



The Columbia City Council conducted a Meeting on Tuesday, February 18, 2014 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and the following members of Council were present: The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine, The Honorable Leona K. Plough, The Honorable Brian DeQuincey Newman, The Honorable Moe Baddourah. Also present were Ms. Teresa B. Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

Chaplain Byron Powers, Columbia Police Department offered the invocation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda, subject to the following amendments. Mr. Newman was not present for the vote.

- Defer consideration of **Items 1** and **3**.
- Remove **Items 6** and **8** from the Consent Agenda.

PUBLIC INPUT RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

No one appeared at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Meeting Minutes of [September 11, 2013 Special Called Meeting](#); [September 17, 2013 Work Session](#); and [September 18, 2013 Special Called Meeting](#) – *Consideration of this item was deferred.*

PRESENTATIONS

2. Recognition of the Columbia National Special Olympics Athlete – The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

Mayor Benjamin recognized Mr. Travis Lutheren for being selected to participate in the National Special Olympics in June. He said we are overcome with pride and joy.

He said it is considered a feat to qualify for the national games. He noted that Travis also participates in and leads on issues that impact local and state government. He thanked Travis for all he has done in his twenty-four (24) years of life; he's not just an accomplished swimmer and a competitor, he's an activist who advocates tirelessly for those with disabilities and works to make Columbia, this region and the State a much better place.

Mr. Travis Lutheren said he didn't know he was getting this. He said thank you so very much; you don't know what it means to me and the organization I work for; I am proud to represent the organization doing what I do best, which is swimming.

3. Bow Tie Proclamation – The Honorable Moe Baddourah – *Presentation of this item was deferred until March 4, 2014.*
4. [Introduction of the Love Columbia Photo Challenge Winners](#) – Ms. Leshia Utsey, Director of Public Relations

Ms. Leshia Utsey, Director of Public Relations said the City of Columbia sponsored a social imagery campaign to find out how much our citizens love Columbia using the hashtag #LoveColumbiaPhotoChallenge. The followers of each site were asked to vote on their favorite submissions out of over 300 photos were submitted. Mr. Frederick Austin was the Twitter winner; Ashley Concannon was the Facebook Winner; Joshua Rue was the Instagram winner. She noted that this concept was created by Justice Walker who is a City of Columbia Intern and a college student.

STAFF UPDATE / CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / PUBLIC INPUT

5. [Bull Street Development \(Columbia Common\) and Multi-Use Entertainment Venue](#)

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager acknowledged Council's desire to receive public input. She applauded staff's hard work, noting that they will be presenting the conceptual work plan that was used from the beginning with updates and highlights. In essence of time, she asked each staff member to come forward to quickly answer any questions of Council.

- Draft Agreements

Ms. Melissa Gentry, P.E., Assistant City Manager for Operations explained that the Venue License Agreement is being combined with the Venue Management Agreement; we are working on the Venue Development Agreement, the reciprocal easement agreements with Hardball and Hughes Development, and possible amendments to the Bull Street Development Agreement with Hughes Development such as baseball will not trigger the garage. She outlined the following deal points that are being considered: monthly lease, Hardball's upfront contribution amount, City events and concession splitting, performance license fees, advertising revenues,

broadcast rights, parking operations and commitments, facility maintenance, operational expenses, capital maintenance fund, naming rights, use of facility for City related events, and the support of community and youth activities. She noted that if we move forward, Council will have to approve the agreements mentioned above including amendments to the Development Agreement with Hughes, the financing of any bond issues, professional services and a voluntary cleanup contract.

Councilor Plaugh asked when those items would come before City Council for a vote.

Ms. Melissa Gentry, P.E., Assistant City Manager for Operations said we would like to come back to the next meeting with the Venue License Agreement, possibly amendments to the Development Agreement with Hughes and possibly the Venue Development Agreement.

Mayor Benjamin thanked staff for working to make sure we do this right. He said there are several issues that have to be negotiated and/or discussed.

- Financing and Other Considerations
- Risk Management and Procurement

Mr. Jeff Palen, Chief Financial Officer said there are a lot of items that we will continue to work on with the goal of getting this out as it comes to us. He explained that the financing needs are the obligations under the Development Agreement for infrastructure, parking and a multi-use facility. He noted that they are seeking to remove the construction of the stadium as a trigger for the obligation to build a parking garage; that trigger will be set further down the road. He said we've looked at this as having to finance everything on day one, but we will be working on a realistic schedule for financing. He said if this passes, there will be baseball stadium and infrastructure costs in year one. He said the financing options still includes hospitality bonds. He said there has been a lot of discussion on terms, amounts and whether to layer or wrap the new debt. He said staff is working to determine if the bonds will be taxable or tax-exempt.

Councilor Plaugh asked what will determine that.

Mr. Michael Seezen, Esq., City's Bond Counsel / McNair Law Firm, P.A. said local governments can issue taxable debt; if they issue tax exempt bond, it would not be included in their revenue. He explained that the ability to issue tax-exempt debt depends on how the property that is financed is used and the kind of payments the issuer receives. In the case of infrastructure, he said those can be funded through a tax-exempt mechanism if they are paid back from a public source of funding. He noted that for things like a baseball stadium where the facility is going to be used by a private entity for the majority of the year, they could still be issued on a tax-exempt basis as long as those bonds are payable from a public source of funds. He said we are looking at the payment streams that would be received under any agreement with a

baseball team owner; whether they would be received upfront; or whether they could be used to pay debt service.

Mr. Jeff Palen, Chief Financial Officer presented the revenue analysis. He said we are considering how we would make the payments on the hospitality bonds; the payment of the Installment Purchase Revenue Bond; and additional revenues that will be coming in during future years. He said the other concerns or other City funded demands include our public works and public safety rolling capital and funding those long-term needs through a lease; Finlay Park and other park system improvements along with maintenance, operations and capital needs. He said we are reviewing one time needs and recurring needs; operational costs for the stadium that we will have to absorb to include police, fire marshals, parking, public works and parks and recreation.

Mayor Benjamin said it is important to take a comprehensive look at all of our funding obligations and share those documents publicly. He noted that they had a great conversation today with arts groups and arts supporters. He reiterated the CFO's statement regarding the ability to fund our infrastructure needs on Bull Street and doing it in a way that truly accelerates and catalyzes the economic development we want to see there. He said we asked our staff and consultants to come back with the most conservative numbers possible and they brought back recommendations that looked at different ways to finance this. He said the numbers show that we have the capacity to do this on day one. He said we have to do it and do it now while ensuring that we maintain the level of arts funding that many of us want to maintain well into the future.

Councilor Davis said this is one of the things that he is looking at as part of staff's due diligence so we will know what the impact will be beyond water and sewer.

Mayor Benjamin clarified that water and sewer funds will only be used for water and sewer and we will continue to protect the water and sewer transfer.

Councilor Plough complimented the Mayor on the meeting he had with the arts community. She commended the Mayor for stepping forward and saying this development will not allow any of the arts community's funding to suffer. She said that is a very bold statement, because having run the numbers I'm not sure how that's possible.

Mayor Benjamin said he was crystal clear and he said it three times. He said contrary to discussions he sees in polls and emails in which we deliberately disseminate misinformed information, the City of Columbia is a well-run city with an AA⁺ bond rating. He noted that this rating came after we approved the Bull Street plan, approved salary increases for employees, and committed to delivering \$100 million annually to our water and sewer system. He acknowledged that the challenge is that we have to grow this city; we benefit from a number of economic drivers. He said if you have the largest parcel of downtown property east of the Mississippi, you want to deliver that to the people of Columbia as soon as possible, practical and responsible as you can. He

said that 21st century urban development recognizes that density is important; you want mixed-use development that allows the construction of buildings that go straight up. He said this will dramatically increase the quality of life. He said we need to consolidate our efforts with the county, but the only way we can get there is to return high value property to the tax rolls. He said it is so important that we remain focused on the facts. He told Ms. Plough that we can continue to support arts organizations at a level that we have done previously; I've committed to it. He expressed support of more organizations becoming line item organizations so they can do proper planning.

Councilor Devine said one concern is that people continue to see different numbers. She asked when Council will see a number they can rely upon.

Mayor Benjamin said the challenge is that a lot of the numbers are coming from random emails we receive every day. He said our obligation under the Development Agreement is \$31,250,000 for infrastructure on site; \$20 million towards a baseball stadium; and the cost of two (2) parking garages that could range. He said the Parking Fund balance is healthy now. He said this can't just be about baseball; we have to build a facility that we fully expect to host five hundred plus (500⁺) events a year; seventy (70) of which are baseball; and another four hundred (400) other events.

Mr. Jeff Palen, Chief Financial Officer said there is \$14 million in cash in the Parking Fund.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said we are trying to help Council make a decision based off of various assumptions. She acknowledged that this might be confusing for the public.

Councilor Devine said the options vary based on interest rates and doing it all on day one. She doesn't want people to continue to see different numbers; she wants people to understand that nothing is set until Council chooses a mechanism and what our tolerance would be.

Councilor Davis added that funding combinations, our contribution and Hardball's contribution are also factors.

Mr. Jeff Palen, Chief Financial Officer said everything we've looked at considers a zero upfront payment from Hardball. He said the total amount of the commitment is \$92 million, but it will come down to how we fit that in.

Councilor Baddourah asked the CFO to come back on March 4, 2014 with analytical data on how much the operational costs will be to own the property as it starts to build up and how much property taxes will be generated along with debt.

Mr. Jeff Palen, Chief Financial Officer agreed to bring that information back.

Mayor Benjamin asked staff to look at the cost of doing nothing.

Mr. Brent Robertson, Financial Advisor / Merchant Capital, LLC said we are looking at four (4) hospitality fee bond scenarios. He said the first two scenarios contemplate a \$24 million deposit to the project fund, which would include an upfront payment taken from the baseball team owner. He explained that the first scenario is a layered debt service solution, which layers the new bonds on top of the existing bonds with no growth being assumed for a par amount of the new bond at \$26,150,000; the second scenario is a wrap of the new bonds around existing bonds with the assumption of no growth for a par amount of new bonds at \$26,730,000; the third scenario contemplates a \$30 million deposit for a layered new bond on top of existing bonds with no growth assumed for a par amount of \$32,555,000; and the fourth scenario is to wrap the new bonds around existing bonds with no growth assumed for a par amount of \$33,270,000. He explained that for the Installment Purchase Revenue Bond (IPRB) there are \$57 million in infrastructure needs for Bull Street that is contemplated in this model; this does not include the baseball stadium, because the stadium is being contemplated as a hospitality fee project; this represents infrastructure and other commitments that the City has already agreed to; it assumes that all bonds will be issued on day one; this is a credit model, not a budget model; this assumes that there are no other sources of revenue available to pay the installment payments over the next thirty (30) years; no growth on assessed values; no growth in hospitality fees; no incremental growth in tax revenues. He said the plan of finance is based on what we have, not on what we hope to have. He further explained that General Obligation (GO) Bonds over the next thirty (30) years would be issued within the 8% debt limit of the City. He said the issuance of an IPRB as a non-profit not controlled by the city would have a \$57 million deposit to a project fund resulting in a total par at \$60 million. He noted that the total debt service would be \$115,931,853 and none of that would fall as a burden on the tax digest for the City directly, because this is an obligation of the non-profit not of the City of Columbia. He explained that if there are no revenues or no other sources of funding available to make these installment payments, we have to assume that the City of Columbia would leverage its 8% debt capacity. He said we would then look at the GO Bonds to pay the IPRB with annual issuances throughout the life of the plan resulting in a total par for GO Bonds issued over the life of the plan under the 8% debt limit of the City in the amount of \$117,140,000 with \$136,620,022 falling on the City's tax digest.

Councilor Plaugh asked staff for an update on the cost benefit analysis.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said we are in the process of getting an analysis done, but it might take three (3) weeks for the most thorough analysis, but we asked for what we could get within two (2) weeks from an independent economist.

- Economic Development

Mr. Wayne Gregory, Director of Economic Development said they are working on that along with scheduling visits to Fort Wayne and Durham.

- **Council opened public input at 7:08 p.m.**

Coach Willie Washington, Athletic Director for Benedict College said knowing that they live in the backyard of the stadium, Benedict College totally endorses the stadium. He said there are 2,000 students at Benedict that could work at the stadium along with a lot of other citizens in the City of Columbia. As a member of the SIC, he sees the conference championships being played at the stadium. He said years ago baseball in Columbia was one of the highpoints and we need to bring that attitude back to Columbia; this will give someone the idea to be a MLB player; and more youth leagues will be developed in our parks. He said that most important thing is that Benedict's Sports Management Program will benefit through internships. He recalled that earlier today, the minister said let all of us receive a blessing for what we try to do. He said let the ballpark become a blessing to Columbia and all its citizens.

Councilor Plough asked if the activities being discussed are being done at Benedict's football stadium.

Coach Willie Washington, Athletic Director for Benedict College and Haskell Avenue resident said it is used for a variety of activities with over 11,000 seats and we book 100 activities per year in the stadium.

Mr. Forrest Alton, 164 Canal Place Circle said he was amazed by the amount of feedback he received after speaking positively about the stadium at the last meeting. He said he processed the comments as coming from people who think we shouldn't ever spend money; people who are concerned about further dividing the pot; and people who think we should spend money, but not on the stadium or Bull Street. He credited this Council and staff for all the due diligence done on this project. He said now let's get this done.

Ms. Betty Rodoson, Sparkleberry Lane resident said she is interested in encouraging young people to come out, because they are going to Charlotte and Atlanta to do things. She said don't say no, let it grow.

Mr. Jaja Akair said this is a very great opportunity for this city; this city of growth and rising to become one of the greatest cities in South Carolina. He said this would be a great investment. He said he grew up playing baseball and he can see the difference between when he played and when he didn't. He said it is a great opportunity for jobs and as a music promoter, he looks forward to promoting one of his shows there.

Ms. Rebecca Haynes, River Drive resident said she supports the mixed use venue and we may experience growing pains, but she is waiting and ready to help. She said she chose to move to Columbia, because it was affordable and she saw the potential. She said Columbia reminded her of how Atlanta was when she was growing up. She said it is an opportunity to be a great dynamic city that will keep people here. As a taxpayer and a downtown resident, she accepts the inherit risks that comes with making these decisions. She said she will continue to hold Council accountable. She said she is disappointed in the bickering, the grandstanding and the manipulation of residents by City Council.

Mr. Moe Brown said he came to Columbia eight (8) years ago to attend USC and to play football and he gained a great affinity for this city. He is employed with the Department of Commerce and he sees that this city has so much potential. He said he is a part of the monthly meeting group where they have speakers that give them advice on how to be better young professionals. He said Bob Hughes presented to them last month about Bull Street. He said they continue to hear from young professionals that there isn't enough to do here. He said the partisanship needs to stop and we need to work together.

Mr. Bob Liming, 1520 Senate Street said four (4) months ago half of you were re-elected on promises of making our streets safer, fixing our decaying water system, eliminating the backup in our sewer system and modernizing services. He said now I'm told that the most pressing priority is building a baseball stadium. He is not against baseball, but somebody has to pay the bill and the people paying the bill are in this room and throughout the city. He has heard all kinds of figures. He said it could be \$200 million. He suggested that we let Mr. Hughes go to the banks to get the money to build this great stadium. He asked why we have to pay for private developer's risks. He said one man's vision can grow up and become every man's nightmare.

Mayor Benjamin noted that our collective vision saved the bus system and public transportation for this city. He said it is important to note that we have made record investments in public safety in Columbia, South Carolina and we will continue to do so. He noted that \$100 million a year is being invested in water and sewer infrastructure. He reported that crime has dropped by 25%; we are doing the things that need to be done; and we don't believe that we can't run the rest of the city just because we build a multi-use venue; we have to keep our eyes focused on the future.

Mr. Bob Liming, 1520 Senate Street said the voters of Richland County passed the penny sales tax, but we can't get home tonight by a bus.

Councilor Newman as Chairman of the Transit Authority Board said we may have not met every goal, a route may not be running on every corner of this city, but we fought hard to get the sustainable funded that we need and we are taking the correct steps to grow the system so we don't get ourselves in the same predicament that it had before.

Mayor Benjamin asked the City's CFO and Financial Advisor to meet with Ms. Derrick to answer questions she has about financing.

Ms. Ariana Derrick, 4116 MacGregor Drive said she attended the meeting with the arts community this morning and she was pleased to hear the Mayor's pledge to not support any reduction in the funding for the arts in the hospitality tax fund. She said that the One Columbia campaign has sparked a renaissance in the arts and cultural activities in our city. She assumes that the other organizations that may not be considered arts organizations such as the Palmetto Capital City Classic, the Christmas Parade, Regional Sports Council, the Earlewood Community, the Devine Street

Merchants Association, the Celebrate Freedom Foundation, the Eau Claire Community Council, and all of the other organizations are included in the list.

Mayor Benjamin said the annual appropriations for arts and historic preservation and other event related funding has been steady at \$2.3 million a year.

Ms. Ariana Derrick, 4116 MacGregor Drive said she heard the Mayor say that the city's financial advisors will run different scenarios to include a worst case scenario.

Mayor Benjamin said that was presented earlier tonight.

Ms. Ariana Derrick, 4116 MacGregor Drive said as a former financial planner, the public hasn't seen any projections based on a worst case scenario; a worst case scenario would imply that revenues go down. She said it appears that the annual debt service payment on the hospitality fund would range from \$1 million to \$1.8 million. Based on page 11 of the Brailsford and Dunlavey Study, she said there's a statement that the stadium supports \$5.2 million in annual food and beverage spending. She said if you apply the 2% tax to that figure, the hospitality tax fund will receive \$104,000 in additional revenue. She stated that this is a long way from the \$1million to \$1.8 million needed to make that additional loan payment. She asked where the money would come from.

Mayor Benjamin said the numbers in the study are based on a number of different contributions, not just the growth in hospitality taxes.

Ms. Ariana Derrick, 4116 MacGregor Drive said if the shortfall will come from the general fund there will be less spent on parks, police, fire, etc. She asked where the money is going to come from to make up for the shortfall in the hospitality fund.

Mr. Oliver Francis, 2401 Sumter Street said he came to Columbia 40 years ago. He said progress is risky; stop talking about money. He said a group fought the strong mayor referendum; now some of you are against the list for the police chief; and the same group is opposing this project. He said stop opposing everything and be concerned about Columbia; let's get this project going.

Mr. Deandre Asbury Heath, Professional Baseball Player for the St. Louis Cardinals / Brookland-Cayce High School graduate expressed his strong support for the construction of the proposed multi-use venue for Minor League Baseball in the City of Columbia. He thanked those that support the plan and for those who don't, he stood as an example of the positive impacts of baseball. He said baseball was everything to him while growing up; it taught him teamwork, work ethic, discipline, to dream and to believe in himself. He has seen baseball change lives and it can do the same thing in Columbia. He asked Council to support this project to bring MiLB to Columbia.

Ms. Edith Whatley said the issue is how baseball will be paid for; this is a money pit. She said we can't afford to spend our money on things that will be nice to have without having the amenities we need like healthy good tasting water, a working sewer system, streets without 3' deep potholes, police security, adequate fire service, support services for the homeless, public transportation, disaster planning and relief, education for our youth and a cushion for emergency expenses, because there will always be unexpected expenses.

Ms. Susan Creed, 1426 Geiger Avenue said Columbia should dream, but you should do some financial planning and manage your money to make those dreams come true. She said we don't have money for this; we are talking about borrowing money for something that is nice to have. She talked about the potholes in front of the new garage at Sumter Street and the horrible traffic at Elmwood Avenue and Sumter Street; those are current needs. She said to handle the dichotomy of current needs and a very expensive, seemingly practical; partially questionable dream is for the City to provide more complete and timely information. She suggested that there be a clearinghouse for questions.

Mr. Jacob Cook, Lexington County resident said this is going to steamroll; that's where my friends will live; that's where my friends are going to be on the weekends and nights; peer pressure will make this complex successful. He said he chose to live here and he plans to stay here. He said that experience and opportunity go hand in hand. He said some of the points are valid, but we have to say yes to some of the right opportunities; we've passed up some of those opportunities in the past and that has allowed many cities to surpass us. He said this is good for Columbia.

Mr. Robert Creed, 1426 Geiger Avenue thanked City Council, because we seem to be moving in a direction that he appreciates. He thanked Councilman Davis for his eloquent statement and asked him to stay true to what he said. He asked what the cost is going to be. He appreciates the fact that the city is addressing water pressure issues. He said that City Council has a hard balancing act and we can easily criticize you. He said Council can't make a sound decision without good facts and conditions.

Dr. Louis Lynn, Spring Valley resident / Buckner Road business owner said his business was recognized as one of the top 100 black businesses in the country by Black Enterprise Magazine. He employees eighty-five (85) people and this is about economic development. He acknowledged that the city helped to make him a major firm in the country. He said this will offer opportunities and provide jobs; this is a major project and he is worried about local firms having to compete for the jobs. He said this park will be for the greater good of the community. He said each of you sit in City Council seats for a time as this; you make the decision.

Mr. Marvin Chattman, Greenview Community resident said he played baseball with Coach Oliver Francis at Greenview Park and was one of the few teams to make it to the Little League World Series in Houston, Texas in the 1970s. He said baseball was the first sport he ever played and we have an obligation to return baseball to inner-city

youth. He recalled being injured while playing baseball at W.J. Keenan High School, but he continued to play and pitch with an injury. He said his baseball coaches mentored him and taught him right from wrong. He said baseball can help a young kid. He said if the right people aren't in place to talk to the kids, then it means nothing; there are a lot of empty baseball stadiums that were built.

Reverend Cory Lorick, Northeast Columbia resident said as a young professional in Columbia he is excited about what Columbia has to offer. He said he was a Leadership Columbia graduate in 2011 and 30% of that class have already left Columbia. He is excited about the opportunities that Columbia has. He said that his wife drives to work at a firm in Charlotte every day, because of the employment opportunities that were removed from Columbia. He said this is an opportunity to make an investment and no longer compare ourselves to other cities.

Mr. Rusty DePass, 1338 Sinkler Road said Truman Safford who worked for the Development Board said that people who follow along after deals like this are smoking a very high grade of opium. He said everyone knows that this is a deal that won't work. He said Bull Street is the wrong place to put a baseball stadium; you can't make it a good deal. He noted that it is precisely the philosophy that the Mayor articulated that has gotten our country to the point where the debt is about to bring this country down and I don't want to see that happen in the City of Columbia.

Major Wade Hefty, United States Marine Corp / Member of Columbia Opportunity Resource (COR) / Forest Acres resident said the Bull Street development agreement has already passed. He said Columbia has no facility for 1,000 and 3,000 seat bands. He said that headhunters tell him to move to Greenville and get out of Columbia. He supports this. He asked how much we are paying or making off of Bull Street without tenants. He said we are doing a good job on Main Street and he gets to appreciate the benefits of the Vista. He said Columbia is a great place to be; let growth happen.

Mr. Jim Reid, Rickenbaker Road resident said there is a live sewer system with a printed sign that says that children and pets shouldn't be there. He doesn't consider that as part of a world class city. He said there are few pros and many cons for building a taxpayer stadium. He said if you aren't able to vote on this, then we must have a public referendum. He said that some have allowed this to become much too divisive. He said that a public referendum will take the burden of the decision from City Council and give it to the taxpayers; they can determine how this enormous sum of money will be spent. He said that the referendum can be put on the ballot of the next citywide election at no additional costs; it can include options on funding the stadium; the wait will give taxpayers additional time to research all of the options. He said vote no on the stadium or let taxpayers decide how this money will be spent.

Ms. Nancy Barksdale, Princeton Street resident said Council wants to use Hospitality Tax bonds and Installment Purchase Revenue Bonds to pay for the project. She asked why General Obligation bonds aren't being used to fund Bull Street, because the cost to taxpayers could be \$27 million less than the two bonds types being recommended.

She said GO bonds would require Council to hold a public referendum to get the voters' approval. She asked why the taxpayers can't pay for it at the lowest possible rate if they are being asked to fund this project. She said using GO bonds would be a win-win situation for all Columbia taxpayers. She asked why this isn't being considered for this project.

Mr. Jeff Palen, Chief Financial Officer explained that issuing a GO Bond is an option, but we would be exceeding our 8% debt limit; that would require a referendum; and that may create the potential for a tax increase.

Councilor Plough said she is astounded by that answer. She asked if doing a straight line amortization and saving \$27 million in interest versus an IPRB would be cheaper,

Mr. Jeff Palen, Chief Financial Officer said that everything we've put together has looked at several different funding sources using the current revenues; we won't have the capacity to bond everything out under a GO Bond without a referendum and that's why it could potentially be a tax increase. He agreed to run the numbers.

Mayor Benjamin said we are not talking about meeting all of our needs on day one; the benefits of the Installment Purchase Revenue Bond are that it allows you to use various streams of income to help meet those long-term needs. He said the GO debt capacity grows in 2018/2019, but there may be additional options.

Councilor Plough asked how that could be more expensive.

Mr. Brent Robertson, Financial Advisor / Merchant Capital, LLC said a level debt service solution on \$60 million for thirty (30) years will have less interest costs over time. He said the IPRBs use five (5) year GO Bonds and they are layered as existing GO Bond debt service is being paid off, it layers in the principal.

Councilor Plough asked why the GO debt can't be structured the same way.

Mr. Brent Robertson, Financial Advisor / Merchant Capital, LLC said there is a legal requirement on how long you can delay payments on principal and you still have interest payments that must be paid.

Councilor Plough asked Mr. Robertson to run the scenario. She said there is a way to structure the debt without raising taxes.

Mr. Brent Robertson, Financial Advisor / Merchant Capital, LLC said that also assumes that a referendum takes place, because we don't have the 8% debt capacity.

Ms. Nancy Bardsdell said if the GO Bond can't work then Council should vote no to fund this project.

Dr. Lonnie Randolph, President of the South Carolina State Conference of the NAACP said as a 64 year resident of this city his comments are strictly based on experiences he's had with projects of this nature, both in the past and the present. He said we passed anti-bullying legislation for people in this state and he said he is going to ask someone to introduce anti-bullying legislation for elected officials. He said it is unconscionable for public officials to go on television making public statements about the competence and credibility of an employee. He said after seeing the maps and complicated figures presented today, he asked who is lobbying for the everyday people. He hopes City Council will find a way to put this presentation in a common sense everyday language. He said he'd rather see a livable district in the City of Columbia rather than another entertainment district. He said the more things change the more things remain the same could be the motto of this city. He said we could start by having summer jobs for kids. He said he hasn't seen procurement matters related with this proposal. He ended with a quote from Steve Hamm that said if it sounds too good to be true, it is. He asked for an independent analysis of what this is going to do for the City of Columbia. In closing, he quoted John Heywood as saying haste makes waste; ill weeds grow fast; Rome was not built one day; all is not gospel that thou doest speak; we are not in a position to rob Peter to pay Paul; and two heads are better than one.

Ms. Kitt Smith, former member of the Richland County Council asked for clarification on the \$6 million that is appropriated to agencies every year. She asked if \$6 million or \$2.3 million will be protected for agencies.

Mayor Benjamin said the commitment he made earlier today is that we've had an approximate \$2.3 million the committee has disbursed over the last several years; there was more this year, because of fund balance.

Ms. Kitt Smith, former member of the Richland County Council said the trend she sees in the hospitality tax fund is 1% to 3%, not 5%. She requested a trend analysis. She said the projections in the Miley Study say you will get \$4.5 million in property taxes at the end of twenty (20) years after the build out of Bull Street.

Councilor Devine said that is why staff's due diligence is important. She said there is still information that is forthcoming; numbers from the Miley Study are older.

Ms. Kitt Smith, former member of the Richland County Council said that needs to be looked at in the cost benefit analysis. She is concerned that economic impact studies done on sports arenas make no allowance for substitute dollars. She said you have to look at substitute spending, because that doesn't create new dollars. She asked that staff address that. She said leakage should be accounted for in an economic impact study. She shared a devotional based on the value of a brand new twenty dollar bill and one that has been around the block, but they are both worth the same thing. She said we want our One Columbia back.

Mr. Tony Mizzell, former member of the Richland County Council said he is a big baseball fan. He said the City had presentations from economic development organizations earlier today and it took a public private investment to start those organizations. He wants to see Columbia continue to flourish and if there's a way to do it, then he is all for it as a citizen.

Ms. Paula Lebby, Earlewood Community resident said someone called her house and asked how she felt about the ballpark. She has no objections to a ballpark, but she is concerned about the location. She asked if they considered the traffic in the area; you will have to divert that traffic somewhere else. She said the traffic light at Elmwood and Park Street needs to be fixed. She said she doesn't want to pay for a ballpark; she is not a sports fan; she doesn't want it in here community.

Mr. Daniel Rickenmann, former member of the Columbia City Council said he has been vocal about his opposition to the baseball stadium; he said we must separate the two (2) issues: there's Bull Street and there's baseball. He said there aren't many places in this country that are investing the type of money being discussed here. He said the issue is what it costs us to finance it; what it will cost us to make a thirty (30) year commitment; and we have to think about our other commitments to the EPA and the Penny Sales Tax. He said we are basing the numbers on economic impact and there are no expenses or costs in the studies that were produced; the studies don't account for the William Street extension and the Shop Road extension. He recalled when Council had to vote on two (2) parking garages on a Friday night, because it was imperative that we did it right now for the growth of Innovista in 2004. He said today we have two (2) garages; a half full building; \$135 million; and less than 200 jobs; we were promised 6,500 jobs and over \$232 million in capital investments. He said people want to know what it is really going to cost us. He said it's very hard to be supportive of this when we are making a very large investment in infrastructure. He said we don't know about any growth or tenants; what is their capital investment commitment. He said their commitment may be based on baseball, but it is also based on them getting financed. He asked that they live the shroud that's encompassing this discussion and put all the numbers out. He said Mr. Hughes created this kind of image, because he didn't talk to the public during the Bull Street deal and he's not talking to the public now. He said we don't know if he has any tenants; we don't know what the design is; what is it going to cost to maintain it; and what happens when you don't have the money to make the payments. He said you have to plan for the worst and the best. He thanked Council for allowing everybody to speak and for slowing down the process.

- **Council closed the public input session at 9:05 p.m.**

Mayor Benjamin thanked everyone for their valuable input and constructive criticism tonight. He said we are listening and in response to the many questions we received, you've seen the positions and information mature. He agreed that full disclosure is very important to making good decisions.

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Ms. Plough and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted unanimously to approve the **Consent Agenda Items 7 and 8a** through **16**. Mr. Baddourah, Mr. Runyan and Mr. Davis were not present for the vote.

CONSIDERATION OF BIDS, AGREEMENTS and CHANGE ORDERS

6. Council is asked to approve a [Memorandum of Agreement](#) to provide Affordable Housing Financing and Energy Efficiency Rehabilitation to Eligible Homeowners in targeted neighborhoods, as requested by the Community Development Department. Award to the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta. *Funding Source: FHLB Atlanta is providing \$300,000 from its Affordable Housing Program and Community Development is providing \$600,000 from its City Lender I Loan Program. – This item was approved by a separate motion. Please refer to Item 16b.*
7. Council is asked to approve the [Purchase of Two \(2\) Ford F-150 Trucks and One \(1\) Ford CMax Hybrid Vehicle](#), as requested by the Planning and Development Services Department. Award to Vic Bailey Ford, using the SC State Contract in the amount of \$56,488.00. This vendor is located in Spartanburg, SC. *Funding Source: Development Services-Auto, Truck, Heavy Equipment Capital; 1014101-658500 – **Note:** These vehicle purchases are part of the annual replacement schedule. - Approved*
8. Council is asked to approve a Contract for Professional Services for the [Assessment of Five \(5\) Existing Parking Garages](#), as requested by the Utilities and Engineering Department. Award to Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., in the amount of \$79,500.00. This vendor is located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: 5313301-636600 – **Note:** The assessment includes reviewing existing conditions; identifying deficiencies; and reviewing the estimated costs for recommended repairs and upgrades at the Arsenal Hill, Taylor Street, Sumter Street, Washington Street and Lady Street parking garages. - Approved*
- 8a. Council is asked to approve [Change Order #1 for Project WM4274](#); An Emergency Project for Construction of Water Main Replacement at Rosewood Drive and South Beltline Boulevard, as requested by Utilities and Engineering. Award to LAD Corporation in the amount of \$442,302.10. This vendor is located in West Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: Water Improvement Fund – **Note:** This project was initiated by the City for rebuilding of the road and additional pavement necessary to repair the roadway that was damaged during the recent water main break. – This item was approved by a separate motion. Please refer to Item 16a.*

9. Council is asked to approve [Project SS7253](#); an Agreement for Engineering Services for design, construction and rehabilitation of the Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant Anaerobic Digester, as requested by the Utilities and Engineering Department. Award to Hazen & Sawyer in the amount of \$3,246,477.00. This firm is located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: Sanitary Sewer Improvement Fund 5529999-SS7253-688505* **Note:** *This is a Mentor-Protégé Program Project and Construction Dynamics, Inc. (Protégé) will provide construction administration and observation services for 12.6% of the total contract. Additional subs and other protégés including minority and women owned firms are providing sub-consulting services under this agreement totaling 22.8% of the total contract. - Approved*

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

10. [Ordinance No.: 2014-007](#) – Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Deed for the transfer of 0.04 acre (1,876 square feet) portion of Richland County TMS #11411-06-08 (formerly 1509 Manning Avenue) from the City of Columbia to the Columbia Housing Development Corporation – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014. – Approved on second reading.*
11. [Ordinance No.: 2014-008](#) – Granting an encroachment to Mainstream V Lofts LLC/Capitol Places for placement of a flame shaped steel sculpture with concrete foundation within the sidewalk right of way area adjacent to 1644 Main Street – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014. – Approved on second reading.*
12. [Ordinance No.: 2014-009](#) – Granting an encroachment to Hamptons Grant Homeowners Association for placement of an island, brick entryway with two columns, lighting and planting areas within the right of way area of the 100 block of Chimney Hill Road at the entrance into Hamptons Grant adjacent to Richland County TMS #13616-02-45Richland County TMS #09014-04-01 – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014. – Approved on second reading.*

ANNEXATION WITH MAP AMENDMENT – SECOND READING

13. [14 Apple Valley Court](#), TMS#07502-07-16; request to annex and zone the properties RG-1 (General Residential). The property is zoned RM-MD (Multi-Family Residential-Medium Density) in Richland County. – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014. – Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 1
Proposal: Annex and zone properties RG-1; contiguous; secondary area
Applicant: Mee Sim Chan Lee and Hing Pang Chan Lee
PC Recommendation: Approve (7-0), 12/02/13
Staff Recommendation: Approve

[Ordinance No.: 2014-003](#) – Annexing 14 Apple Valley Court, Richland County; TMS #07502-07-16 – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014. – Approved on second reading.*

14. [16 Apple Valley Court, 2105, and 2210 Apple Valley Road](#), TMS#07502-07-15, 06114-01-06 and 07502-07-09; request to annex and zone the properties RG-1 (General Residential). The property is zoned RM-MD (Multi-Family Residential-Medium Density) in Richland County. – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014. – Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 1
Proposal: Annex and zone properties RG-1; contiguous; secondary area
Applicant: Tai Chee Lee and Mee Sim Chan Lee
PC Recommendation: Approve (7-0), 12/02/13
Staff Recommendation: Approve

[Ordinance No.: 2014-002](#) – Annexing 16 Apple Valley Court, 2105 Apple Valley Road and 2210 Apple Valley Road, Richland County TMS #07502-07-15; 06114-01-06 and 07502-07-09 – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014. – Approved on second reading.*

15. [2145 Apple Valley Road](#) , TMS# 07502-01-08; request to annex and zone the properties RG-1 (General Residential). The property is zoned RM-MD (Multi-Family Residential-Medium Density) in Richland County. – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014. – Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 1
Proposal: Annex and zone properties RG-1; contiguous; secondary area
Applicant: Hamida Sadiq
PC Recommendation: Approve (5-0), 08/05/13
Staff Recommendation: Approve

[Ordinance No.: 2013-108](#) – Annexing 2145 Apple Valley Road, Richland County; TMS #07502-01-08 – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014. – Approved on second reading.*

16. [Bower Parkway \(portion\)](#), TMS# 002830-01-035; request to annex and zone the property C-3 (General Commercial). The property is zoned C (Collector Street) in Lexington County. – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014.* – *Approved on second reading.*

Council District: 1
Proposal: Annex and zone properties C-3; contiguous; secondary area
Applicant: Wessington Partners Limited Partnership
PC Recommendation: Approve (7-0), 12/02/13
Staff Recommendation: Approve

[Ordinance No.: 2014-004](#) – Annexing 1.65 acre portion of Bower Parkway, Lexington County TMS; #002830-01-035 – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014.* – *Approved on second reading.*

CONSIDERATION OF BIDS, AGREEMENTS and CHANGE ORDERS

- 16a. Council is asked to approve a Contract for Professional Services for the [Assessment of Five \(5\) Existing Parking Garages](#), as requested by the Utilities and Engineering Department. Award to Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., in the amount of \$79,500.00. This vendor is located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: 5313301-636600 – **Note:** The assessment includes reviewing existing conditions; identifying deficiencies; and reviewing the estimated costs for recommended repairs and upgrades at the Arsenal Hill, Taylor Street, Sumter Street, Washington Street and Lady Street parking garages. - Approved*

Councilor Plough requested an explanation of the procurement process.

Mr. John Spade, Director of Parking Services said this was a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process; nine (9) firms responded; the committee selected Kimley-Horn; and I negotiated a contract within the budgeted amount of \$80,000.

Mayor Benjamin asked if this includes aesthetic upgrades to the exterior.

Mr. John Spade, Director of Parking Services said yes and Sumter Street will be the starting point.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Plough and seconded by Mr. Runyan, Council voted unanimously to approve a Contract for Professional Services for the Assessment of Five (5) Existing Parking Garages, as requested by the Utilities and Engineering Department. Award to Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., in the amount of \$79,500.00. This vendor is located in Columbia, SC.

- 16b. Council is asked to approve a [Memorandum of Agreement](#) to provide Affordable Housing Financing and Energy Efficiency Rehabilitation to Eligible Homeowners in targeted neighborhoods, as requested by the Community Development Department. Award to the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta. *Funding Source: FHLB Atlanta is providing \$300,000 from its Affordable Housing Program and Community Development is providing \$600,000 from its City Lender I Loan Program. - Approved*

Councilor Plough sought an explanation of the sizable commitment.

Mayor Benjamin disclosed the fact that he serves as a member of the Federal Home Loan Bank's Affordable Housing Advisory Council, but he has no economic interest.

Ms. Deborah Livingston explained that the Federal Home Loan Bank contributed \$300,000 with \$150,000 going towards down payment assistance for homes in an amount not to exceed \$10,000 per transaction and \$150,000 going towards energy efficiency to include new roofs, HVAC and insulation. She said this will help to revitalize our targeted areas. She noted that the City's commitment is part of our City Lender Loan I Program; there are no additional dollars coming from the City; and we earn a fee for administering this program. If this is approved, there will be a soft launch tomorrow and a press conference next Thursday at 1:30 p.m. She said we are the first and only municipality in the country to receive this honor.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Plough and seconded by Mr. Runyan, Council voted unanimously to approve a Memorandum of Agreement between the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta and the City of Columbia to provide Affordable Housing Financing and Energy Efficiency Rehabilitation to Eligible Homeowners in targeted neighborhoods, as requested by the Community Development Department.

MAP AMENDMENT – SECOND READING

17. [161 Pontiac Business Center Drive](#), TMS#25714-01-10; request to rezone from M-1(Light Industrial) to C-3 (General Commercial). – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014. – Approved on second reading.*

Council District:	4
Proposal:	Rezone parcel from M-1 zoning to C-3
Applicant:	Shawn Rioux (Rioux Industries)
PC Recommendation:	Approve (7-0), 12/02/13
Staff Recommendation:	Approve

Councilor Plough asked about the streets.

Ms. Krista Hampton, Director of Planning and Development Services said this is not an annexation; it's a rezoning; Spears Creek Court and Spears Creek Church Road are state roads; and Pontiac Business Center Drive will come into the City.

Councilor Plough said this is an example where the infrastructure for this commercial development was built by the developer and we will get title to it.

Ms. Krista Hampton, Director of Planning and Development Services said that is correct, if they are county roads.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted unanimously to give second reading approval to the **Map Amendment** for **161 Pontiac Business Center Drive**, TMS#25714-01-10; request to rezone from M-1(Light Industrial) to C-3 (General Commercial).

MAJOR CHANGE TO A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT – SECOND READING

Mayor Benjamin said while he has no economic interest and no conflict of interest, he has made it a practice every step of the way since his service on Council to recuse himself from any matters dealing with **Item 18**.

18. [Village at River’s Edge, +/- 28 acres at Rawl Street, Aspinwall Road, McQueen Street, Pearl Street, Valkill Court, McRae Street, and Gibson Street](#), TMS# 09103-02-01; 09104-01-06; 09104-12-01 through -06; 09104-13-01 and -02; 09104-14-01 through -21; 09104-15-01 through -10; 09104-16-01 through -16; and 09201-01-17 through -22; request major change to PUD-R (Planned Unit Development-Residential). – *First reading approval was given on February 4, 2014. – Approved on second reading. Mayor Benjamin abstained from voting on this matter.*

Council District:	1
Proposal:	Rezone from PUD-R to PUD-R
Applicant:	Reginal Barner for VRE II, LLC
PC Recommendation:	Approve (7-0), 01/06/2014
Staff Recommendation:	Approve

Upon a motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to give second reading approval to a **Major Change to a Planned Unit Development** for the **Village at River’s Edge**, +/- 28 acres at Rawl Street, Aspinwall Road, McQueen Street, Pearl Street, Valkill Court, McRae Street, and Gibson Street, TMS# 09103-02-01; 09104-01-06; 09104-12-01 through -06; 09104-13-01 and -02; 09104-14-01 through -21; 09104-15-01 through -10; 09104-16-01 through -16; and 09201-01-17 through -22; request major change to PUD-R (Planned Unit Development-Residential). Mayor Benjamin abstained from voting on this matter.

ORDINANCES – FIRST READING

19. [Ordinance No.: 2014-015](#) – Consenting to the Inclusion of Property in a Multi-County Industrial/Business Park – *Approved on first reading.*

Councilor Plaugh said there are two (2) parcels associated with this. She said this is the first one she has been associated with where we are talking about a multi-county industrial park and the issuance of revenue credits that accrue to this particular development a discount in property taxes. She asked staff to describe what this is.

Mr. Wayne Gregory, Director of Economic Development said we are consenting to the County's procedure of designating these parcels as a multi-county business park so that we in conjunction with the County can offer the special source revenue credit.

Councilor Plaugh said staff will provide the criteria for anyone else coming forward to take advantage of this and there will be an analysis for the cost of service associated with each request.

Mayor Benjamin clarified that we are going to require this as a policy and we are going to make sure that the cost for service will be included.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mayor Benjamin, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2014-015 – Consenting to the Inclusion of Property in a Multi-County Industrial/Business Park.

RESOLUTIONS

Upon a single motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to approve **Items 20** through **24**.

20. [Resolution No.: R-2014-013](#) – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine beverages only within Finlay Park for the Bark to the Park Walk and After Party – *This event is scheduled for April 5, 2014. - Approved*
21. [Resolution No.: R-2014-015](#) – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at the Indie Grits Film Festival Opening Party in the Cannon Parking Garage in the event of inclement weather – *This event is scheduled for April 11, 2014. - Approved*
22. [Resolution No.: R-2014-020](#) – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at the River Rocks at the Columbia Canal Park – *This event is scheduled for April 12, 2014. - Approved*
23. [Resolution No.: R-2014-016](#) – Authorizing Eau Claire Community Council's Eau Claire Fest and consumption of beer and wine only at Hyatt Park and Eau Claire Town Hall – *This event is scheduled for April 26, 2014. - Approved*
24. [Resolution No.: R-2014-017](#) – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at the Italian Festival in the 1600 block of Blanding Street – *This event is scheduled for October 4, 2014. - Approved*

APPOINTMENTS

25. [Hospitality Tax Advisory Committee](#)

Upon a motion made by Ms. Plaugh and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to approve the reappointment of Mr. William Green and Mr. Frank Holley, III to the Hospitality Tax Advisory Committee as Restaurateurs for a second and final two (2) year term.

26. [Planning Commission](#)

Upon a motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Mr. Runyan, Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Mr. Dale Stigamier and Mr. Earl Waites to the Planning Commission for a three (3) year term.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS/REFERRALS

Councilor Baddourah asked that the Arts and Historic Preservation Committee continue discussions from this morning with the arts groups about the hospitality bond. He feels like we ran out of time during the meeting for people to voice their concerns.

Mayor Benjamin asked that if the conversation is about Bull Street, it is important to have the entire Council participating in that discussion.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said based off of today's discussions, staff has to run more numbers and that information may not be ready for the committee meeting.

Councilor Baddourah agreed to do this in a Council meeting. He referred the concept of Little Libraries to the Arts and Historic Preservation Committee. He said they are smaller libraries. He asked that staff research the concept.

Mayor Benjamin offered to share his research on the Little Free Library with staff in order to start the conversation. He said more information can be found at www.littlefreelibrary.org and the concept is that someone sets up a library in front of their home; it is a community book sharing arrangement. He noted that Shandon had the first one and his kids love it.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Baddourah and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to refer a review of Little Free Libraries to the Arts and Historic Preservation Committee.

Councilor Devine announced that Together We Can Read initiative is scheduled for tomorrow morning at 8:30 a.m.

APPEARANCE OF THE PUBLIC

No one appeared at this time.

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Mr. Runyan, Council voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session at 9:29 p.m. for the discussion of the employment of an employee.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Ms. Plough, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the executive session at 10:05 p.m.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Mr. Runyan, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Moore
City Clerk