



CITY OF COLUMBIA
CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2015 – 6:00 P.M.
CITY HALL – 1737 MAIN STREET
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

The Columbia City Council conducted a meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 6:19 p.m. and the following members of City 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

Second Lieutenant James Jameson, United States Air Force led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

INVOCATION

Chaplain Jim Reese, Columbia Fire Department offered the Invocation.

**Councilor Plough led a moment of silence reflecting on the life and service of Mr. James D. Barber. She said “Jim” passed away on Sunday. He was a gentleman, a banker and he loved this city very deeply.

**Mayor Benjamin acknowledged the passing of Judge Ernest Kinard, Jr. who served dutifully as a Circuit Court Judge in the Fifth Judicial Circuit.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda with the following amendments:

- Move the following Zoning Public Hearing items prior to the Budget Public Hearing: *Amend Future Land Use Map of The Columbia Plan: 2018* and *Amend Chapter Eight Physical Area Development, Transportation Element*
- Defer consideration of the *Map Amendment for 1000/1010 Lady Street, 1218 Park Street*
- Remove Item 7 (*Harlem Heights Watershed Study*) from the Consent Agenda

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Revised [June 24, 2014](#) Council Meeting – *Approved as presented by a vote of six (6) to one (1).*

Councilor Plough asked the City Attorney to clarify for the record that even though she wasn't present at a meeting, when the minutes come before Council she is required to vote.

Ms. Teresa Knox, Esq., City Attorney said that every Council member present has to vote.

Councilor Plough stated for the record that she is voting no, because she wasn't there and she doesn't know what took place.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted six (6) to one (1) to approve the revised Council Meeting Minutes of June 24, 2014. Voting aye were Mr. Davis, Ms. Devine, Mr. Newman, Mr. Runyan, Mr. Baddourah and Mayor Benjamin. Ms. Plough voted nay.

[April 14, 2015](#) Council Meeting; [April 21, 2015](#) Council Meeting; and [May 5, 2015](#) Council Meeting – *Approved as presented.*

Upon a single motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Ms. Plough, Council voted unanimously to approve the Minutes for the April 14, 2015 Council Meeting; April 21, 2015 Council Meeting; and May 5, 2015 Council Meeting.

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 **6** and **8** through **11**. **Item 7** was approved by a separate motion. Mr. Newman was not present for the vote.

CONSIDERATION OF BIDS & AGREEMENTS

2. Council is asked to approve the Purchase of [Honeywell Structural Firefighting Gloves](#), as requested by the Fire Department. Award to Newton's Fire and Safety Equipment, Inc. of Swepsonville, North Carolina as the lowest bidder meeting specifications in the amount of \$53,190.00. *Funding Source: Fire Administration County – Special Departmental Supplies 2082301-627100 \$26,595.00 and Fire Suppression - Special Departmental Supplies 1012303-627100 \$26,595.00. The original budgeted amount is \$53,190.00. These gloves are part of the firefighter's personal protection gear. The original budgeted amount is \$60,000.00. - Approved*
3. Council is asked to approve the [Purchase of Twelve \(12\) Automatic Vehicle Locators](#), as requested by the Fire Department. Award to Motorola Systems of Sumter, South Carolina using the SC State Contract in the amount of \$97,166.30. *Funding Source: Fire Suppression/Computer Equipment Hardware 1012303/627500 - \$48,583.16 and Fire Administration- County/Computer Equipment Hardware 2082301/627500 - \$48,583.16 - Approved*

4. Council is asked to approve Services for the [Up-fitting of Police Vehicles](#), as requested by the Police Department. Award to West Chatham Warning Devices of Lexington, South Carolina as the lowest bidder in the amount of \$62,881.45. *Funding Source: Police Operations – Vehicle Repair/Service Supply 1012403-631700 - Approved*
5. Council is asked to approve the [Implementation of the Cityworks Inspection Module](#), as requested by the Utilities and Engineering Department. Award to POWER Engineers of Hailey, Idaho in the amount of \$297,682.00. *Funding Source: 5516205-SS730201-638305 – The original budgeted amount is \$300,000.00. **CIO Comment:** I support the City moving ahead with this project related to Clean Water 2020. - Approved*
6. Council is asked to approve an Agreement for the [Harlem Heights Watershed Study](#), as requested by the Utilities and Engineering Department. Award to Woolpert, Inc. in the amount of \$491,299.00. *Funding Source: 5534210-SD8386-638305 – **Note:** This is a Mentor Protégé Program Project and Woolpert, Inc. (Mentor) is headquartered in Dayton, OH and has a local office in Columbia, SC. Chao and Associates (Protégé) a Minority Business Enterprise located in Columbia, SC will provide field survey and data collection services in the amount of \$34,450.00 (7% of the contract value). Additional sub-consultants: 4D Engineering, a Woman-owned Business Enterprise with headquarters in Lexington, SC, will provide engineering design services in the amount of \$122,800.00 (25% of the contract value); P.J. Noble & Associates, a Woman-owned Business Enterprise with headquarters in Columbia, SC, will provide public involvement and meeting facilitation services in the amount of \$47,300.00 (9.6% of the contract value); and Schnabel Engineering, with headquarters located in Glen Allen, VA and a local office in West Columbia, SC, will provide geotechnical services in the amount of \$16,900.00 (3.4% of the contract value). The original budgeted amount is \$575,000.00. - Approved*

