

**CITY OF COLUMBIA
WORK SESSION MINUTES
FEBRUARY 10, 2010 – 9:00 A.M.
CITY HALL - 1737 MAIN STREET
2nd Floor – COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM**



The Columbia City Council conducted a Work Session on Wednesday, February 10, 2010 in the City Hall Conference Room located at 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Robert D. Coble called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m. and the following members of Council were present: The Honorable E.W. Cromartie, II, The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann and The Honorable Kirkman Finlay III. The Honorable Belinda F. Gergel arrived at 9:14 a.m. The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine arrived at 9:30 a.m. Also present were Mr. Steven A. Gantt, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Salley, City Clerk.

**Mr. Cromartie recognized Police Officers Erskine Moody and Rickey Scleis-Hooyman for quickly apprehending the suspect that had broken into the back wall of his store over the weekend.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

1. Fuel Cell Collaborative Update – Mr. Neil McLean, EngenuitySC

Upon a motion made by Mr. Rickenmann and seconded by Mayor Coble, Council voted unanimously to approve funding in the amount of \$120,000 from the Economic Development Special Projects Account for the annual support of hydrogen fuel cell development in Columbia.

2. Audit Update – Mr. S. Allison Baker, Senior Assistant City Manager

Mr. S. Allison Baker, Senior Assistant City Manager reported that a meeting was held with the auditing firm as it relates to the Columbia Empowerment Zone. He asked that the matter be discussed further in Executive Session.

- **Dr. Gergel joined the meeting at 9:14 a.m.**

3. Jackie Breland & Associates Contract Extension – Mr. Steven A. Gantt, City Manager

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Dr. Gergel, Council voted unanimously to approve a contract extension for Jackie Breland & Associates in the amount of \$22,600.

4. Council is asked to approve the appointment of Ms. Ryan Nevius to the Climate Protection Action Committee, as requested by The Honorable Belinda F. Gergel.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Cromartie and seconded by Dr. Gergel, Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Ms. Ryan Nevius to the Climate Protection Action Committee.

RESOLUTIONS

5. Resolution No.: R-2010 - 010 - Supporting a Joint Resolution of the Richland County Council, Lexington County Council and the City of Columbia Regarding the Development of a Midlands Regional Sustainability Plan

Upon a motion made by Dr. Gergel and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2010 - 010 - Supporting a Joint Resolution of the Richland County Council, Lexington County Council and the City of Columbia Regarding the Development of a Midlands Regional Sustainability Plan.

OTHER MATTERS

6. Welcome to the City of Columbia Finance Department's Web Page – Mr. Steven A. Gantt, City Manager

Mr. Steven A. Gantt, City Manager explained that the Finance Department's Web Page can be accessed from the City of Columbia's website at www.columbiasc.net by clicking on "Departments" and then the link to the "Finance Department".

Mayor Coble added that there is a link on the bottom right hand side of the City's homepage entitled "View the City's Financial Reports".

- **Ms. Devine joined the meeting at 9:30 a.m.**

7. Council is asked to approve a Contract for a Third Party Administrator for the Employee Dental Benefits, as requested by the Employee Insurance Committee. Award to Delta Dental of Missouri in an annual amount not to exceed \$52,000.00.
Funding Source: 6028931-636600

Upon a motion made by Mr. Cromartie and seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve a Contract for a Third Party Administrator for the Employee Dental Benefits, as requested by the Employee Insurance Committee. Award to Delta Dental of Missouri in an annual amount not to exceed \$52,000.00.

Councilor Davis asked if there were qualified dentists that specialize in serving people with disabilities.

Councilor Rickenmann said that we have a true network now; we didn't have a network before, we had contracts here and there with dentists. We had someone review our claims and more specialists are included in the network.

Councilor Davis asked that they continue to monitor that since we have parents with special needs children.

Councilor Rickenmann stated that Delta Dentist has made a commitment to negotiate with dentists outside of the network, if needed. He said that 90% of our population is in the Midlands and it is a nationwide program in case something happens to you outside of the area.

Mr. Steven A. Gantt, City Manager said that his dentist is outside of the present network and when he gets a cleaning it costs him \$98 and now I won't have to pay anything, because he will be a part of the Delta Dental network.

Councilor Rickenmann said that the changes are effective March 1, 2010.

Councilor Devine said that she learned that the State and the Municipal Association will be charging a surcharge for smokers. We need to consider that.

Councilor Rickenmann said that the Employee Insurance Committee will be bringing forth that recommendation and others to the Council in April. They would like for Council to give them feedback in order to formulate those kinds of options. We have a free smoking cessation class now. Smaller towns like Florence are testing people and if you don't pass the test, you are penalized.

Councilor Devine added that Florence charges \$50 per month and the Municipal Association and the State will be charging \$25 per month. The fee is waived if you participate in the Smoking Cessation Program. If you lie about not smoking and you fail the test, then they penalize you and assess the back fees. They also discussed the fact that Mount Pleasant conducted an audit of dependents and found that 10% of the dependents they were paying coverage for were ineligible. That saved them \$350,000 per year. They didn't find any fraud, but there were cases where dependents were living with the other parent or were no longer in college.

Councilor Rickenmann said that the Committee is also developing recommendations as it relates to new employees and future retirees in order for us to sustain a quality program.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion made by Mr. Cromartie and seconded by Mr. Finlay, Council voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 10:00 a.m. for the discussion of **Items 8.** through **10.** as amended. Mr. Davis was not present for the vote.

8. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements
 - New Light Beulah Baptist Church
 - **Lobbyists
 - **City Manager's Contract

These items were discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.

9. Receipt of legal advice as it relates to matters covered by attorney-client privilege
 - **Columbia Empowerment Zone Audit

This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.

10. **Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct - *This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.*

- **Mayor Coble left the Executive Session at 11:30 a.m.**
- **Mr. Davis left the meeting at 11:52 a.m.**
- **Mayor Coble returned to the Executive Session at 12:06 p.m.**

***Amendment to the Agenda*

- **Council adjourned the Executive Session at 1:03 p.m.**

RESOLUTIONS

11. Resolution No.: R-2010 - 004 – Authorizing the Mayor to execute an Employment Contract between the City of Columbia and Steven A. Gantt

Upon a motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Finlay, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2010 - 004 – Authorizing the Mayor to execute an Employment Contract between the City of Columbia and Steven A. Gantt.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 1:04 p.m. for the discussion of **Item 12**.

12. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements
 - ****Mast General Store, Inc.**

This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken. Mayor Coble abstained from discussing this item due to a conflict of interest.

- **Council adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Salley
City Clerk