATED IN THE OAKS AT GEM LAKES SUBDIVISION.

Mr. Thompson stated that at the July meeting Council gave first reading to an ordinance to accept the balance of the water and sewer system at The Oaks in Gem Lakes. The city does accept utilities of residential subdivisions after

the utilities have been installed and evaluated. In May, 1994, Council accepted the dedication of a portion of the sanitary sewer system for The Oaks, and the developers would like to have the city accept the remainder of the water and sewer utilities in the dedication.

The Oaks is located outside the City of Aiken, and the staff has been working with the developer to complete annexation agreements for the area. These agreements have been completed and the staff is recommending that Council accept the utilities.

The public hearing was held and no one spoke.

Councilman Anaclerio moved, seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn and unanimously approved, that the ordinance accepting the remainder of the water and sewer utilities in The Oaks Subdivision be passed on second and final reading to become effective immediately.

ANNEXATION - ORDINANCE 091294A

Johnson, J. Steven
Solo Builders
605 Boardman Road
Tax Parcel No. 30-076-02-008

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for the second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to annex a .39 acre vacant lot on the south side of Boardman Road just west of Chatham Street.

Mr. Thompson read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO ANNEX TO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF AIKEN CERTAIN PROPERTY CONSISTING OF 0.39 ACRES OWNED BY SOLO BUILDERS, INC. LOCATED AT 605 BOARDMAN ROAD, AND TO ZONE THE SAME AS R-1A, SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL.

Mr. Thompson stated the city has received a request from Solo Builders, Inc. for annexation of a .39 acre vacant lot on the south side of Boardman Road. The property owners would like to annex to obtain utilities for the home that is under construction. The property is contiguous to the city and the zoning requested is R-1A Single Family Residential. Mr. Thompson stated the request had been reviewed by the Planning Commission and was recommended for approval by City Council. Mr. Thompson pointed out this would be the only property on this section of Boardman Road that would be within the city limits. However, the staff feels that this annexation would be positive for the property owners and could assist with efforts for annexation of other properties in the area.

The public hearing was held and no one spoke.

Councilwoman Clyburn moved, seconded by Councilwoman Papouchado and unanimously approved, that the ordinance to annex 605 Boardman Road and zone as R-1A Single Family Residential be passed on second and final reading to become effective immediately.

FRIENDSHIP AFRICAN BAPTIST CHURCH COMPLEX - ORDINANCE 091294B

Landmark
Aiken Historic Register
Historic Site
Redd, Lillian
Richland Avenue
Kershaw Street
Tax Parcel No. 30-070-06-008

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for the second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to designate Friendship African Baptist Church Complex to the Aiken Historic Register as a landmark.

Mr. Thompson read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING FRIENDSHIP AFRICAN BAPTIST CHURCH COMPLEX LOCATED AT THE SOUTHEASTERN CORNER OF RICHLAND AVENUE AND KERSHAW STREET TO THE AIKEN HISTORIC REGISTER AS A LANDMARK.

Mr. Thompson stated Council had received a recommendation from the Planning and Historic Preservation Commissions that Friendship African Baptist Church

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complex be designated as a landmark in the Aiken Historic Register. The church building is one of the oldest buildings in the city. It was originally constructed in 1866 and reconstructed in 1893. The property was identified by the State Historic Preservation Office in the inventory of historic properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

The public hearing was held and no one spoke.

Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilman Anaclerio and unanimously approved, that the ordinance be passed on second and final reading designating Friendship African Baptist Church complex to the Aiken Historic Register as a landmark to become effective immediately.

Councilwoman Price stated she would like to recognize Lillian Redd and thank her for her efforts in getting the Friendship African Baptist Church complex designated as a landmark in the Aiken Historic Register.

TAX ASSESSMENTS - ORDINANCE 091294C

Special Tax Assessments

Historic Properties

Low Income Rental Property

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for the second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to grant special property tax assessments for rehabilitated historic properties and for qualifying low and moderate income rental properties.

Mr. Thompson read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 21 OF THE AIKEN CITY CODE TO ADD A SECTION GRANTING SPECIAL REAL PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS FOR REHABILITATED HISTORIC PROPERTIES AND FOR QUALIFYING LOW AND MODERATE INCOME RENTAL PROPERTIES.

Mr. Thompson stated Council had discussed possible incentives to encourage reinvestment in homes and rental property in Aiken. He said an ordinance had been prepared to grant special real property tax assessments for rehabilitated historic properties and for qualifying low and moderate income rental property.

