

**CITY OF COLUMBIA
CITY COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP
MAY 5, 2008 - 9:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.
EAU CLAIRE PRINT BUILDING – 3901 ENSOR AVENUE**



The Columbia City Council conducted a Budget Workshop on Wednesday, May 5, 2008 at the Eau Claire Print Building located at 3901 Ensor Avenue, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Robert D. Coble called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. The following members of Council were present: The Honorable E.W. Cromartie, II, The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine, The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann and The Honorable Kirkman Finlay III. The Honorable Anne M. Sinclair arrived at 10:49 a.m. The Honorable Sam Davis was absent. Also present were Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Salley, City Clerk.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

1. Fire Department – Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department, provided an overview of who they are, what they do and how they are organized at the Fire Department. He introduced members of the Executive Staff. They ran the numbers and discovered that one-fourth of the department was hired within the last 2 ½ years; 40% of the Captains have been in their positions for less than 3 years; 80% of Battalion Chiefs have been in their positions for less than two (2) years; and none of the Executive / Command Staff were in these positions 3 ½ years ago. They are all fairly new in various positions, but it is an exciting time for the Fire Department as they implement a lot of changes. He presented an organizational chart as an overview of the structure, which ties in with the budget numbers. The Fire Chief and the Deputy Fire Chief have a co-managerial relationship in terms of supervising the 4 areas of the department. Those divisions are: Administration, Professional Services, Operations and Fire Prevention. The department is also divided into five (5) Battalions. There are 481 authorized positions within the Fire Department. There are an additional 100 volunteer firefighters. Richland County provides \$13.7 million and the City funds \$18.1 million for the Columbia Fire Department. Another \$407,660 comes from the Water and Sewer Fund for fire hydrant maintenance personnel.

Councilor Cromartie noted that placing fire stations closer to residences results in lower or higher classifications in the fire designation rating. He asked how this has changed in the county since stations have been strategically placed.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department explained that the Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating inside the city is a Class 2 on a scale of one to ten. We contracted with the County to unite fire services and aggressive fire station construction has occurred throughout the county. This helped to lower the rating substantially to a Class 4, which is unheard of in areas without fire hydrants. Due to this reduction, county residents have saved \$5.5 million per year. He noted that commercial properties would benefit most from the reduction.

Councilor Finlay asked if Richland County would stop collecting taxes for Fire Services if property is annexed into the City of Columbia.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department explained that Richland County would continue to collect the tax, but would return the funds collected to the City of Columbia General Fund.

Councilor Finlay asked if city residents are double taxed for fire services. He stated that you pay more for fire services inside the city than outside the city. He asked why the Fire Department's budget has increased by 50%.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department explained that the additional funding would cover the proposed pay increases for firefighters in the recruiting and retention effort, which is projected to cost the City \$1,344,072 over three (3) years; to hire additional Deputy Fire Marshals; the hiring of three (3) Battalion Chiefs; replacement of desktop computers; Aides for Division Chiefs; Aides for Battalion Chiefs; the purchase of land for another station; and a new fire engine for the St. Andrews Fire Station.

Councilor Finlay noted that the cost of fire services would increase by \$4-8 million in the next 3-5 years. We will need to budget \$3-4 million each year in the Capital Improvements Program.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department briefed the Council on the Fire Department's Strategic Plan, which was created three (3) years ago. There are six (6) strategic issues, most of which has already been accomplished. The first strategic issue is to meet increased service demand and the second issue is to recruit and select quality career and volunteer personnel. They have made significant changes to the way they hire and promote employees. The county funded a Volunteer Coordinator a few years ago and that position has been helpful. The third strategic issue is to retain and develop personnel and this is along the same lines as strategic issue two.

Councilor Rickenmann asked if staff could revisit the nepotism clause, because we are losing quality applicants. There are enough positions within the Fire Department to avoid nepotism. He noted that firefighting is a family tradition.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager stated that he would meet with the City Attorney and Labor Attorney to review and discuss the city's nepotism policy as it relates to the Fire Department.