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

7. [Ordinance No.: 2015-010](#) - Authorizing the City Manager to execute an Intergovernmental Agreement Relating to the Pineview Industrial Park between the City of Columbia and Richland County – *First reading approval was given on May 5, 2015 by a vote of five (5) to two (2). – Approved on second reading by a vote of four (4) to two (2).*

Councilor Plaugh explained that she is opposing this on second reading, because we are waiving our annexation policy as it relates to this development and not requiring them to come into the City if they become contiguous.

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted four (4) to two (2) to give second reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2015-010 - Authorizing the City Manager to execute an Intergovernmental Agreement Relating to the Pineview Industrial Park between the City of Columbia and Richland County. Voting aye were Mr. Davis, Ms. Devine, Mr. Runyan and Mayor Benjamin. Voting nay were Ms. Plaugh and Mr. Baddourah. Mr. Newman was not present for the vote.

8. [Ordinance No.: 2015-039](#) - Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Fourth Amendment to Lease between the City of Columbia and Old Boy Properties, LLC for property consisting of 100± acres in Richland County, South Carolina being a portion of the property formerly owned by Columbia Venture, LLC and Sunday School, LLC – *First reading approval was given on May 5, 2015. – Approved on second reading.*
9. [Ordinance No.: 2015-040](#) – Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 11, Licenses, Permits and Miscellaneous Business Regulations, Article XII, Sexually Oriented Businesses, Sec. 11-735 Issuance of license (a) License (3) - **Note:** *This amendment seeks to correct the inadvertent omission of a word in one portion of Ordinance No. 2011-105 to clarify that a sexually oriented business license will be denied if the sexually oriented business is not in compliance with locational requirements of any part of the City of Columbia Code (i.e., either the licensing ordinance or zoning ordinance). All other provisions of the City Code (e.g., building code, fire code, etc.) will be enforced through the simpler methods prescribed by those provisions, rather than through the sexually oriented business licensing ordinance. – First reading approval was given on May 5, 2015. – Approved on second reading.*
10. [Ordinance No.: 2015-041](#) - Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Sixth Amendment to Purchase Agreement between the City of Columbia and Bright-Meyers 2001, LLC for the sale of 5.97 +/-acres (Capital City Stadium), Richland County TMS #11204-02-02 – *First reading approval was given on May 5, 2015. – Approved on second reading.*
11. [Ordinance No.: 2015-043](#) – Authorizing the City Manager to execute Voluntary Cleanup Contract 15-6325-NRP in the Matter of Site Rocky Branch Warehouse Site, Richland County, between The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and The City of Columbia for the property commonly known as Dreyfus Road – *First reading approval was given on May 5, 2015. – Approved on second reading.*

PRESENTATIONS

12. City LIGHTS Employee Recognition – Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said this recognition is being done in conjunction with residents from the Regency Park Neighborhood located off of Broad River Road. She said the community members were trying to deal with several issues that were impacting their quality of life and they were adamant that our City employees be recognized for the work they have done to assist them. She said that Columbia Police Department employees went above and beyond the call of duty to address all of the concerns expressed by residents and they worked together to bring about positive outcomes. She presented Officer Julie McElDowney and Mr. Antoine Williams, Code Enforcement Division with certificates for being recognized as City LIGHTS.

Ms. Christine Thompson, resident of Regency Park said that Officer Julie truly went above and beyond and she is a wonderful presence in the Regency Park neighborhood. She said that Mr. Antonio Williams has been wonderful to the community, too.

**Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said there are lots of trinkets in the room and the displays are meant for our public to be able to walk around and understand a lot of the things that go on in our City on a daily basis in the various departments. As we have our budget public hearing tonight we wanted to turn it into an open house and I hope that the citizens were able to get one of our *Budget in Brief* guides that lays out the budget and the budget process. This is meant to be educational. She noted that public safety officials are present to answer questions from citizens.

13. [Bike and Bicycle Safety Month Proclamation](#) - The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

Ms. Dana Higgins, City Engineer recognized the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

Mayor Benjamin and the members of City Council proclaimed May 2015 as Bike and Bicycle Safety Month.

14. [National Preservation Month Proclamation](#) - The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

Mayor Benjamin and the members of City Council proclaimed May 2015 as National Preservation Month in the City of Columbia.

- [2015 Mabel Payne Historic Preservation Award](#) – Mr. Jerre Threatt, City Planner for the Planning and Development Services Department

Ms. Amy Moore, Preservation Planner for the Planning and Development Services Department explained that the Mabel Payne Historic Preservation Award is presented annually by the Planning Division to an individual or group that has played a vital role in preserving the City’s architectural heritage. The 2015 Mabel Payne Historic Preservation Award goes to Dr. John M. Bryan.

ZONING PUBLIC HEARING

- **Council opened the Zoning Public Hearing at 6:43 p.m.**

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

15. [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 – *Approved on first reading.*

Ms. Krista Hampton, Director of the Planning and Development Services Department explained that while we were updating our land use plan we were annexing property and that land use plan did not take into account those properties. This is a bulk assignment of land use classifications to the properties that were annexed during the time of the land use plan. This is administrative and future annexations will be assigned a zoning classification as well as a land use classification.

No one appeared in support of or in opposition to this matter.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Baddourah and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to 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.

AMENDMENT TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT – FIRST READING

16. [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 – *Approved on first reading.*

Mr. John Fellows, Assoc. AIA, AICP, Planning Administrator for the Planning and Development Services Department recalled that we have been working on this plan for a year in collaboration with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and many City departments. He introduced Ms. Jean Crowther as our consultant.

Ms. Jean Crowther, Associate with Alta Planning + Design presented the Walk Bike Columbia Master Plan and Bike Share Plan that was commissioned by the Central Midlands Council of Governments in partnership with the City of Columbia. She reiterated that this was a collaborative effort among City departments, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, State Department of Transportation, University of South Carolina, The COMET, Abacus Planning Group, Palmetto Health and private sector partners who supported funding of the plan. She said the purpose of the plan is to provide options for mobility. She noted that this is also part of the economic vision for Columbia in terms of capitalizing on the interest in the branding opportunity for people to be more active and living healthier lifestyles. She said the vision focuses on an expanded and ADA-accessible network of transit, sidewalks, greenways, trails, and on-street bicycle connections for the City linking people to the destinations that they need and want to get to. She said they began by looking at the strengths and challenges in Columbia's bicycling, walking and transit environment. She noted that sixteen (16) programmatic recommendations are included in the plan along with policy recommendations and bike share recommendations. She said the infrastructure recommendations are for pedestrians and bicycles. She stated that the full capital improvement plan being offered includes seven (7) phases of implementation along with priority projects on Garners Ferry Road, Farrow Road, Laurel Street and Sumter Street. In closing, she encouraged everyone to review the plan at www.walkbikecolumbia.org.

Mr. Will Haltiwanger thanked Council for their support of this plan and for allowing him to serve on BPAC for the last four (4) years. He looks forward to moving our city forward.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to 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.

ZONING CONFIRMATION – FIRST READING

17. [7201 Garners Ferry Road](#), TMS#16405-03-01; confirm C-3 (General Commercial). –
Approved on first 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 |

No one appeared in support of or in opposition to this matter.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Baddourah and seconded by Ms. Plough, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to the Zoning Confirmation for 7201 Garners Ferry Road, TMS#16405-03-01; confirm C-3 (General Commercial).

MAP AMENDMENT – FIRST READING

18. 102 Christian Street, TMS#14203-12-04; rezone from RS-2 (Single Family Residential) to C-1 (Office and Institutional). - *Denied*
- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Council District: | 1 |
| Proposal: | Rezone parcel from RS-2 to C-1 |
| Applicant: | W. S. Ramseur, Treasurer, Palmetto Elk Lodge |
| PC Recommendation: | Deny (8-0), 03/02/15 |
| Staff Recommendation: | Deny |

Ms. Dorothy M. Felton, member of the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World said they purchased the property two (2) years ago and they would like to have a meeting place. She said most of their meetings for the South Carolina Department of Elks are held in Columbia and they have no home. She said their goal is to improve the property. She said they want to become an active part of the neighborhood and provide a meeting place for all youth and senior civic organizations in the area and they also want to tutor students after school. She insisted that their growth depends on having a place to meet. She urged Council to reconsider the denial.

Ms. Bernetha Richardson echoed the words of Ms. Felton. She said talents don't stop with age and they can share what they have with the youth. She asked Council to be considerate of their wishes.

Mr. James D. Williams, Jr. said he lived in Greenview for forty (40) years and he has nothing against the Palmetto Elks in general. He expressed concerns about office and institution zoning spreading all over the neighborhood if this is approved. He said there are no sidewalks, there is poor lighting and parking would be a problem.

Ms. Bernetha Richardson said we are not a club; we are a lodge and temple. She said we don't plan to do club-type things; we are there for peace and growth; this would be an asset to the community.

Mr. Harold Murray, Jr., 6509 David Street said he has been a resident of the Greenview Community for forty-five (45) years. He recalled that he rode through the Spring Valley and Wildewood communities and he saw several very nice places they could use. He said these are all residential neighborhoods and if this lodge tried to put their facility in the aforementioned neighborhoods, they would have been rejected immediately. He said the property in the Greenview community is under valuated and we can't afford to have commercial properties in residential areas. He said this is a commercial enterprise applying for commercial zoning. He said there are no sidewalks and the streets are relatively narrow; they will be parking cars on the street; and children will have to navigate between cars with poor lighting. He asked Council to deny this request.

Mayor Benjamin said the Elks are a respected organization everywhere. He thanked the members of the Elks Lodge for all they are doing to help the young people across this community. He acknowledged that there are major policy issues at play with the denial from both the Planning Commission and staff.

Ms. Krista Hampton, Director of Planning and Development Services said it has been a longstanding policy of this Council to consider commercial encroachment into neighborhoods very carefully; rarely if at all, does this Council approve commercial encroachment into neighborhoods. She said parking, the adjacency of the structures and the inventory of available commercial properties along our corridors such as Farrow Road impacted their decision. She said we do have a new land use plan, which designates this parcel as an urban residential small lot and that policy would dictate that it be a residential zoning.

Councilor Davis said the recommendation is consistent with the zoning itself and we have really been trying to get a handle on encroachment, because it impacts property values and the basic preference of the property owners who live there and their quality of life. He said it would set precedence. He supports the neighborhood's request.

Councilor Devine said this Council has been clear in the past about encroachment into residential. She said this has no reflection on the quality of the organization. She hopes that they will talk with staff about other available properties.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to deny the Map Amendment for 102 Christian Street, TMS#14203-12-04; rezone from RS-2 (Single Family Residential) to C-1 (Office and Institutional).

Mayor Benjamin asked staff and realtors that were present during the meeting to meet with the applicant now to help identify other commercial properties in or near the Greenview community.

19. [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). – *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

TEXT AND MAP AMENDMENT – FIRST READING

20. [Amend Article V Historic Preservation and Architectural Review](#), Divisions I, 17-651 Purpose of Article and 17-674(f) Review Process. – *Consideration of this was deferred.*
Council District: 1, 2
Proposal: Amend Article V Historic Preservation and Architectural Review, Divisions I, 17-651
Purpose of Article and 17-674(f) Review Process: Delay of demolition.
Applicant: Krista Hampton, Planning and Development Services
Director
PC Recommendation: Approve (5-4), 04/06/15
Staff Recommendation: Approve

[Ordinance No.: 2015-033](#) - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 17, Planning, Land Development and Zoning, Article V, Historic Preservation and Architectural Review, Division I, Generally, Sec. 17-651 Purpose of article and Division II, Preservation Standards for Landmarks and Design Protection Districts, Sec. 17-674 Review process – *Consideration of this was deferred.*

- **Council closed the Zoning Public Hearing at 7:18 p.m.**

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

21. [Ordinance No.: 2015-042](#) - Consenting to the Inclusion of Property in a Multi-County Industrial/Business Park (Project Icon on Main, Education Realty Operating Partnership, LP (EdR), 1.26 acres Southwest corner of Main Street and College Street, Richland County TMS #11304-07-05 and 11304-07-06) – *First reading approval was given on May 5, 2015. – Approved on second reading.*

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to give second reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2015-042 - Consenting to the Inclusion of Property in a Multi-County Industrial/Business Park (Project Icon on Main, Education Realty Operating Partnership, LP (EdR), 1.26 acres Southwest corner of Main Street and College Street, Richland County TMS #11304-07-05 and 11304-07-06). Mr. Baddourah was not present for the vote.

22. [Ordinance No.: 2015-044](#) - Authorizing the City Manager to execute an Air Rights Development Contract between the City of Columbia and Hallmark Homes International, Inc. – *First reading approval was given on May 5, 2015, subject to striking Item B - Assignment from Page 9 of the agreement. – Approved on second reading.*

Upon a motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Runyan, Council voted unanimously to give second reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2015-044 - Authorizing the City Manager to execute an Air Rights Development Contract between the City of Columbia and Hallmark Homes International, Inc. Mr. Newman abstained from voting due to a potential conflict of interest. Mr. Baddourah was not present for the vote.

RESOLUTIONS

23. [Resolution No.: R-2015-044](#) - Authorizing Condemnation for Easement Acquisition for Sanitary Sewer Relocation at Senate Street along Property Identified as Richland County TMS#11406-12-01 for CIP Project #SS7299; CF#250-348 – **Note:** *The referenced Resolution for Condemnation is for a sanitary sewer project that is necessary to upgrade the sanitary sewer system and increase capacity and performance necessary to meet customer demands in the vicinity of Harden Street and Gervais Street leading south to Five Points. - Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2015-044 - Authorizing Condemnation for Easement Acquisition for Sanitary Sewer Relocation at Senate Street along Property Identified as Richland County TMS#11406-12-01 for CIP Project #SS7299; CF#250-348.

OTHER MATTERS

24. Council is asked to approve the [Installation of Sixteen \(16\) Speed Humps](#) at the following locations, as requested by the Lyon Street Neighborhood Association. *Proposed speed hump locations in the Lyon Street Neighborhood: 1208, 1303 & 1513 Lyon Street; 1225 Liberty Hill Avenue; 2424 & 2436 Washington Street; 1211, 1314 & 1516 McDuffie Street; 1223, 1317 & 1513 Manning Street; 818 & 1108 Tree Street; and 1113 & 1311 King Street – **Note:** The Columbia Fire Department supports this request. - Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Mayor Benjamin, Council voted unanimously to approve the Installation of Sixteen (16) Speed Humps at the following locations, as requested by the Lyon Street Neighborhood Association: 1208, 1303 & 1513 Lyon Street; 1225 Liberty Hill Avenue; 2424 & 2436 Washington Street; 1211, 1314 & 1516 McDuffie Street; 1223, 1317 & 1513 Manning Street; 818 & 1108 Tree Street; and 1113 & 1311 King Street.

Councilor Devine said there may be additional requests from the neighborhood for Council to consider. She asked that the additional requests be moved along quickly in hopes of installing them all at the same time.

APPOINTMENTS

25. [Columbia Museum of Art Commission](#)

Upon a motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mayor Benjamin, Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Mr. Joel Smith to the Columbia Museum of Art Commission.

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

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve the reappointment of Ms. Mary Greene to the Columbia Tree and Appearance Commission.

27. [Planning Commission](#)

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Ms. April James to the Planning Commission.

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve the reappointment of Mr. John Taylor to the Planning Commission.

****Ms. Teresa Wilson**, City Manager introduced Ms. Lisa Johnson as a temporary employee that will be filling in while Connie Lucius is on maternity leave.

****Councilor Plough** asked that staff provide a copy of the RFP for the Charlotte Hornets to the members of Council and that Council be briefed on those negotiations at the next meeting.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said she isn't privy to the RFP and staff hasn't been officially asked to respond.

Mayor Benjamin agreed to provide a full report at the next meeting.

Councilor Devine said her understanding is that staff of the City isn't responding, but there may be an interest from an entity of the City, but that board hasn't decided whether or not they are in a position to respond.

Mayor Benjamin said the RFP from the Hornets requires a June 15, 2015 response to the Request for Proposals, the Notice of Intent to Respond was due by May 15, 2015 and I fully intend to have the City respond. He explained that the window to provide that response came before a Council meeting. He said we expect that potentially one of our development corporations will be responding on our behalf. They made a point to consult with a number of Council people who also expressed their support, obviously we can't poll Council. We will share the RFP with the entire Council with the admonition and encouragement that this be treated as an opportunity for the City and not mishandled.

BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

28. [Fiscal Year 2015/2016 Budget Presentation](#) – Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget and Program Management Director – [Click here to view the fiscal year 2015/2016 Budget in Brief](#)

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget and Program Management Director said the open house is an opportunity for everyone to see a sample of their tax dollars at work. She said that various departments have information displayed around Council Chambers and the first floor of City Hall. She noted that copies of the *Budget in Brief* are available and it's available on the City's website. The 2015/2016 General Fund budget is 45% and Water and Sewer is 46% of the overall operating budget of nearly \$300 million. The top three budget priorities are public safety; water and sewer infrastructure and Clean Water initiatives; and the City's compensation plan. The budget includes funding for police body cameras and a new police evidence and storage facility. The majority of the water and sewer fund is focused on addressing the Clean Water 2020 Program, which is the City's program to meet the EPA Consent Decree requirements. She said the \$4 million transfer to the General Fund has been eliminated and replaced with a public safety transfer that is capped at 2% of the water and sewer budget, which totals \$2,675,605 resulting in a 33% reduction in the transfer. She noted that this is the third year that the transfer has been reduced with this being the largest reduction in the transfer. Also, \$1.6 million in expenses have been shifted into the General Fund. The budget includes \$19.7 million in cash, which contributes to the Capital Improvement Program for a total CIP of \$120 million. The City is focusing on restoring the competitiveness of its compensation plan and the budget includes \$3 million across

multiple funds that will go towards a phased in implementation of the compensation and classification study. The study supports the police and fire recruitment and retention programs. She reviewed the operating funds, noting that the General Fund budget is \$130.7 million, which is an increase of \$3.2 million or 2.6% over the current year with public safety departments making up \$2.8 million of the \$3.2 million increase. She also noted that most departments in the General Fund budget remained flat or were reduced, except for Council Support Services due to funding for the upcoming election and the Office of Business Opportunities shifted fully to the General Fund, but their budget remains flat. The budget includes a 2 mil property tax rollback resulting in a \$1 million reduction in revenues. This is the seventh straight year without a property tax increase. There is a proposed increase to the franchise fee from 3% to 5% resulting in a \$4.7 million increase in revenues. The majority of the City's revenue comes from property taxes, business licenses and permit fees in a total amount of \$117 million, which is an increase of \$6 million or 5.5% over the current year. She reported that transfers-in and other financial uses total \$13.6 million, which is a reduction of \$2.7 million or 17% over the current year. Over the past three years there has been very little growth in revenues and that may not change over the next five (5) to ten (10) years. The Water and Sewer budget is \$133 million, which is a \$6 million increase or 4.9% over the current year and reflects a 9.5% rate increase. She noted that \$1.6 million in expenses are being shifted from the Water and Sewer Fund to the General Fund and that system assets have almost doubled since 2005. She also noted that the majority of the revenue comes from water sales at 62% with the largest expenditure being the Utilities and Engineering Department at 85% of the budget. She noted that debt service represents \$29 million of the budget. She presented a chart of Columbia's existing and proposed rates in comparison to other providers. The budget for the Storm Water Fund is \$7.1 million, which is a decrease of \$485,000 or 6%. The revenues are budgeted at current year levels and the \$500,000 transfer from the General Fund has been eliminated. She reported that staff is auditing existing customer bases to ensure that we are accurately capturing all storm water accounts. There is \$2.2 million available for the Storm Water CIP. The proposed budget for the Parking Fund is \$7.2 million, which is an increase of \$349,000 or 5% over the current year. She recalled that changes to the budget were discussed with City Council during the presentation from our consultant for the Parking System Master Plan that will be brought back to Council in August. A variety of revenues make up the Parking Fund with the largest portion coming from garages and lots at 37%, parking meters at 32% and non-moving violations at 29%. The Hospitality Tax budget represents a \$10.6 million budget with revenues increasing by 3.3%, but the overall reduction is \$1.2 million, because of the reduced amount of fund balance being used. The Hospitality Tax Committee and line items are projected at current year levels and we have continued funding for things committed to by Council. The transfer to the General Fund is at \$3 million although the qualifying services provided by the General Fund exceed that amount. She reported that debt service is a reduction of 2% from the current year and reflects the use of \$247,000 in fund balance. For the Accommodations Tax Fund the budget is \$2.1 million, which is a 1.4% increase and no assumptions have been made on the allocations except those allocations dictated by state law. Funding for year one capital projects is \$120 million with \$80 million being for wastewater and \$40 million for water projects. She noted that 90% of the wastewater projects are for the Clean Water 2020 Program. The capital projects are being funded from operating cash, cash reserves and anticipated bonds. The storm water CIP for year one is \$6.2 million and those projects are focused on meeting our EPA requirements of the phase one storm water management program. Parking improvements represent \$2 million for work at five of our eight

city garages. She announced that the public hearing is tonight; first reading is scheduled for June 2, 2015; and final adoption of the budget is scheduled for June 16, 2015.