Mr. Thompson stated several months ago Councilman Anaclerio had suggested that the city identify tax incentives for property owners to encourage the rehabilitation of existing homes and structures. The State Code does authorize cities and counties to provide special real property tax assessments for rehabilitated historic property and for low and moderate income rental properties. Under the system a property owner would only pay a portion of the taxes on improved property. The property owner would submit historic property for inclusion under the program to the Historic Preservation Commission of the city. Low and moderate income rental housing would be submitted through the Housing Committee of the city. If the property is included under the program, the property owner would pay taxes on the property, frozen at the assessment prior to the improvements, for the first two years. For the next eight years the property owner would pay taxes equal to either 40% of 4% of the appraised value after rehabilitation, or at the original assessed value of the unimproved property. The formula changes slightly for income producing properties, with the 4% rates rising to 6%. The effect of the ordinance would be to give a very attractive tax incentive to the rehabilitation of properties and essentially the property owner would pay taxes as if the property had not been improved. Basically the ordinance would give property owners a ten year tax break on properties.

The Historic Preservation Commission would receive petitions for historic properties and submit eligible properties to the State Department of Archives and History for approval. The property owner would have to complete renovation of the building within two years after receiving approval of the plans. The ordinance includes provisions specifically outlining the type of properties eligible for the program. The Housing Committee of the City of Aiken would receive petitions for designation of low and moderate income rental properties.

Mr. Thompson stated an earlier ordinance would provide a special tax incentive for historic properties, and the staff had recommended that Council adopt a single ordinance addressing both historic and low and moderate income rental properties.

Mr. Thompson stated that at the last meeting Councilman Anaclerio had asked about amending the appeals process in the ordinance concerning Housing Committee appeals. He stated the section of the ordinance that concerns low and moderate income rental housing is submitted through the Housing Committee of the City of Aiken for consideration. Councilman Anaclerio had suggested that the property owners should have some further appeal available to City Council. Mr. Holly has suggested wording to change the ordinance if Council wishes to provide a further appeals process to Council.

Councilman Anaclerio moved that the proposed ordinance be amended to allow for an appeal process through City Council for decisions on low and moderate income rental housing by amending item (e) of Section 2 by adding the following language:

"Any real property owner aggrieved by a final decision of the committee with respect to certifying or disqualifying a real property may appeal that decision to city council by filing a letter with the city manager setting forth the grounds of appeal within ten (10) days of the date of the committee's decision. Council shall consider that appeal at the next available meeting of Council based upon the record of the hearing before the committee. Council may affirm, reverse, or otherwise modify the final decision of the committee."

The motion was seconded by Councilman Radford and unanimously approved.

The public hearing was held and no one spoke.

Councilman Anaclerio moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price and unanimously approved, that the ordinance to provide a special property tax assessment for rehabilitated historic properties and for qualifying low and moderate income rental properties be passed on second and final reading as amended to become effective immediately.

Councilwoman Papouchado suggested that the city refer the ordinance to County Council to see if Aiken County would be interested in joining the City in this special tax assessment.

Councilman Anaclerio also suggested that the city establish a meeting with all the real estate agents and developers so they could understand the purpose of the ordinance.

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT - ORDINANCE 091294D

Local Governments

Governmental Units

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for the second reading and public hearing of an ordinance authorizing the City Manager to execute mutual aid agreements.

Mr. Thompson read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 012792B AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER, UPON THE ADVICE AND THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE CITY DEPARTMENT INVOLVED AND THE CITY ATTORNEY, TO APPROVE AND EXECUTE MULTIPLE AGENCY AID AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE CITY OF AIKEN AND AGENCIES OF OTHER GOVERNMENTAL UNITS AND TO REPORT THE SAME TO CITY COUNCIL.

Mr. Thompson stated several cities and counties in the area execute mutual aid agreements allowing the local governments to assist each other with the use of employees and equipment. The agreements help to resolve several liability issues, and also provide the employees with clear authority to perform their official duties outside of the city limits of the City of Aiken. In 1993 City Council received many requests for mutual aid agreements for public safety services and at that time City Council adopted an ordinance allowing the City Manager to execute these agreements. The staff is recommending that Council extend this authorization to include all mutual aid agreements between the city and other governmental units. The city has received several requests in the last few months to assist other local governments with animal control services, and these have been brought to Council individually for action. He said through these agreements he felt Council had expressed a policy to assist other local governments as long as the city can provide assistance without affecting service to the citizens of Aiken. He said the staff is recommending that Council authorize the City

Manager to execute mutual aid agreements with the understanding that Council is to be informed of any mutual aid agreements executed through the City Manager's Office.