Councilor Finlay said that the policy should be standardized across the city, because it will create problems if some people can do it and some can't.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department continued with Strategic Issue Four which is to show compassion and caring for personnel. They have done a lot to improve communications with all employees. He visits all the fire stations for several hours to work on morale issues. The fifth Strategic Issue is to address City/County issues in providing services. They are working very hard to ensure that operations are seamless between the City and County. They have a very large service area excluding Fort Jackson. Strategic Issue six is to use appropriate technology. This year they are involved in a joint project with Richland County to utilize software that will allow you to see where fire trucks and ambulances are and better determine who should report to an incident scene.

Councilor Devine asked where we are with obtaining the Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) software.

Mr. S. Allison Baker, Assistant City Manager for Public Services, explained that they are finalizing the contract with the vendor, a team of individuals has been working through this, the contract has been sent to Richland County for consideration and the CAD System should be operational in August / September 2009.

Councilor Cromartie asked about fire hydrant maintenance personnel and the colors that are painted on the hydrants.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department reported that there are nine (9) personnel funded out of the Water and Sewer Fund that maintain the hydrants. The hydrants are tested to make sure they are working and to determine the flow coming from the hydrant. The blue hydrants have the highest volume and there are approximately 13,000 hydrants in the water system.

Mayor Coble asked for the number of hydrants that are out of service each month.

Assistant Fire Chief Rick Dunn, Columbia Fire Department / Logistics Bureau, reported that 5-10 hydrants go out of service each month. They are repaired and placed back into service. Last month there were 40 hydrants out of service, which is considered to be a small number.

Councilor Cromartie noted that all male and female firefighters are healthy looking. He asked if there was an exercise program or a physical fitness requirement.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department stated that there is not an on-going required physical maintenance program, but a lot has been done to encourage firefighters to participate in fitness activities.

Councilor Cromartie proposed that they work with the trainers at the Charles R. Drew Wellness Center. He stated that they are considering allowing 24-hour access to the center via a security card.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department stated that the fire personnel at downtown stations could use the wellness center.

Councilor Cromartie asked for the number of female and minority firefighters.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department explained that they have a diverse group of employees within the Fire Department. There are Five (5) sworn female firefighters and three (3) will be coming in with the next class and 40% of the firefighters are African Americans.

Councilor Devine asked if the Fire Chief had encountered any alternatives to flushing the hydrants through his nationwide interaction. What are other fire departments doing to reserve water even though they have to flush the lines?

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department explained that they perform flow tests wherein they have to open the 2 ½" outlet and let it flow until we know that it is doing all that it can; they check for a change in pressure; the availability of water; and a quick check to ensure hydrants are functioning.

Mr. Steve Gantt, Senior Assistant City Manager for Operations explained that the Utilities and Engineering Department would flush hydrants when they get complaints about poor water quality. The lines are flushed when there is no loop for continuous flow and water can become stagnated. Our five-year plan has identified those dead end situations.

Councilor Finlay noted that the Fire Department will have a negative balance for overtime pay and wanted to know how that would work.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department explained that funding from vacant positions is used to fund overtime expenses. He added that funding would be transferred to make the accounts balanced.

Councilor Cromartie asked for the base salaries of firefighters.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department, stated that the base salary is \$28,300 and it will be increased due to the recruitment and retention plan. The next recruitment class begins on May 19, 2008 and they will graduate on August 21, 2008. The Fire Department will send out notices for the graduation ceremony.

2. General Government – Ms. Teresa Wilson Florence, Director of Governmental Affairs and Community Relations

Ms. Teresa Wilson Florence, Director of Governmental Affairs and Community Relations, explained that General Government consists of the budgets for administrative and support functions of the entire city to include the City Manager, Executive Management, Governmental Affairs, Public Relations, Office of Business Opportunities, the City Clerk, Legal, Finance and General Services. Human Resources and Information Technology are covered under General Government, but will be discussed at a later time. She noted that all Department Heads have worked to utilize available resources and to maintain current year level funding in their respective budgets. Any budget increases are minimal. She explained that the City Manager continues to review and implement findings from the informational audit and that functions within the General Government budget may be realigned to achieve maximum efficiency and accountability.

Councilor Devine asked when they would discuss the proposed reorganization. She would like to know where changes would be made.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager explained that these discussions will begin in June in accordance with the budget. The functional realignments will not have a negligible impact on anyone's employment with the city. He noted that there are other matters that must be resolved first, because those matters will impact the direction of the realignment.

