



CITY OF COLUMBIA
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2015 – 6:00 P.M.
CITY HALL – 1737 MAIN STREET
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The Columbia City Council conducted a Meeting on Tuesday, June 2, 2015 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 6:22 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 Cameron A. Runyan and The Honorable Moe Baddourah. Also present were Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. *The minutes are numbered to coincide with the order of the meeting.*

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Master James Benjamin of Burton Pack Elementary School, Master Cooper McBurney and Master Miquel Calero of Boy Scout Troop 100 of St. Joseph's Catholic Parish led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

INVOCATION

Chaplain Byron Powers, Columbia Police Department offered the Invocation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda, subject to deferring consideration of **Item 1** (*May 19, 2015 Council Meeting Minutes*) and **Item 19** (*First reading of the Map Amendment for 1000/1010 Lady Street, 1218 Park Street*).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. [May 19, 2015 Council Meeting](#) – *Consideration of this item was deferred.*

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon a single motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to approve the **Consent Agenda Items 2** through **12**.

CONSIDERATION OF BIDS & AGREEMENTS

2. Council is asked to approve the [Renewal of the Annual Maintenance Agreement for the Report Management System](#), as requested by the Police Department. Award to Trittech Software Systems of Castle Hayne, NC in the amount of \$168,826.40. *Funding Source: Police Administrative Services – Maintenance and Service Contracts 1012402-638200 – The budgeted amount is \$290,000.00. **CIO Comment:** I support this renewal of the annual maintenance for a collection of software from TriTech used by the Columbia Police Department. - Approved*

3. Council is asked to approve [Project PK102402; Canal Riverwalk ADA Accessibility](#), as requested by the Utilities and Engineering Department. Award to AOS Specialty Contractors as the lowest responsive bidder in the amount of \$85,049.50. This firm is located in Lexington, SC. *Funding Source: 4019999/PK102402 – The original budget amount is \$72,000.00. **Note:** An additional \$14,000 was transferred from the Parks and Recreation Department Operating Budget. Due to funding limitations, the recommendation to move forward only includes two of the three locations. Staff will continue to work towards identifying funding options for the bathroom ramp within the next fiscal year while also determining if this work can be performed in house by the Street Division. - Approved*
4. Council is asked to approve [Project SD8284 \(2\); 1311 Wellington Drive Phase II Storm Drain Improvements](#), as requested by the Utilities and Engineering Department. Award to Shady Grove Construction as the lowest bidder in the amount of \$114,341.00. This firm is located in Irmo, SC. *Funding Source: 5549999-658650-SD828402 in the 2013/2014 Stormwater CIP. – The original budget amount is \$500,000.00. On April 14, 2014, Council approved Phase II of this project in the amount of \$430,234.50. **Note:** This is a Mentor Protégé Program Project and 3G Construction of Hopkins, SC (Protégé) will provide construction services at 46% or \$52,812.10 of the contract value. This firm received 20% (\$195,290) for services provided in Phase I of the project. Also, Blue Sky Tree Care will receive 1.5% or \$1,600.00 of the contract value for tree removal services. - Approved*
5. Council is asked to approve [Project SD837101; Penn Branch Wall / Slope Stabilization](#), as requested by the Utilities and Engineering Department. Award to Shady Grove Construction as the lowest responsive bidder in the total amount of \$116,260.00. This firm is located in Irmo, SC. *Funding Source: 5549999-658650-SD837101 in the 2014/2015 Stormwater CIP. – The original budget amount is \$550,000.00. This project is only a portion of the overall project and is needed in advance of the overall project moving forward due to a failure in a particular area. Sub-consulting services will be provided at 20.5% (\$23,310.00) of the contract value: Capital Concrete Company of Lexington, SC – 15.36% or \$17,850; Southeastern Concrete Products of Cayce, SC - 2.29% or \$2,660; Exceed Landscape Solutions, Inc. of Columbia, SC - 2.41% or \$2,800 for landscaping. - Approved*
6. Council is asked to approve [Project SS7339; Sanitary Sewer Repair/Replacement on Lyon Street](#), as requested by the Utilities and Engineering Department. Award to McClam & Associates as the lowest bidder in the amount of \$662,080.75 with a contingency of \$36,250.00 for a total amount of \$698,330.75. This firm is located in Little Mountain, SC. *Funding Source: 5516205-638305 Special Contracts. Lyon Street is an emergency project required due to a collapsed sewer line. Funding for this project has been identified via savings in other projects budgeted in the current year CIP as follows: \$400,000 - SS7229FY- Annual CCTV Contract (5516205-638305); \$218,000 – SS683301- Piney Grove Sewer Pump Station Improvements; \$48,000 – SS728601 – CE Projects not yet defined; \$32,330.75 - SS726401 – Montague Road Gravity Sewer - The following sub-consulting services will be provided at 32.8% (\$216,997.50) of the contract value. - Approved*

Firm	Location	Services	Percentage / Amount
Palmetto Builders Concrete, LLC	Columbia, SC	Concrete/Flowable Fill	16.32% or \$108,000
NW – White	Columbia, SC	Stone Hauling	.46% or \$3,000
CR Jackson	Columbia, SC	Asphalt Paving	11.77% or \$77,917.50
Intect Coating Consultants	Alpharetta, GA	Manhole Rehabilitation	.62% or \$4,080
Insituform	Monroe, NC	CIPP Piping	3.63 or \$24,000

7. Council is asked to approve [Project SS7284; Upgrades to the Liquid Treatment Train I](#), as requested by the Utilities and Engineering Department. Award to AECOM (formerly URS) in an amount not to exceed \$774,700.00. This firm has headquarters in Los Angeles, CA and a local office in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: 5529999-SS7251-658650 - The original budget amount is \$1,000,000.00. Funding for this project is available via savings from Project SS7251 Blossom and Huger funded in 2014/2015. This was a project originally identified for funding in the current year, but due to funding limitations, it was deferred. Savings from other projects were identified to allow this project to move forward. This is a Clean Water 2020 Program Project and the following sub-consulting services will be provided at 21.5% (\$166,900.00) of the contract value. - Approved*

Firm / Designation	Location	Services	Percentage / Amount
Howard Engineering (MBE)	Marietta, SC	Electrical Engineering	12.7% or \$98,400
K&P Engineering (SBE)	Lexington, SC	Structural Engineering	1.3% or 10,000
Terracon	Columbia, SC	Geotechnical	0.7% or \$5,500
Felkel and Hastings (SBE)	Columbia, SC	Mechanical Engineering	1.3% or \$10,000
Davis Architecture (SBE)	Columbia, SC	Architectural	0.7% or \$5,500
4D Engineering (SBE)	Lexington, SC	Flood Plain Approval & Permitting	4.8% or \$ 37,500

AMENDMENT TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – FUTURE LAND USE MAP – SECOND READING

8. [Amend Future Land Use Map of The Columbia Plan: 2018](#) to assign land use classifications to recently annexed properties.
 Council District: 1, 2, 3, 4
 Proposal: Amend Future Land Use Map of The Columbia Plan: 2018 to assign land use classifications to recently annexed properties
 Applicant: City of Columbia
 Krista Hampton, Planning and Development Services
 Director
 PC Recommendation: Approve (9-0), 04/06/15
 Staff Recommendation: Approve

[Ordinance No.: 2015-032](#) - Amending the City of Columbia Comprehensive Plan 2018 Future Land Use Map to include properties annexed into the City of Columbia between April, 2014 and February, 2015 – *First reading approval was given on May 19, 2015. - Approved on second reading.*

AMENDMENT TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT –
SECOND READING

9. [Amend Chapter Eight Physical Area Development, Transportation Element](#), subsection 8.2.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities of *The Columbia Plan: 2018*.
Council District: 1, 2, 3, 4
Proposal: Amend Chapter Eight Physical Area Development, Transportation Element, subsection 8.2.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities of The Columbia Plan: 2018
Applicant: City of Columbia
Krista Hampton, Planning and Development Services
Director
PC Recommendation: Approve (8-1), 04/06/15
Staff Recommendation: Approve
BPAC Recommendation: Approve

[Ordinance No.: 2015-029](#) - Amending the City of Columbia Comprehensive Plan 2018 to repeal Chapter Eight Physical Area Development, Transportation Element subsection 8.2.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities and adopt the Walk Bike Columbia plan as the Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities component of the Comprehensive Plan – *First reading approval was given on May 19, 2015. – Approved on second reading.*

ZONING CONFIRMATION – SECOND READING

10. [7201 Garners Ferry Road](#), TMS#16405-03-01; confirm C-3 (General Commercial). – *First reading approval was given on May 19, 2015. – Approved on second reading.*
Council District: 3
Proposal: Confirm C-3 zoning for recently annexed property
Applicant: Marion T. Burnside & Mary Blakely Hendricks
Burnside
PC Recommendation: Approve (7-0); 03/02/15
City Council Recommendation: Approve; 01/27/15
Staff Recommendation: Approve

EVENT RESOLUTIONS

11. [Resolution No.: R-2015-020](#) - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine beverages only at the SC Pride Festival 2015 on Main Street on October 24, 2015 - *Approved*
12. [Resolution No.: R-2015-046](#) - Authorizing consumption of beer and wine beverages only at the Palmetto Tasty Tomato Festival on July 18, 2015 - *Approved*

PRESENTATIONS

13. [Recognition of Four Richland One Students Named as Gates Millennium Scholars](#) – The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

Mayor Benjamin recognized Shacoria Anderson of Lower Richland High School, Micah Crumpton of W.J. Keenan High School, Marcas Smith of A.C. Flora High School and Linda Taylor of Eau Claire High School as 2015 Gates Millennium Scholars. He said Columbia has a sweet spot in developing super stars. He said that Richland One has four Gates Millennium Scholars and this is one the most prestigious scholarships in the entire world that pays for tuition, room and board, and everything else for as long as these young people are in school. He said we could not be more proud of the four of you.

Miss Shacoria Anderson said she plans to attend Georgetown University in Washington, DC to major in human science in hopes of becoming a pediatrician.

Master Micah Crumpton said he plans to attend the University of South Carolina to major in computer engineering and business in hopes of starting his own computer technology and game designing business.

Master Marcas Smith said he plans to attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to study Architectural Engineering and Design.

Miss Linda Taylor said she plans to attend the University of South Carolina to major in computer science in hopes of starting a business focused on STEM.

14. [Business Spotlight Program Honoree \(Alala, LLC\)](#) – Mr. Angelo McBride, Administrator for the Office of Business Opportunities

Mr. Angelo McBride, Administrator for the Office of Business Opportunities presented Alala, LLC as the third quarter of 2015 business spotlight honoree.

Mr. Lee Catoe, Director of Community Affairs & Small Business Engagement for the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce said according to the US Census 92% of jobs created in America are created by small businesses. He said that the Chamber is excited about joining in the recognition of these businesses and to assist these businesses with networking. He said that Alala, LLC is a premier post-surgical support and services company that has become the focal point for women cancer survivors.

Ms. Kim Neel and Ms. Sharry Norris, Co-Owners of Alala, LLC thanked the City of Columbia for the FastTrac scholarship, because it helped them to become organized and helped them to be the first female business to graduate from the University of South Carolina Incubator Program.

Mayor Benjamin and the members of Council proclaimed Alala as the third quarter Business Spotlight Honoree of 2015 in the City of Columbia.

RESOLUTIONS

Councilor Devine said the Columbia Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated was chartered as Theta Beta Sigma Chapter on November 16, 1940 by fifteen college educated women determined to use their collective talents to serve the community and improve the lives of residents. She said it was the first African American Greek letter sorority in Columbia and the second graduate chapter of Delta Sigma Theta in South Carolina and they have served Columbia for nearly seventy five years by implementing a wide range of public service initiatives. In honor of this historic landmark, she announced the dedication of Delta Sigma Theta Way in the 5100, 5200 and 5300 blocks of Fairfield Road. She said the official dedication is scheduled for November. As a point of personal privilege, she noted that she has been a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated for twenty-two years; City Manager Teresa Wilson has been a member for twenty years; and Mrs. DeAndrea Benjamin has been a member for twenty-two years. She reiterated that this extraordinary sorority has done a lot in the Columbia community and it is an honor to celebrate this milestone. She said the membership is a lifetime commitment and this is a small token of what the City can do to recognize that.

15. [Resolution No.: R-2015-033](#) - Approving the honorary naming of the 5100, 5200 and 5300 blocks of Fairfield Road (US Hwy 321) between Winmet Drive and Alcott Drive to "Delta Sigma Theta Way" - *Approved*
16. [Resolution No.: R-2015-034](#) - Approving the honorary naming of the 100 block of Winmet Drive, (corner of Winmet Drive and Fairfield Road) to "Columbia (SC) Alumnae Place" – *Approved*

Upon a single motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mayor Benjamin, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2015-033 - Approving the honorary naming of the 5100, 5200 and 5300 blocks of Fairfield Road (US Hwy 321) between Winmet Drive and Alcott Drive to "Delta Sigma Theta Way" **and** Resolution No.: R-2015-034 - Approving the honorary naming of the 100 block of Winmet Drive, (corner of Winmet Drive and Fairfield Road) to "Columbia (SC) Alumnae Place".

17. [Resolution No.: R-2015-045](#) - Authorizing Acceptance and Dedication of street known as a portion of Gayle Pond Trace, (50' R/W) in Eastfair, Phase 1 to the City of Columbia; Richland County TMS#19104-15-01 (Portion); CF #297-11 - **Note:** *This street is in Eastfair, Phase I, which is located within the City limits. The development plans for this new subdivision were approved with the streets to be dedicated to the City as public streets.* - *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Ms. Plough and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2015-045 - Authorizing Acceptance and Dedication of street known as a portion of Gayle Pond Trace, (50' R/W) in Eastfair, Phase 1 to the City of Columbia; Richland County TMS#19104-15-01 (Portion); CF #297-11.

ORDINANCE – FIRST READING

18. [Ordinance No.: 2015-046](#) - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 21, Stormwater Management and Sedimentation Control, Article III, Flood Damage Prevention, Division I, Generally, Sec. 21-125 Definitions to add Functionally dependent use and Sec. 21-134 Severability; Division 2, Administration, Sec. 21-151 Responsibility for administration; Sec. 21-154 Appeals and variances; and Division 3, Flood Hazard Reduction, Sec. 21-172 Specific standards; Sec. 21-173 Standards for streams without established base flood elevations or floodways; and Sec. 21-175 Standards for areas of shallow flooding - [Click here to view Frequently Asked Questions for the Proposed Changes to the City's Floodplain Ordinance](#) -

Mr. Joey Jaco, Director of Utilities and Engineering explained that the City participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, which gives residents the ability to have flood insurance and we have to maintain minimum requirements with routine reviews. He further explained that the City must adopt additional changes that are in line with State regulations in order to close the current audit. He reported that one of the major changes would no longer allow a basement below the base flood elevation for new construction and substantial improvements in floodplains; all livable space must be above the base flood elevation. He said another change allows for a variance, but if approved, it would require a Conditional Letter of Map Revision to be submitted to FEMA and a 15% bond.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Baddourah and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2015-046 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 21, Stormwater Management and Sedimentation Control, Article III, Flood Damage Prevention, Division I, Generally, Sec. 21-125 Definitions to add Functionally dependent use and Sec. 21-134 Severability; Division 2, Administration, Sec. 21-151 Responsibility for administration; Sec. 21-154 Appeals and variances; and Division 3, Flood Hazard Reduction, Sec. 21-172 Specific standards; Sec. 21-173 Standards for streams without established base flood elevations or floodways; and Sec. 21-175 Standards for areas of shallow flooding.

BUDGET ORDINANCES – FIRST READING

19. [Ordinance No.: 2015-025](#) – Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 23, Utilities and Engineering, Article V, Water and Sewer Rates, Sec. 23-143 Water service rates and Sec. 23-149 Sewer service rates – *The Budget Public Hearing was held on May 19, 2015. – Approved on first reading by a vote of four (4) to three (3).*

A motion was made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Newman to approve Ordinance No.: 2015-025 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 23, Utilities and Engineering, Article V, Water and Sewer Rates, Sec. 23-143 Water service rates and Sec. 23-149 Sewer service rates.

Mayor Benjamin said emails were sent asking people to call the Mayor's Office. He said he did his best to respond to each email and phone call regardless of the tone and tenor of the communication and the false information that may have been shared. He said this is the budget that staff presented to us. He noted that he did offer amendments to that budget, but this is the budget as presented by the City Manager and her staff after a process that began last November. He said this year's General Fund budget increased by \$3.2 million with \$2.8 million of that going to public safety. He noted that \$1.6 million that used to come out of the water and sewer fund for the Office of Business Opportunities and the Development Corporations now comes from the General Fund and this allowed us to reduce the proposed water and sewer increase from 12.1% to 9.5%. He said there's \$1.75 million that was budgeted to start implementing pay raises for our City employees. He said that the City Manager has assured us that all of our employees will be making at least \$10.10 per hour recognizing the failure of the national government to move forward to increase the minimum wage. He said that is a total of \$6.16 million, but the budget only grew by \$3.26 million. He acknowledged that there have been motions in the past that would cut \$4 million in revenue, but no ideas on where to make cuts. He said we are also investing in helping homeowners weatherize their homes and to promote energy conservation efforts. He said we have proposed a 5% franchise fee and Greenville, Charleston, Lexington, Rock Hill, Myrtle Beach, Spartanburg, Florence, Goose Creek, and Mount Pleasant are at 5%. He noted how the water and sewer transfer has decreased every year over several years and now we are dropping it by \$1.4 million in one year. He said in 2001 through 2004 the water and sewer budget was much lower, the transfer was much higher and we weren't investing as much in the system as we are now. He said at the end of the day we'll have modern infrastructure that this entire City can be proud of.

▪ **Council opened the meeting for public input at 7:04 p.m.**

Ms. Diane Wiley said she heard about a meeting that was held to discuss water and sewer and Ms. Plough's name kept coming up. She said she also received a post card in the mail about baseball and the post card was really upsetting to her. She said if we don't fix the water system, it will continue to corrode. She said the increase on her water bill is \$4.99 per month and it isn't bad. She said the electric bill is going up, too, but a small amount isn't bad on the citizens.

Councilor Plough said that she and Mr. Baddourah hosted a joint district meeting on the budget.

Ms. Olivette Akers said there is too much money being spent on newer inventions and other things, but there are so many lacks concerning the needs for the people. She said there seems to be problems with relationships and being able to have a fruitful and harmonious life; those things are more important. She would like to see a lot of progress on those issues and it will take sacrifice; people come before anything else. She asked Council to consider using the money for the people before a stadium or beautification.

Mr. James Matthews said he lives in the unincorporated area and he did not realize that his water bill was being used to pay city taxes until he read it in the paper. He said he also found out that the city was taking \$4 million off the top every year and the EPA said the City hasn't been maintaining the sewers. He said the City of Columbia taxes should pay for public safety. He said you did not maintain the system. He believes that it is illegal and he would like to sue the City for taking money from its business and not using it for what it is intended for.

Ms. Madonna McElveen said we are on fixed incomes, the rates keep going up and how are we supposed to live. She said it is really wrong. She said we don't feel like you all are watching out for people, especially the elderly.

Ms. Vera Wood expressed concerns about her electric and water bill. She said she is retired, her husband is deceased and she is on a fixed income. She said she received the post card. She said she received another letter about paying a \$5.95 sewage bill and she has too much going on. She said she doesn't know what she is going to do.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said the letter from SCE&G was for an optional warranty program.

Ms. Barbara Jefferson said she is a retiree on a fixed income and she can't afford these increased costs.

Mayor Benjamin said it is important to note that we are listening and we are digesting your comments; the issues you raised are very legitimate issues; and we may disagree on some policy issues.

Mr. James Williams said he lives outside the City limits and he receives a bill from Palmetto Richland Sewer. He asked if that is for the City of Columbia also and who is responsible for that money.

Mayor Benjamin said Palmetto Richland is a private entity.

Mr. Dean Slade said when you look at the numbers it would be more affordable for us to pay more in our water than it would to pay a franchise fee. He said a 12% increase is approximately \$2.50 per month, but a 2% increase in an electricity bill is \$4 per month. He said the budget said \$4.7 million would be raised by the increase in the franchise fee and it's a very difficult thing to do; it impacts low income families and those on fixed incomes very heavily. He said we need to look at priorities in the budget and try to avoid increases. He said we did this when transportation was taking a dive, but there's not anything in this budget that would require that to happen.

Mr. John Bookhart said this whole city is carrying the county and everybody else around here. He said we supply services to those that come into the city, but they spend their money outside the city; we need to find ways to keep money inside the city. He said you have done work in the city and put more companies and restaurants in the city; we have improved in some ways.

- **Council closed the public comment period at 7:33 p.m.**

Councilor Plough said the ordinance deals with the increase in sewer rates. She asked if this ordinance also allows Council to approve the water and sewer budget and the CIP associated with water and sewer.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said yes.

Councilor Plough said by the vote on the sewer rate adjustment we are also approving the water and sewer budget, the 9.5% increase in water and sewer rates for in-city and slightly higher outside and a \$2.7 million transfer into the General Fund.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said yes.

Councilor Baddourah said he is concerned about the proposed 9.5%, because almost \$5 million in revenue is going to revenue projected for this fiscal year and the other \$5.5 million goes to the next fiscal year. He doesn't think that's the proper way to budget or to generate revenue and for that reason he can't support this water rate increase.

Councilor Devine said the information on the yellow card is false information. She said we can philosophically disagree on the budget. She said having a discussion on why you disagree is one thing, but telling people that Council is split racially on a budget and telling people that two black people on a committee refused to meet is unfair, false and it adds to the rhetoric that goes out in our community. She recalled having a serious conversation with a citizen who quoted several things that was mentioned at this meeting that was held weeks ago and it was completely inappropriate. She said we can debate whether you believe the city is going in the right direction. She acknowledged that Council has heard from African Americans in opposition to the budget; no one wants to pay higher rates. She said SCE&G is going to raise their rates regardless and if we don't raise our rates then we're not thinking forward in trying to invest in our city. She asked her colleagues to think hard about how they add to the rhetoric by providing information that is misleading. She said a citizen equated this Council to cities that have had huge financial problems while having African American leadership. She said that started with members of this Council. She said everyone had an opportunity to give a budget proposal or an idea and if you didn't take that opportunity you shouldn't blame members of this Council.

Councilor Davis said he has dealt with several budget decisions and we all know that Columbia is a capital city with a very extreme challenge unlike other major cities. He said we have a revenue deficit, because properties and entities do not participate in the revenue stream. He said we've also listened to the staff; we gave staff the responsibility to look at the issues and the Consent Decree requirements and put into place a system that this City would be proud of. He invited those in opposition to the water rate increase to do a comparison of rates in other cities. He said we've been in this territory before even with the franchise fee increase and once the goals were met, we repealed it.

Mayor Benjamin recalled that the City received the Government of Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted four (4) to three (3) to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2015-025 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 23, Utilities and Engineering, Article V, Water and Sewer Rates, Sec. 23-143 Water service rates and Sec. 23-149 Sewer service rates. Voting aye were Mr. Davis, Ms. Devine, Mr. Newman and Mayor Benjamin. Voting nay were Ms. Plough, Mr. Runyan and Mr. Baddourah.

Councilor Plough implored her colleagues to continue to support the Mayor's vision. She said at the very core is the fact that we are all trying to achieve the same thing; we want Columbia to be a better place to live, work and raise a family, but how we go about it is different. She said now is a time for us to reflect on a more dutiful method for achieving the Mayor's vision. She said the the City has already committed significant money to the Bull Street development to the tune of \$31 million; we've committed \$30 million to the baseball complex; and we are looking seriously at a new basketball complex as another visionary thought. She said our track record for maintaining these facilities has been fairly dismal. She said we can look at our existing parks and our crumbling sewer system. She said that City Council has a choice to make tonight; we can come together to approve a budget that is citizen and business friendly; one that doesn't add a significant burden to our existing tax payers. She said the hardest hit will be the seniors and small businesses. She said we've seen significant growth in our tax base and we see a budget that would heavily rely on that growth to fund our proposed growth rather than a franchise fee, which is a regressive tax. She said we could approach this budget using a cost containment strategy; one that requires us to live within our means. She said this year the City Manager asked departments to come in with a 7% across the board cut, but the budget before us today calls for a tax increase; government spending is being raised by 3%. She said other governments in the Midlands have demonstrated their ability to deal with cost containment. She said it's essential to pass a flat budget and we would only need to cut a few thousand dollars to get there and do away with this regressive \$4.7 million tax hike. She moved that the city say no to the increase in the franchise fee; say yes to the cutting of a couple hundred thousand dollars to get us to a flat budget; and direct the staff to re-evaluate the trimming of our budget to accommodate essential growth and yield to our various departments, because they know those needs better than we would know; delete ordinance 2015-037, which is the franchise fee modification; and modify ordinance 2015-036 that would propose using the revenue increase from the franchise fee to the general fund budget in line with a flat budget.

Mr. Baddourah seconded the motion.

Mayor Benjamin said he is not sure what cost-cutting other municipalities have done. He noted that this budget cuts property taxes by 2 mils and he hasn't come across any other government that has done such. He indicated that this past fall, the Town of Lexington moved their franchise fee from 3% to 5%. He asked that we look at how the budget has improved dramatically and how water and sewer transfers have gone down since 2001/2002. He noted that the water and sewer transfers were at their highest when Ms. Plough was the City Manager. He said our staff has shown us a lean budget; a very tight budget; and if you are going to cut the revenue, then it's up to us to cut expenditures.

Councilor Baddourah said we are in 2015 and we have a \$750 million mandate from the EPA. He said this is serious money, this is a serious problem and this is a serious challenge that this city has to face. He said you increase rates and you don't devote 100% of the revenue from that money back to infrastructure. He asked what we are going to do to improve the system and get the mandate off our back. He said the 2% franchise increase is a bad idea. He said he proposed an idea and this Council chose to think about it and we brought other ideas to this table to slow down increases; we've done everything we could. He said the only power I have now is to say no; I don't know what to do to talk to anybody on this Council. He said it is easy to go up on the fees. He clarified that the \$750 million was not in the picture in 2001.

Mayor Benjamin noted that the cost of deferred maintenance increases significantly.

A motion made by Ms. Plough and seconded by Mr. Baddourah to say no to the increase in the franchise fee; say yes to the cutting of a couple hundred thousand dollars to get us to a flat budget; to direct the staff to re-evaluate the trimming of our budget to accommodate essential growth and yield to our various departments, because they know those needs better than we would know; delete ordinance 2015-037, which is the franchise fee modification; and modify ordinance 2015-036 that would propose using the revenue increase from the franchise fee to the general fund budget in line with a flat budget failed by a three (3) to four (4) vote. Voting aye were Ms. Plough, Mr. Runyan and Mr. Baddourah. Voting nay were Mr. Davis, Ms. Devine, Mr. Newman and Mayor Benjamin.

20. [Ordinance No.: 2015-037](#) - Amending Section 9 of the Franchise Agreement between South Carolina Electric & Gas Company ("SCE&G") and the City of Columbia dated February 20, 2002 and amended February 15, 2011 and May 1, 2013 – *The Budget Public Hearing was held on May 19, 2015. – Approved on first reading by a vote of four (4) to three (3).*

A motion was made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Ms. Devine to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2015-037 - Amending Section 9 of the Franchise Agreement between South Carolina Electric & Gas Company ("SCE&G") and the City of Columbia dated February 20, 2002 and amended February 15, 2011 and May 1, 2013.

Councilor Plough said she was surprised when she read that the franchise fee is going towards public safety and the \$2 million transfer from water and sewer is going to public safety. She said we must have a \$7.2 million growth in public safety.

Ms. Teresa Wilson said that was the discussion with Council when we discussed the budget multiple times.

Mayor Benjamin said it was a very specific recommendation. He said we will discuss the transfer from the water and sewer fund to meet the needs of the general fund budget annually.

Councilor Plough didn't recall ever discussing that the franchise fee would go to public safety. She asked if we have a \$7.2 million growth in public safety.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said the original budget proposal from staff was for public safety needs, because this Council approved increases in funding for officers and you approved incentivizing the educational requirements. She said it grew based off us utilizing the franchise fee approach. She said there are several federal requirements coming online with the Busbee Street property and the evidence facility; a multitude of public safety expenditures will occur over the next year.

Councilor Plough asked if the \$7.2 million is going to fund the growth in public safety.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said yes.

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted four (4) to three (3) to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2015-037 - Amending Section 9 of the Franchise Agreement between South Carolina Electric & Gas Company ("SCE&G") and the City of Columbia dated February 20, 2002 and amended February 15, 2011 and May 1, 2013. Voting aye were Mr. Davis, Ms. Devine, Mr. Newman and Mayor Benjamin. Voting nay were Ms. Plaugh, Mr. Baddourah and Mr. Runyan.

21. [Ordinance No.: 2015-036](#) – To Raise Revenue and Adopt the Budget for the City of Columbia, South Carolina, for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2016 – *The Budget Public Hearing was held on May 19, 2015.* – *Approved on first reading by a vote of four (4) to three (3).*

A motion was made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Mr. Newman to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2015-036 – To Raise Revenue and Adopt the Budget for the City of Columbia, South Carolina, for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2016.

Councilor Plaugh asked if this includes the CIP for the general fund.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said yes while acknowledging that this Council has to make some decisions as discussed today.

Councilor Plaugh asked if this includes storm water, parking and all of the associated CIPs.

Councilor Devine said she will support this, but she is concerned about reducing the milage; it's dangerous to reduce it due to state regulations on our ability to raise the milage when necessary.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said Council hasn't raised taxes in ten years and you haven't dealt with the milage that you could've tapped into. She said when the Council supported our recommendation to increase the police force and public safety measures within budget, they acknowledged that over the next budget cycle and the following budget cycle, we would have to live up to that expectation and pay for those services. She said without there being a milage increase, the staff proposed the franchise fee as part of our original budget proposal. She said subsequently, additional amendments were made to the staff budget which incorporated the transfer for public safety.

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted four (4) to three (3) to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2015-036 – To Raise Revenue and Adopt the Budget for the City of Columbia, South Carolina, for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2016. Voting aye were Mr. Davis, Ms. Devine, Mr. Newman and Mayor Benjamin. Voting nay were Ms. Plaugh, Mr. Runyan and Mr. Baddourah.

**Councilor Devine said we've had several conversations regarding public safety and we have historically funded the Public Defender's Office. She said the Public Defender's Office has requested \$100,000 and there may be funding in the City Attorney's Office budget and we would need to expend that before June 30, 2015.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager cautioned Council that this is not reoccurring funds. She agreed to double-check the budget. She said there are a lot of eligible items for public safety and this is another example of that.

Councilor Devine asked Council to consider allocating \$100,000 to the Public Defender's Office at the next work session.

MAP AMENDMENT – FIRST READING

22. [1000/1010 Lady Street, 1218 Park Street](#), TMS#09013-09-01, -02, -22; rezone from M-1, -DD (Light Industrial, Design Development Overlay) to C-4, -DD (Central Area Commercial, Design Development Overlay). – *The Public Hearing was held on May 19, 2015 and first reading consideration was deferred. – Consideration of this item was deferred.*

Council District:	2
Proposal:	Rezone parcel from M-1, -DD to C-4, -DD
Applicant:	William H. Bailey
PC Recommendation:	Deny (7-2), 04-06/15
Staff Recommendation:	Approve

APPOINTMENTS

23. [Columbia Tree and Appearance Commission](#)

Upon a motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Ms. Pressley Hogue to the Columbia Tree and Appearance Commission as an at-large representative.

**Mayor Benjamin said the Police Department's advisory council is structured to only appoint city residents, but he would like to expand it to take applications from those living outside the city as well. He wants to make it clear that we are expanding the avenue for accepting applications.

Councilor Plough asked if Council wanted to limit the number of slots for residents not in the City.

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to direct staff to expand the residency requirement for the Columbia Police Department Citizens Advisory Committee to those residing outside of City limits. No more than one-third of the membership will consist of those residing outside the corporate limits of the City. Mr. Runyan was not present for the vote.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS / REFERRALS

- 24. Administrative Policy Committee Report – *This report was discussed in Executive Session.*
- 25. Council is asked to refer a review of the City Municipal Judge's evaluations and the operational plan for Municipal Court to the Administrative Policy Committee. The Committee will meet on June 15, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. and bring back a framework for City Council's consideration on June 16, 2015.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Plough and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to refer a review of the City Municipal Judge's evaluations and the operational plan for Municipal Court to the Administrative Policy Committee. The Committee will meet on June 15, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. and bring back a framework for City Council's consideration on June 16, 2015.

APPEARANCE OF THE PUBLIC

No one appeared at this time.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Runyan, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Moore
City Clerk

Meeting Dates	Type of Meeting	Meeting Times
June 15, 2015	Administrative Policy Committee Meeting	8:00 a.m.
	<i>City Hall – 1737 Main Street – 2nd Floor Conference Room</i>	
June 16, 2015	Work Session	2:00 p.m.
	<i>City Hall – 1737 Main Street – 2nd Floor Conference Room</i>	
	Council Meeting / 2nd Reading of Budget Ordinances	6:00 p.m.
	<i>City Hall – 1737 Main Street – Council Chambers – 3rd Floor</i>	
June 23, 2015	<i>Tentative Meeting(s)</i>	
June 30, 2015	Economic and Community Development Committee Meeting	2:00 p.m.