The public hearing was held and no one spoke.

Councilman Radford moved, seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn and unanimously approved, that the ordinance authorizing the City Manager, upon the advice and recommendation of the appropriate department head and the City Attorney, to execute multiple agency mutual aid agreements between the City of Aiken and other local governments be passed on second and final reading to become effective immediately.

BUDGET 1993-94 - ORDINANCE 091294E

Amendment

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for the second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to amend the budget for fiscal year 1993-94.

Mr. Thompson read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET OF THE CITY OF AIKEN FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 1993 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 1994.

Mr. Thompson stated that with the close of the fiscal year several budget adjustments needed to be made. Some expenses made from holding funds for special projects needed to be identified in the budget. The budget had previously been amended but other expenditures were made that need to be included in the budget. These expenses include design for the gym at the Weeks Center, construction of Citizens Park, and billing for completion of the Public Safety building expansion. The expenses will amend the General Fund budget by \$164,980.

The public hearing was held and no one spoke.

Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilman Anaclerio and unanimously approved, that the ordinance to amend the budget for fiscal year beginning July 1, 1993 and ending June 30, 1994, be passed on second and final reading to become effective immediately.

LANCASTER STREET - ORDINANCE

Aiken Prep School
Quit Claim Deed

Mayor Cavanaugh stated an ordinance had been prepared for first reading to execute a quit claim deed for a portion of Lancaster Street to Aiken Prep School.

Mr. Thompson read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF AIKEN, BY AND WITH THE ATTEST OF THE CITY CLERK, TO EXECUTE A QUIT CLAIM DEED CONVEYING A PORTION OF THE RIGHT-OF-WAY OF LANCASTER STREET TO THE AIKEN PREPARATORY SCHOOL SUBJECT TO SEVERAL CONDITIONS.

Mr. Thompson stated Council has received a request from the Board of Trustees for the Aiken Preparatory School asking the city to consider selling the portion of Lancaster Street that passes through the school as a permanent part of the campus. The proposed ordinance will authorize the Mayor to execute a quit claim deed for the portion of Lancaster Street, abandoning this portion of the street to the school.

The school has used a portion of Lancaster Street since 1921. In 1953 Council allowed the school to close Lancaster Street to thru traffic, leasing the property for a period of 25 years with the second 25 year renewal extending the lease through December 2002. The school is developing a master plan for the campus and would like to place permanent structures on or near the roadway of Lancaster Street.

Mr. Thompson stated the staff concerns are primarily on utilities in the right-of-way and the need for emergency access. The staff suggests that the city retain an easement of 10 feet on each side of the utility lines that are

located in the right-of-way. The buildings also need to be spaced far enough apart to allow emergency access into the site, and the city needs an emergency entrance into the campus. The school also needs to install sprinkler systems in the old auditorium and the older sections of the school before any additional construction takes place.

Mr. Thompson stated that in 1973 the city swapped several properties including Henderson Lane, with the Aiken County Board of Education for several pieces of similar property including some property around the Schofield School.

Mr. Thompson stated that for the city to abandon a public street, the city must publish three notices in the newspaper and this has been done. He said in addition to the right-of-way requirements in the ordinance the city needed to obtain a release from any damages from permanently abandoning the road from the school. He said the requirements of the ordinance had been discussed with Aiken Preparatory school officials.

Councilwoman Papouchado stated since she was a member of the Board of Trustees of Aiken Preparatory School she would not participate in the discussion or vote on the ordinance.

Councilman Anaclerio stated he would like for a proviso to be added to the ordinance to the effect that if the school ever loses its charter as a school or it changes its purpose for that property that the City of Aiken be given the first right of refusal to buy back the land for the price the property was sold to the school.

Mr. Holly stated procedurally the ordinance could be amended by Council. However, if the school uses the property to expand its campus, there could be buildings constructed on a portion of the right of way and this could cause some problems in the future if the city were to require that the city have first right of refusal for the property.

Councilman Anaclerio stated he would still like for a section to be added to the ordinance giving the city first right of refusal for the property if the school ceases to exist. He stated the school authorities and the city authorities at that time could sit down and work out a settlement.