Councilor Rickenmann asked for a detailed explanation of all increases and decreases within the General Government budget. He asked if the realignment would cause changes to the departmental budgets. He inquired about the reduction in operating capital for Development Services and the reduction in Court Supervisors. Council needs to know the details of the realignments and any budget implications.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager explained that the realignment would be done prior to implementing the new budget. He feels that some functions will be better suited once aligned with other like functions. There will be a transition to a bureau concept with at least 4 major areas being identified as bureaus and contained within those bureaus would be their respective departments and within those departments would be the divisions. This is being done so there will be clear lines of the chain of command. We are not creating any new positions, but personnel may be consolidated or reassigned into other functions.

Councilor Rickenmann asked that someone explain the changes made in the General Government budget as it relates to the recent shifting of personnel.

Councilor Finlay asked how much is 311?

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager stated that there are three (3) people in 311 now, which was reduced from five (5).

Ms. Missy Caughman, Interim Finance Director explained that the 311 Call Center receives about 500 calls per week and a lot of those calls are for general information.

Councilor Devine asked if we thought about putting 311 with 211 as previously suggested.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager said that as Ms. Leshia Utsey, Director of Public Relations looks at restructuring her office we have had preliminary discussions about adding 311 to Public Relations and we can talk to United Way about the prospect of a partnership.

Mayor Coble had the impression that the 311 Call Center was shut down, but if they are getting 500 calls per week and we are not hearing anything that means they are answering the questions.

Councilor Rickenmann said that Council needed to see the numbers to ensure that it is working.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager explained that it was Ms. Caughman's suggestion to reduce the number of staff after she had the opportunity to review how they function. He believes that 311 is a public relations oriented function.

Councilor Cromartie suggested that each Council member receive a listing of 311 inquiries in their district as they did in the past.

Councilor Devine proposed that staff conduct a public relations blitz for 311 to educate the public on the services being offered. This will lessen the calls handled by other staff.

Councilor Finlay suggested that any public relations efforts be driven through the website. He noted that it would be best to provide up to date information on the website.

Councilor Devine reminded Council that they discussed hiring someone to administer grants and asked if that is included in this year's budget.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager said that we are looking at the potential and hoping that we can find a way to fund that position. He noted that two (2) years ago he presented a legitimate proposal to Council, but it was not accepted and no alternatives were provided.

Councilor Devine explained that she is not saying that we can't partner with others but we need a full-time employee to coordinate these efforts and to ensure that our needs are the focal point.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager said that staff realizes the need for a Grants Coordinator and is committed to finding an individual to handle that.

Councilor Finlay explained that Senator John Courson doesn't feel that the City of Columbia should have lobbyist. We are a state capital and we are going to have to pay more attention to that since Senator Kay Patterson is leaving. He asked if it is a conflict for Senator Courson to help us with finance issues.

- **Ms. Sinclair joined the meeting at 10:49 a.m.**

Ms. Teresa Wilson Florence, Director of Governmental Affairs and Community Relations stated that it would be helpful for her to understand who the members of Council have relationships with, who they feel comfortable going to and which issues are important to them.

Councilor Finlay noted that it is important to have coordination and to set priorities.

Councilor Devine requested that staff look at a system of communication that works for the entire Council.

Councilor Finlay urged his peers to commit to not asking other elected officials for things for the city without checking with the Director of Governmental Affairs first.
Councilor Finlay asked how much does Channel Two cost to operate.

Ms. Leshia Utsey, Director of Public Relations stated that the budget for Channel Two is merged into the overall Public Relations budget. She shifts money around because there is not a specific budget for this.

Councilor Rickenmann asked for the number of viewers for Channel Two.

Ms. Leshia Utsey, Director of Public Relations said that she has talked with Time Warner Cable in January to get this information and will follow up with them. Staff requested an assessment of Channel Two to determine what needs to be done to upgrade the quality of Channel Two programming.

Councilor Rickenmann wanted to know if there is way to provide closed captioning or to provide streaming videos. He is concerned about the Public Relations budget only increasing by \$1,800. He suggested that the city end the contract with the University of South Carolina for the use of the Koger Center during Richland School District One graduations and then use that money to fund Channel Two. That funding could then be used for Public Relations initiatives.

Councilor Devine directed staff to send a letter to Ms. Shirley Mills of the University of South Carolina regarding the fees being paid for the use of the Koger Center.

Councilor Cromartie recommended that staff talk with the City Attorney first.

Councilor Finlay noted that the city website and Channel Two are the most vital means of communication with the citizens of Columbia.

Ms. Leshia Utsey, Director of Public Relations added that there is a need for another staff person to help manage Channel Two. She has also contacted the host of the city's website to determine usage of the site.

Councilor Devine stated that Time Warner Cable may reconsider the assessment since you are showing more original programming. She asked that staff add a typed message on the screen to show which agenda item is being discussed.

- **Mayor Coble left the meeting at 11:25 a.m. and Mayor Pro-Tempore Tameika Isaac Devine is now presiding.**

Councilor Finlay noted that the organizational chart for the Office of Business Opportunities shows eight (8) people, but the budget is funding three (3) individuals.

Mr. Steve Gantt, Senior Assistant City Manager for Operations stated that five (5) positions are funded from the Water and Sewer Fund.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager stated that the Office of Business Opportunities will be restructured in the next 30 days.

Councilor Finlay asked for the total compensation for the positions funded from the Water and Sewer Fund.

Ms. Dana D. Turner, Assistant City Manager for Commerce and Development stated that the compensation is \$214,000.

Councilor Finlay noted that the total funding is \$650,000 for the Office of Business Opportunities and he asked if any funding came from other sources.

Mr. Tony Lawton, Director of Community Development stated that the Office of Business Opportunities earns revenue from its loan portfolio and from being equity partners in developments to come. He further explained that the Empowerment Zone has its own budget, but it has been merged with the Office of Business Opportunities and used to fund salaries and community efforts.

Councilor Finlay asked where that flows through and where does that show up.

Mr. Tony Lawton, Director of Community Development stated that they have Implementation Plans with a set dollar amount attached to them. They pay requisitions for each Implementation Plan and then draw down the funds.

Councilor Finlay asked where the line in and the line out is for each transaction. He asked what's coming in and what's being disbursed. He would like to see the lines being closed and flowing through. We need to know what our sources of revenue are and be able to understand the impacts of these federal funds so we can monitor changes in funding and adapt as needed.

Mr. Ken Gaines, City Attorney explained that he added one Assistant City Attorney position last year and will bring the salary information to Council on next Wednesday. He is currently advertising for an Assistant City Attorney for the Prosecuting Division.

Councilor Cromartie stated that there are not many African American male and female attorneys in the City's Legal Department. He insisted that the Legal Department reflect more of the population in this city.

Councilor Finlay said that he sat down with Mr. Ken Gaines, City Attorney on Friday, because he receives correspondence, phone calls and audio tapes from disgruntled employees. He is not comfortable receiving this communication but he has no ability to do anything until he gets further input. He said that he went to the Legal Department to see what the city is going to do. He asked that a whistle blower process be considered.

Councilor Cromartie suggested that Mr. Finlay refer such employees back to their supervisors, because Council members have no control over personnel.

Councilor Devine suggested that they add this matter to the executive session discussion, because we might need a policy.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager stated that copies of the statute were distributed. He asked what else could be done.

Councilor Devine asked if the Legal Department had budgeted for the implementation of the Disparity Study.

Mr. Ken Gaines, City Attorney stated that funding has not been allocated, because they were not sure of fees and projections for the implementation of the Disparity Study.

Councilor Devine asked if the City would be reimbursed for legal expenses if we were to win the hotel litigation.

Mr. Ken Gaines, City Attorney replied that he is unsure.

Mr. S. Allison Baker, Assistant City Manager for Public Services explained that General Services includes Fleet Services, Support Services, one million square feet of buildings, 56

buildings total and 10 support personnel in the building maintenance area.

Councilor Finlay noted that too frequently things are moved and it's hard to get a solid grasp on where things are coming from. He requested that staff tighten this down so it's clear where money is coming from and where it's going.

Councilor Sinclair asked Mr. Baker to explain what was cut from the budget.

Mr. S. Allison Baker, Assistant City Manager for Public Services stated that moving out of 1225 Laurel Street helped to save money. The city did improve the HVAC system first.

Councilor Finlay asked what service contractors are.

Mr. S. Allison Baker, Assistant City Manager for Public Services explained that service contractors are all outside contractors such as custodians and electricians.

Councilor Finlay asked about the \$51,000 expenditure on materials for new buildings and the \$300,000 expenditure on phones.

Mr. S. Allison Baker, Assistant City Manager for Public Services noted that the budget includes all electric expenses.

Mr. John Spade, Director of General Services explained that the telephones are budgeted by the fund and that voice mail is charged back to the department.

Councilor Sinclair asked if we are satisfied with the extra support we are paying for in the Solicitor's Office.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager explained that they met last year and were able to get things back on track. He feels that it is worth the investment, there is a distinction between what is civil and criminal and we clarified their level of authority.

Councilor Cromartie suggested that we use the Solicitor to brief residents on criminal activities.

Councilor Sinclair stated that someone at City Hall needs to make sure we are getting what we are asking for. She asked if the Columbia Police Department is getting the help they need from the Solicitor's Office.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager stated that he will ask Chief Carter to review this partnership after he gets situated.

Council Contingency Account

Councilor Rickenmann asked for a copy of the Council Contingency Fund, because he doesn't know what was spent last year.

Councilor Devine stated that they all needed to look at their expense accounts and decide what to pay from expense accounts and what to pay from the contingency account.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager suggested that they discuss how to fund economic development trips.

Councilor Finlay asked what happens when council expense accounts are not fully expended. He suggested that they look at a way to transfer funds to each other when needed.

Non-Departmental / Community Promotions

Councilor Rickenmann suggested that they use the current compensation and classification information we have before spending \$200,000 on another study.

Councilor Finlay suggested that they look at salaries over \$50,000 to see what was done over three (3) years, because some employees are underpaid. Look at the previous two (2) years of salaries to see how they are growing.

Councilor Rickenmann questioned the \$51,000 we pay to the River Alliance when the Parks and Recreation Department is doing all of the work.

Councilor Sinclair explained that the city created the River Alliance.

- **Mr. Finlay left the meeting at 12:34 p.m.**

Councilor Rickenmann asked what we decided to do about security cameras.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager stated that the consultant will prepare a report for us, but the key issue is deciding on the locations to place the cameras.

Councilor Devine stated that the cameras are for people to feel safe and comfortable. We have added more officers and we are addressing the gang issue, but this helps to accomplish more security.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager asked if the Council wanted to invest the \$147,000 grant in a Shot Spotter or invest it in the camera study.

Councilor Rickenmann stated that having cameras in police cars is more important. Where are we going to get the bigger bang for our buck?

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager stated that in the past, they tried to invest in cameras that would feed into patrol cars, but the consultant did not come through with what we needed. It is worth discussing.

Councilor Sinclair asked where the people would be that are watching the cameras.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager explained that Officers will either be in patrol cars, at the 911 dispatch center or the basement of 1225 Lady Street will be set up as a command center using Homeland Security personnel to monitor the cameras.

Councilor Rickenmann suggested that they put the money into things we know we can achieve, noting that we cannot achieve the cameras.

Councilor Devine noted that there is already \$300,000 allocated for cameras.

Councilor Rickenmann suggested that they put the \$50,000 towards the gang initiative or somewhere else.

- **Council recessed at 1:09 p.m.**
- **Council reconvened at 3:13 p.m. Mr. Finlay was present at this time.**

3. Homelessness – Ms. Dana Turner, Assistant City Manager for Commerce and Development

Ms. Dana Turner, Assistant City Manager for Commerce and Development explained that the Winter shelter budget is approximately \$600,000, but the full amount is not budgeted.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager, explained that staff will continue to explore the budget as is to see what possibilities there might be for reallocating some resources, but he is not sure where that is at this juncture.

Councilor Devine asked if the City Manager is continuing to look for funding or is he looking for City Council to make the decision.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager stated that we need to engage the Council in some decisions, because these are your priorities. He noted that staff would not delete any priorities that the Council has identified.