Councilor Devine explained that Council voted during today's Work Session to create an ad hoc committee of Council to be chaired by Mr. Baddourah to further explore his proposed business license fee revisions.

[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

[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

[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

- **Council opened the Budget Public Hearing at 7:55 p.m.**

Mr. Victor Kemper, Local 793 Columbia Association of Professional Firefighters spoke in favor of the transfer to public safety, because the money will do more to ensure the safety of our citizens. He said the Fire Department has experienced its worst attrition rate over the past decade. He said the pay package is the leading cause and it is essential to have experienced mentors to move the department forward in day to day operations. He said that the Columbia Fire Department is having trouble attracting competent and qualified applicants due to the pay package. He said at every level we are seeing experienced and quality personnel leave the department and these losses are damaging.

Dr. Raj Aluri thanked Council for their support of the Columbia International Festival. He said they had a fabulous 25th anniversary and this defines our city as an international community. He said that he will be bringing three (3) distinguished individuals to make special presentations to City Council, because many foreign born individuals make significant contributions to our City.

Mr. Doug Bridges, Realtor and member of the Central Carolina Realtors Association said the franchise fee is going to be injurious to the people and businesses of the City; citizens and small businesses are one in the same. He said this is going to force small businesses to raise the cost of their goods and services and they will pass that on to the people. He asked Council to think deeply about increasing the franchise fee.

Mr. Jim Reid, Rickenbaker Road resident expressed opposition to any increase to the SCE&G franchise fee, because it is a tax increase that will create a financial hardship for many citizens and businesses; it will come on top of a 10% increase of water and sewer rates and increases by the school district; it will primarily be paid by city residents; SCE&G rates will continue to rise; the 2% tax will be higher than the proposed minuscule reduction to property taxes; and businesses will pass on the tax to their customers. He suggested that Council cut non-essential

spending and identify other sources of revenue. He said Mr. Baddourah's proposal is an excellent start. He urged Council to vote against this tax increase.

Mr. Joe Boyes, 1025 South Holly Street said the property tax decrease is risky business, because it might be difficult to raise it to an adequate level in the future; it will result in a \$10 reduction in property taxes and a \$50 increase in franchise fees. He said out of city water and sewer customers should have to pay twice as much as in city customers.

Ms. Jennifer Gardner said a lot of the expenditures that come out of the water and sewer fund budget have nothing to do with water and sewer. She questioned the expenditures for the development corporations and economic development special projects. She said she isn't against the franchise fee increase. She asked what happened to the 5% we were paying in 2011. She asked why Council can't eliminate the transfer to the General Fund. She sought to understand if everybody would be paying this increase.

Mayor Benjamin said the transfer has been reduced for the last several years at the rate of \$250,000 and we are reducing the transfer by \$1.3 million this year; we are going in the right direction.

Mr. Paul Allen, 4711 Datura Road sought clarification on the budget process. He asked why the finance committee never met on the budget. He also inquired about Mr. Baddourah's proposal.

Mayor Benjamin said that the Finance Audit and Budget Committee held meetings during the fourth quarter. He explained that under this form of government we have committees as advisory bodies to help the Council expedite its business. Under this form of government, the City Manager is responsible for presenting a budget to Council. Staff started this budget process in November of 2014; it has been a progressive process that Council has been kept apprised as the budget has developed; and while the committee may not have met to take up the budget, the entire Council has been kept apprised of the process.

Councilor Runyan said he prepared a document that can be found outside of Chambers. He told Mr. Allen to read the document and feel free to call him on the matter. He asked that the document be linked to the minutes. – *Click here to view Mr. Runyan's FY 2015/2016 Proposed Budget Facts*

Mr. Paul Allen, 4711 Datura Road asked how guidance was given from City Council to the City Manager. He inquired about alternatives to the franchise fee and the business license proposal for non-profits, doctor's offices and anything competing with business in the private sector.

- **Council closed the Budget Public Hearing at 8:19 p.m.**

Mayor Benjamin said Council discussed the proposed ordinance earlier today. He said this ordinance has not been adopted anywhere else in this state. Council discussed some of the unintended consequences. He said it's not possible to consider that proposal as part of this budget, because there is no data and no due diligence was done. By a unanimous vote today, Council set up an ad hoc committee that Mr. Baddourah will chair to continue to explore this issue. The potential ordinance may in fact exempt a significant portion of Palmetto Richland; it

could possibly include churches, the Salvation Army thrift shop and others. This is not something that I support. He said we are always open to additional ideas; they will either pass muster or they won't; and we'll be held accountable for those decisions.

Councilor Newman said that it is his understanding that at a recent meeting a colleague indicated to a large crowd that he or Mr. Davis rejected meeting dates for the budget committee. He said the reality is that it may have been a miscommunication or misunderstanding, but that's false. He acknowledged receiving several emails accusing him and Councilman Davis of refusing to meet about the budget and that is absolutely false.

Councilor Davis responded to that by saying that he doesn't participate in email chains. He stated for the record that he has never refused to attend or participate in a committee meeting that he has been appointed to. He said he is unsure where that originated and he will not follow that up, but the good citizens of this City and those that know him, knows that he wouldn't refuse to participate in a called committee meeting; it is not true.

Councilor Plough said she felt the need to address Mr. Allen's question about other options that were explored. She explained that on four different occasions dating back to March she asked to be able to work with the staff to explore alternatives and sometimes she put suggestions on the table as part of the motion. At other times she started out saying there was criteria we could use to work with staff to come up with other budget recommendations. All four times the majority of this Council declined. She said in one motion she asked for a week's delay to explore the Mayor's proposal and she was declined the opportunity.

Mayor Benjamin said one of the motions put forward by Ms. Plough to end the water and sewer transfers without any recommendations regarding the cost of covering expenses failed for the lack of a majority. He said I'm not sure when you ever required Council's consent to engage with staff; you meet with staff more than any other member of Council. He asked when Council told Ms. Plough that she can't dialog with staff on solutions for the budget.

Councilor Plough said you're mistaken Mayor. She insisted that she meets with staff on a conference call every Monday before City Council for a half an hour to go over the items on the agenda to get clarity so that Council can speed the discussions along in meetings. She said she's not questioning what her colleagues do. She thought it appropriate if she wanted to have staff time that she have the support of this Council to sit down and look at alternatives. She said in one instance she wasn't granted a week to look at a document.

Mayor Benjamin asked Ms. Plough when she was denied access to staff to fashion in any form of a budget.

Councilor Plough said she was denied on March 17, 2015, April 14, 2015 and on April 21, 2015.

Mayor Benjamin said he has sat through some of the meetings Ms. Plough had with staff on Mondays and oftentimes those meetings go well into an hour or two. He said you have never been denied the ability or opportunity to present proposals on budget issues to staff or Council. You made a motion that was defeated by failure to get a majority; it was a three-to-three vote and I asked you to withdraw that motion because there had been no due diligence on exactly how we

were going to cut expenses along with cutting revenues. You chose to move forward with that motion and it was voted down. The very next meeting I presented a motion that was a modified version of the City Manager's budget plan and it passed with a majority vote. He said it is important to be factual and some of the concerns that Mr. Newman and Mr. Davis have raised are because some of us have spent a great deal of time with the public sharing information that's just not true. He reiterated that Mr. Davis and Mr. Newman never declined to meet with Mr. Runyan or any other member of Council to discuss the budget. He told Ms. Plaugh that it is so important that at any of the meetings you host in your district that you don't tell constituents that, because it's just not true and I know that it was shared at the last Heathwood meeting that you and Mr. Baddourah both shared. After our last District IV meeting you sent an email "Columbia Taxpayers Blast Tax Hike" and it talks about an overwhelmingly majority of public comments coming from a crowd of more than 100 citizens. He said there were not 100 citizens there; the vast majority of the people in that room were either City employees or people who worked for the City as contractors. Eleven people spoke at the meeting; of the eleven only four came to speak about the budget, the others came to speak about offshore drilling and the ways in which the city is going to try to meet the needs of the underprivileged in our community. The four people who spoke gave some very pointed, thoughtful and eloquently delivered comments and concerns. He added that in the same meeting Mr. Baddourah told people to come out to the May 19th public hearing and raise hell. We don't need that; we need to have discussions; we are going to disagree often, but let's do our best to raise the level of the conversation and let's make sure that we are being very truthful with our constituents. We are doing our best to get our City to the point where we have a three legged stool on taxation policy, reducing the dependence on the water and sewer transfers and trying to make sure that we work with our state legislators and others on addressing the business license fee issue. It's a process and let's make sure that we are being very truthful and that we are being very thoughtful about the concerns of our colleagues as well.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS/REFERRALS

No committee reports or referrals were made at this time.

APPEARANCE OF THE PUBLIC

No one appeared at this time.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Erika D. Moore
City Clerk