Councilman Anaclerio moved, seconded by Councilman Radford and unanimously approved, that the proposed ordinance authorizing execution of a quit claim deed for a portion of Lancaster Street to Aiken Preparatory School be amended to include a proviso that if the school ever ceases that the City of Aiken be given the first right of refusal to buy the property back from the school at a nominal price with the city and school authorities at that time working out a settlement for the property and that the ordinance be passed on first reading with the second reading and public hearing set for the next regular meeting of Council.

TREE PROTECTION AND LANDSCAPING ORDINANCE

Central Business District

Trunk Diameter

Tree Diameter

Mayor Cavanaugh stated a proposed ordinance had been prepared to amend the Tree Protection and Landscape Ordinance regarding measurement of trees and clarifying application to the Central Business District.

Mr. Thompson read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF AIKEN TREE PROTECTION AND LANDSCAPING ORDINANCE WHICH IS DESIGNATED AS ORDINANCE NO. 060892 AND WAS ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AIKEN ON JUNE 8, 1992, SO AS TO CHANGE THE METHOD OF MEASURING THE SIZE OF TREES FROM DIAMETER BREAST HEIGHT TO CALIPER AND TO CLARIFY THE LIMITED APPLICATION OF THE ORDINANCE TO THE CENTRAL BUSINESS ZONING DISTRICT.

Mr. Thompson stated the Planning Commission had been discussing several changes to the Tree Protection and Landscape Ordinance and has recommended that Council consider amending the ordinance to change the method used to measure trees under the ordinance and to clarify the ordinance applicability in the Central Business District.

Mr. Thompson stated that for some time the City Horticulturist, has been discussing possible improvements to the Tree Protection and Landscaping Ordinance with area horticulturists and the foresters. The present method of measuring trunk diameter for replacement values under the ordinance is through a measurement of breast-height, or approximately 4.5 feet above grade. The Horticulturist feels that existing and newly planted trees should be measured instead at caliper height, or approximately 6 inches above grade. A 3 inch tree at caliper height will be smaller than a 3 inch tree measured at DBH, but caliper is the standard measurement used by nurseries and the difference in measurement methods has caused some confusion.

The Planning Commission has also discussed amendments to the ordinance to better illustrate how the Tree Protection Ordinance applies to the Central Business District. Originally the ordinance exempted commercial properties in the CBD from the requirements. The CBD typically requires no setback and buildings can be built up to the lot lines. The Planning Commission was concerned that significant trees could be taken out of the CBD. The Planning Commission has recommended that significant and specimen trees would have to be replaced and that multi-family and commercial properties would have to install a planting strip in front of any off street parking adjacent to the street.

Councilman Perry asked how this might affect parking lots in the CBD. He specifically asked how this might affect the parking lot adjacent to Marilyn Riviere's office off Bee Lane. He pointed out if the area is landscaped it will reduce the number of cars that can park in the lot. He stated this might defeat the purpose and cause problems with less parking spaces available in the CBD.

Mr. Holly pointed out the proposed ordinance would only affect new projects proposed after the effective date of the ordinance and not affect present properties and businesses.

Councilman Radford moved, seconded by Councilwoman Papouchado and unanimously approved, that the ordinance amending the Tree Protection and Landscaping Ordinance adopting caliper measurement instead of DBH measurement and clarifying the ordinance for properties in the Central Business District be passed on first reading and the second reading and public hearing be set for the next regular meeting of Council.

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX FUNDS

Recommendations

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the Accommodations Tax Committee had made their recommendations to Council for expenditure of Accommodations Tax funds.

Mr. Thompson stated each year the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee reviews projects submitted for funding under the Accommodations Tax revenues. Accommodations Tax funds are revenues that are generated from fees for overnight stays in hotel and motel rooms and in campgrounds within the city. The State of South Carolina requires that these businesses charge an additional 2% on the base fees to help fund tourism related projects. The Advisory Committee has completed their review and has recommended the following:

<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>AMOUNT REQUESTED</u>	<u>RECOMMENDED</u>
Aiken 20/20	\$ 40,000.00	\$18,500.00
Olympic Training Center	20,000.00	8,000.00
Aiken Steeplechase Assn.	15,000.00	10,000.00
Citizens Park	7,000.00	4,000.00
Christmas in Hopelands	5,500.00	2,000.00
Aiken Driving Club	3,500.00	3,000.00
Aiken Choral Society	1,100.00	.00
Etherredge Ctr. Orchestra Assoc.	3,000.00	.00
LTCEP-Polynesians Corp.	8,000.00	.00
Dollhouse & Miniatures Show/Sale	1,500.00	1,000.00
Christmas Craft Show	1,500.00	500.00
Chamber of Commerce	<u>4,976.89</u>	<u>5,000.00</u>
Totals	\$111,076.89	\$52,000.00