Councilor Sinclair is frustrated, because only six (6) vacant positions were reallocated when there are more vacant positions that should be reallocated. She reminded the Council that they discussed an Office of Sustainability and that the Homeless Shelter is under funded.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager recommended that the money from the six (6) vacancies be used to fund the homeless shelter. We need to find some common ground to make decisions on how we fund areas where we are falling short.

Councilor Sinclair stated that she would not declare this a balanced budget when it does not address full funding for the homeless shelter, disparity study, jail and other elements that we committed to do.

Councilor Finlay suggested that they start with what we went through at the Retreat relating to our basic goals and then group them as top priorities and work through them.

Councilor Devine suggested that the Council freeze vacancies to fund the implementation of the gang assessment recommendations and the results of the energy audit.

Councilor Rickenmann asked how many vacancies did we have last year and if we used all the money that was budgeted for vacant positions.

Mr. Jacques Gilliam, Director of Human Resources stated that there are 285 vacancies citywide, but it fluctuates. We have fewer vacancies now than we have ever had.

Mayor Coble stated that the business community is briefing him on a secret initiative that may cost the city money but will get us out of providing homeless services.

Councilor Sinclair added that the Salvation Army will be purchased and turned into the infamous one stop shop.

Councilor Rickenmann noted that the group overseeing this project has included the neighborhoods, but they are conducting their business before the residents get there; therefore, they are not involving everyone.

Mayor Coble stated that they need political help, but they have not briefed City Council, because we may need to vote on funding or zoning matters.

Councilor Rickenmann suggested that Council budget for the homeless shelter so we are prepared to take care of our responsibilities.

Councilor Sinclair stated that if this group pulls it off there won't be a shelter this winter.

Councilor Devine asked about the Housing First initiative.

Ms. Dana Turner, Assistant City Manager for Commerce and Development stated that the Housing First initiative will be funded through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

Mayor Coble added that \$400,000 is needed for the detention center and he believes that steps can be taken to reduce the numbers.

Councilor Devine stated that there are twenty (20) Criminal Domestic Violence (CDV) cases per week.

Councilor Cromartie requested the numbers on the crimes and how many nights the offender remained at the Detention Center.

4. Administrative Services – Ms. Gladys Brown, Assistant City Manager for Administrative Services

Mr. Jacques Gilliam, Director of Human Resources feels certain that there are some positions we can reallocate. He is going to look for \$1 million as directed by the City Manager. He noted that some departments and divisions have ongoing vacancies.

Councilor Devine asked if Training Administration is working to identify training opportunities by departments.

Mr. Jacques Gilliam, Director of Human Resources stated that the standard is to bring all the people to one training session.

Mr. Vincent Simonowicz, Director of Information Technology stated that the mission of IT is to provide efficient, cost effective services that are human data related to all city departments and divisions. They have 28 full time employees and 5 part-time employees and a budget of \$2,808,512. An IT assessment was completed along with an extensive reorganization plan and an asset inventory. He described the vulnerabilities of the city caused by a lot of people attempting to attack the computer system.

▪ **Mr. Finlay left the meeting at 4:41 p.m.**

Councilor Devine asked if we can have security and still allow our citizens to access information and communicate with us.

Mr. Vincent Simonowicz, Director of Information Technology explained that they met with Richland County to discuss the Lidar Flights and to talk about the real GIS issues. We asked for and offered to be full partners if they give us the information we need with full use. He stated that the data from the Lidar flights is being analyzed.

Mr. Tony Westmoreland, Geographical Information Systems Coordinator, stated that Richland County wanted to charge the city \$800 for each tile.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager explained that we did not want to rent or lease their tiles for viewing only, so we decided not to do this.

Mr. Tony Westmoreland, Geographical Information Systems Coordinator noted that Richland County charges the schools a rental fee on their data as well.

Councilor Rickenmann stated that it's a policy issue in which we should use our partners.

Mr. Vincent Simonowicz, Director of Information Technology stated that we now have a resource to sell to Richland County, because they are due for a flight now.

Mayor Coble directed staff to put the request into a memo form so this can be done in a cooperative fashion with Richland County.

- **Council adjourned the meeting at 5:19 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Salley
City Clerk