Mr. Thompson stated that at a special meeting City Council had approved the Olympic Training Center funding request for a total of \$10,000 under the current year allocation, an increase of \$2,000 over the recommendation of the Accommodations Tax Committee. Council asked that the extra \$2,000 for the Olympic Training Center come from the funds allocated to Aiken 20/20. This will reduce the portion available for the Aiken 20/20 program to a total of \$16,500. The original request for the Aiken 20/20 program totaled \$200,000 with funding over a total of five fiscal years. The Committee was reluctant to obligate funds for future years.

Mr. Thompson pointed out most of the projects are marketing efforts intended to bring more people into Aiken for overnight stays which is an emphasis of the Accommodations Tax Committee.

Councilwoman Papouchado moved that the recommendations of the Accommodations Tax Committee be approved with the exception of Aiken 20/20 being reduced to \$16,500 and the Olympic Training Center funding increased to \$10,000, for a total allocation of \$52,000 for all projects. The motion was seconded by Councilman Anaclerio and unanimously approved.

UNITED WAY WEEK

Signs Campaign Resolution

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider a resolution recognizing United Way Week and approval of the request for campaign signs.

Mr. Thompson stated the 1994 annual campaign of the United Way of Aiken starts September 12, and United Way has asked Council to continue the tradition of allowing the placement of United Way campaign thermometers around the city. The signs would be placed downtown in the park across from NationsBank, in front of Kalmia Plaza, in front of Palmetto Federal southside on Whiskey Road, and in front of Palmetto Federal on Richland Avenue. In the proposed resolution City Council would recognize the United Way campaign asking that the residents of the Aiken area support the United Way and also authorize the placement of thermometers at the requested locations. The theme this year is "Love Can Build a Bridge." With the authorization Council would be approving the placement of the thermometers for future years as well.

Councilman Anaclerio moved, seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn and unanimously approved that Council adopt the resolution authorizing the placement of campaign signs and proclaiming United Way Week. Councilman Anaclerio stated he felt the United Way was very contributory to the benefit of the community.

KINGHORN & ASSOCIATES

Consultant Grants Contract

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider a contract with Kinghorn & Associates to represent the city for the purpose of obtaining grants.

Mr. Thompson stated during the budget sessions for fiscal year 1994-95, Council discussed the recommendation that the city retain a firm to represent the city for the purpose of obtaining grants. Council discussed this at some length and asked that the staff schedule contract discussions with some firms. Based on the contractual reviews, the staff is recommending that Council enter a contract with Kinghorn & Associates in Washington to represent the city for upcoming grant applications.

Mr. Thompson stated the City of Aiken has always been at least as successful as most cities in South Carolina in obtaining grants, but there are some cities that have been notably more successful. Many of these cities have retained the services of grant firms to help aggressively pursue grants. A contract with one of these firms would give Council an opportunity to evaluate whether or not this is a reasonable investment for the city. There is potential for sizeable grants that could ultimately reduce the cost of expenses to the Aiken area taxpayers.

Although there are no guarantees, the firm of Kinghorn & Associates has been successful in obtaining grants for governmental customers and the firm's aggressive approach to grants supporting manufacturing and industrial

projects seems to be in keeping with City Council's emphasis on economic diversity. The firm will also help to look for grants that are directly related to city and other community services, including public safety programs, education, and health care.

Mr. Thompson stated Council had discussed the matter at length and had requested that any grants obtained should be consistent with the city's goals and visions for the community.

Councilwoman Papouchado moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council authorize the Mayor to enter into a one year contract with Kinghorn & Associates out of Washington, DC to represent the city in grant applications. The motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 1, with Councilman Perry opposing the motion and Councilman Radford abstaining from voting due to the appearance of a possible conflict of interest.

BUS SERVICE

Best Friend Express

Dial-A-Ride

Aiken County

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the city had received a request from Aiken County for funding for the Best Friend Express bus service and the Dial-A-Ride service.

Mr. Thompson stated again this year City Council has been asked to provide \$11,000 for funding of the Best Friend Express and the Aiken County Transit System. In the past fiscal year Council approved \$11,000 for the system to assist with services that serve the handicapped in Aiken County.

Mr. Thompson stated Council had discussed funding for the bus service extensively in the past. Mr. William Shepherd, Aiken County Administrator, summarized the experience of the Transit System and service to city residents in his letter of request to the city. Mr. Shepherd stated that 54% of the Best Friend Express passengers board the bus system within Aiken city limits, and 64% of the certified Dial-A-Ride passengers reside in Aiken. The Dial-A-Ride program is the on-call transportation system with a car or van dispatched to a person's home for door-to-door service. The Dial-A-Ride service typically assists the handicapped. The Best Friend Express operates on a regular fixed route basis to serve all customers in the area. The Transit System has a proposed budget of \$326,031 and about \$244,000 of the total budget is provided by grants and federal funds. Local revenues include the \$39,455 from Aiken County, \$15,000 from the United Way, fare revenues of \$15,000 and a proposed contribution from the City of Aiken of \$11,000.

Mr. Thompson stated Mr. Yul Holloway, Manager of the Aiken County Transit System, and Kit Galton, Chairman of the Aiken County Transit Commission, were present to answer any questions.

Mr. Kit Galton stated he felt the Transit System had used the money provided by the City well. The ridership of the Dial-A-Ride had increased, serving about 12,000 clients which is about the number using the Best Friend Express. He stated he felt the Dial-A-Ride was meeting Council's goals in reaching out to those that are elderly, ill and in need of some services in the community such as doctors and businesses throughout the Aiken area. Mr. Galton stated Council was concerned for the growth of the city especially with the project 2000 and the continued growth of the elderly population. He said he felt the transit system could help the city meet the need that the elderly people will be coming to expect from Aiken.

Mr. Galton stated the Transit System did have more publicity on the bus system and ridership had increased over the past year.

Councilwoman Papouchado asked if the company that runs the bus service was based in Georgia.

Mr. Galton stated the Council on Aging provides the Best Friend Express and Dial-A-Ride service. The Council on Aging does have a contract with Rider in Augusta for the maintenance of the vehicles, but the contract for the bus service is with the Council on Aging.

Councilman Radford stated he had been opposed to the bus service because of the concerns that he has about federal funding and subsidizing. He pointed out the rider fares provide less than 5% of the actual transit budget. He

pointed out the buses have very few riders on the buses. He stated the County stated they needed the city's support now more than ever because of the Clinton administration's proposed reduction in federal transit funds. He also pointed out the charts show that the system has almost doubled the mileage of the buses. He said increasing the mileage this much should certainly increase the ridership. He stated for the reasons stated he was opposed to providing \$11,000 to the bus system.

Councilwoman Clyburn stated the people affected by the city not giving \$11,000 may not be much, but she would hate to see the city not participate in the bus service. She pointed out the city had just saved \$28,300 by not accepting a contract for a study to consider four laning Whiskey Road. She pointed out the city had also just contracted to hire a consulting firm to try to obtain grants. She stated she did not see how the city could justify not participating in a program that directly affects the quality of life for a few people. She stated she knew some of the people who use the bus, and they need the service to get to work. She said by providing the bus service for some people to get to work puts these people on the tax rolls. She stated she felt the Transit System was working on making the system better. She stated she felt \$11,000 was not too much to help with the quality of life for some people.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he felt the bus service was a worthwhile project. He said he felt the value of the bus service was something that can't be measured by dollars and cents. He felt if the bus service can provide a service for those who need a ride the city should do it for the small amount of \$11,000 compared to the total budget. He pointed out if people ride the bus this will cut out more cars on the roads which will be better for the environment.

Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn, that Council approve the request for \$11,000 for the Transit System as requested by Aiken County. The motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 2, with Councilmembers Perry and Radford voting in opposition to the motion.

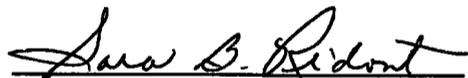
SIGNS

Banners Temporary Signs

Mr. Riley Hammond, a member of the Planning Commission, appeared before Council regarding the signs which were approved for United Way. He pointed out Chairman Sheetz had asked him to review the total sign ordinance. He stated the next consideration will be temporary signs. He pointed out the signs approved for United Way would be in conflict with the sign ordinance. He said one of the real problems had been special signs as everyone wants to have a sign to call attention to their special event. He stated he felt there would be a problem in the future with approval of the United Way thermometer signs as they would not conform with the sign ordinance.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M.



Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk