

**CITY OF COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
JANUARY 8, 2013 – 2:00 P.M.
EAU CLAIRE TOWN HALL
3905 ENSOR AVENUE**



The Columbia City Council met for a Work Session on Tuesday, January 8, 2012 at the Eau Claire Town Hall located at 3905 Ensor Avenue, Columbia South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 2:12 p.m. The following members of Council were present: The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Leona K. Plaugh, The Honorable Brian DeQuincey Newman, The Honorable Cameron A. Runyan and The Honorable Moe Baddourah. The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine was absent. Also present were Mr. Steven A. Gantt, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

1. [Update from the Columbia Museum of Art](#) – Ms. Karen Brosius, Executive Director

Mr. Luther Battiste, III, Columbia Museum of Art Board Member said that he is proud of two projects completed during his tenure as a councilmember: one being the Eau Claire Town Hall/ Print Building and relocating the Museum of Art from Senate Street to Main Street. He has enjoyed having the First Thursdays and the ice skating rink downtown. He stated that Karen Brosius is a winner and it is a great time to be at the Columbia Museum of Art. He recognized the board members and supporters that were in attendance.

Ms. Karen Brosius, Executive Director of the Columbia Museum of Art reported on the economic impact of the organization. She said that the arts are good for the vibrancy of our city and businesses. Due to increased programming and the booking of world class exhibitions, the museum's operating budget has grown steadily and the expenditures in the local economy have been growing in tandem. She reported that tourism is on the rise; attendance is on the rise; and cultural tourists spend more money on lodging and restaurants than any other tourist demographic. Most importantly, the city receives a \$16 return on investment for every dollar allocated to the CMA. The CMA supports 370 local jobs, which is up from 160 in 2005. She stated that in their current planning and building upon high weekend and evening visitation, they are now focusing on weekdays as the next opportunity to increase.

Councilor Davis thanked Ms. Brosius for the report on the museum's economic impact. He would like to see similar information from other organizations.

Mayor Benjamin said as we continue to invest in the economy and having a strong vibrant urban core it's not lost on any of us that the Art Museum is the crown jewel. He said that people who are in charge of the cultural community in other parts of the country are aware of Ms. Brosius and the Columbia Art Museum.

2. [Urban Land Institute Advisory Services Panel](#) – Mr. Fred Delk, Columbia Development Corporation Director

Mr. Fred Delk, Columbia Development Corporation Director said that the Urban Land Institute has come forward as the single group that's best with helping cities and towns find their way through hard issues. He said that Mr. Calvin Gladney is a developer from Washington, DC who the institute uses to help communities like ours; he is coming to Columbia next month and we will have an opportunity to work with him. He reported that all over the world communities have received assistance from the Urban Land Institute and they have a 75% success rate in the implementation of projects. He noted that a few years ago Columbia and the State of South Carolina created a district council of the Urban Land Institute. He recalled that one year ago the Congaree Coalition sponsored a technical assistance panel and the group came up with ways to connect Main Street to the Vista. The Congaree Coalition identified things such as the lack of coordination of development; problems with marketing and way finding; bringing our city together; and the need for our organizations to create a collective plan and vision. The Urban Land Institute will evaluate the areas of Five Points to the Historic Warehouse District, to the river including the University of South Carolina, downtown, the Riverfront, and the Convention District.

Mr. Richard Burts, Five Points Association said that Columbia was first designed with beautifully wide boulevards and now it has become one of our biggest challenges, because pedestrians don't feel comfortable with cars driving by and the islands propose a challenge. He said that by bringing the panel coming to Columbia they hope to create ways to bridge these islands and to pull all these groups together as a stronger city center.

Ms. Heather Foley, Executive Director of the South Carolina District Council Urban Land Institute (ULI) said that ULI is a mission driven organization founded 76 years ago on the belief that the world would benefit from developing leadership and responsible use of land in order to create sustaining and vibrant communities. The ULI provides technical assistance in 15 South Carolina communities and since 1949, they produced over 600 panels across the world and helped find creative and practical solutions to some of the most challenging issues facing urban, suburban and rural communities. She stated that next month, eight experts from around the country are coming to Columbia to initiate critical conversations with key stakeholders and to provide timely and candid solutions.

Mr. Ric Luber, President and CEO of the Midlands Authority for Conventions Sports and Tourism reported that they bring approximately four million visitors to this community each year and one of the top challenges is connectivity. He said that if you bring people here, but they can't get from one place to another then they go home with their dollars in their pockets. He said that we have an opportunity to be one of the next great cities in this country. He asked the members of Council for their time by pairing up with panel members and sharing their ideas on where this community can go over the next ten to twenty years. There will be a public meeting to allow community members to discuss their recommendations. The panel will complete the study, provide an initial report and present a final report after six weeks.

Councilor Plough asked if there was discussion about including Bull Street, because we have the challenge of connecting that development with everything else.

Mr. Fred Delk, Columbia Development Corporation Director said that Bull Street will be a part of the discussion and the study. He noted that the Bull Street developers were originally a part of the group and chose to rescind their sponsorship.

Councilor Davis inquired about the concept of Smart Scapes. He said that Columbia's major corridors tend to stop at the steps of the State House. He sought feedback on making the best use of land and the real concept of redevelopment. He said that seamlessness makes people understand that there is investment in and commitment to the whole.

Councilor Newman recalled conversations that he had with Fred Delk about ULI and other opportunities for downtown Columbia to ensure that we have these seamless areas where people can move about the city. He reiterated the importance of Council's interaction with the panel. He asked that the itinerary be circulated as soon as possible.

3. City of Columbia NxLevel Micro Entrepreneur Course in partnership with Benedict College Small Business Development Center – Ms. Tina N. Herbert, Executive Director of the Office of Business Opportunities

Mr. Angelo McBride, Office of Business Opportunities recalled that in 2005, they partnered with Midlands Technical College to launch the Fast Trac Program, which trained small business owners on developing their businesses from the ground up at a cost of \$895 per participant. He announced the NxLevel Micro Entrepreneur partnership with the Benedict College Small Business Development Center, which has the same model, but will only cost \$84 per participant. He invited the members of Council to participate in the launching of the program on Saturday, January 26, 2013 at 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. He said that up to 20 small businesses will be better prepared for entrepreneurship after this 12-week program.

Councilor Plaugh inquired about the reduction in cost for the program.

Mr. Angelo McBride, Office of Business Opportunities explained that the Kauffman Foundation is another sponsor of the NxLevel program and they saw the value in reducing the cost in order to get businesses to participate. Also, Benedict College has the staff on board that can teach the modules.

Councilor Davis asked if this program is for existing and new start-up businesses.

Mr. Angelo McBride, Office of Business Opportunities said the focus is on three groups: those who are ready to start; those that don't know where to start; and existing businesses that have been in operation for up to three years.

4. Update on Water and Sewer Rates – Ms. Melissa Gentry, P.E., Assistant City Manager – *This item was withdrawn from the agenda.*

5. [Renaissance Foundation](#) – The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

Mayor Benjamin said that Council discussed this several months ago during the discussion of hospitality tax appropriations. He referenced Richland County's letter indicating their support of the effort. He explained that it's a financing mechanism that Robert Lewis put together to help secure tax credits to renovate the property at Sumter and Taylor Streets. He said that it's a new and different way of us doing things; it would be us guaranteeing a portion of the lease. He stated that it's an incredible opportunity that's being leveraged nationally in cultural tourism and particularly, African American cultural tourism. He noted that it is Mr. Luber's belief that if properly done, the Renaissance facility could become the number one tourist destination in the city. He supports the effort and Council will need to bring it up later for formal action.

Councilor Newman agreed wholeheartedly. He said that Matt Kennel is on the Renaissance Foundation's Board and completing this project would help to complete the corridor, it goes along with the development on Main Street and it will increase activity.

Mr. Matt Kennel, President and CEO of the City Center Partnership and a Board Member for the Renaissance Foundation said that it could be a significant attraction for the community. He stated that it was designed and built by the first African American architect in the country; it's notable in its own right. He noted that several studies have identified a need for such a facility in this community. He said that the simple guarantee being requested will take this project to the next level. He asked the members of Council to support it.

Councilor Plaugh inquired about the size of the facility.

Mr. Matt Kennel, President and CEO of the City Center Partnership said that it would be a 500 seat facility; there is significant demand; and it fits a niche that we don't have in the community.

Councilor Plaugh inquired about the dollar amount being set aside.

Councilor Newman said \$50,000 per year for seven years.

Mayor Benjamin said the funding would be committed, but set aside and used only when necessary.

Mr. Matt Kennel, President and CEO of the City Center Partnership clarified that it's there to secure the financing.

Councilor Plaugh said that the concept is that the revenue coming in from the facility would be able to cover the costs. She asked the City Attorney if there was anything they needed to be cognizant of from a legal standpoint.

Mr. Kenneth E. Gaines, Esq., City Attorney offered to respond in executive session.

Councilor Baddourah inquired about the length of the project.

Councilor Plaugh asked about the operational side of the budget.

Mr. Matt Kennell, President and CEO of the City Center Partnership said that if the tax credits are received, the center would open to the public in two years. He stated that Ric Luber has assisted with a plan for operations based on his experience.

Councilor Plaugh asked if there is expectation that Council will continue funding the operating side from the hospitality tax.

Mr. Matt Kennell, President and CEO of the City Center Partnership said that the receipt of hospitality tax funding isn't built into the plan.

Councilor Baddourah asked if the hospitality tax money pays for operations.

Mayor Benjamin said no.

Councilor Davis said that a strong marketing strategy will help take care of that.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session at 3:02 p.m. for the discussion of **Items 6** through **8** as outlined.

6. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements - *This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.*
 7. Receipt of legal advice which relates to a matter covered by attorney-client privilege - *This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.*
 8. Discussion of negotiations incident to the proposed sale of property - *This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.*
- **Council adjourned the Work Session at 4:20 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Moore
City Clerk



CITY OF COLUMBIA
DISTRICT III EVENING MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2013
6:00 P.M.
AC MOORE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
333 ETIWAN AVENUE

The Columbia City Council conducted a District III Evening Meeting on Tuesday, January 8, 2013 at AC Moore Elementary School located at 333 Etiwan Avenue, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. The following members of Council were present: The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Leona K. Plough, The Honorable Brian DeQuincey Newman, The Honorable Cameron A. Runyan, and The Honorable Moe Baddourah. The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine was absent. Also present were Mr. Steven A. Gantt, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

Chaplain Byron Powers, Columbia Police Department offered the invocation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted unanimously to approve the adoption of the agenda as amended to add Item 10b, the consideration of Hospitality Tax Contingency Funding for the Renaissance Foundation, as a continuation from the Work Session agenda.

PUBLIC INPUT RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

No one appeared at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Work Session Meeting Minutes of December [4](#), 2012; Meeting Minutes of December [18](#), 2012; and Special Called Meeting Minutes of December [27](#), 2012 – *Approved as presented.*

Upon a motion made by Ms. Plough and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted unanimously to approve the Work Session Meeting Minutes of December 4, 2012; Meeting Minutes of December 18, 2012; and Special Called Meeting Minutes of December 27, 2012.

PRESENTATIONS

2. Welcome Address – The Honorable Moe Baddourah, District III Representative

Councilor Baddourah welcomed everyone to the District III Evening Meeting. He said that he is honored to be a representative of this district. He picked this location, because it's in the middle of District III, which starts at USC's campus and runs to Atlas Road.

3. Greetings from AC Moore Elementary School – Dr. Chantelle Baker, Principal

Dr. Chantelle Baker, Principal of AC Moore Elementary School welcomed everyone to the school. She said that the school is represented by students from fourteen (14) different countries. In addition to being culturally diverse, the school has a strong focus on the arts to include arts infused curriculum, strings, ballet, modern dance, visual arts, chorus and other opportunities that are made available through an Arts and Basic Curriculum Grant and a Distinguished Arts Program Grant. AC Moore is the first school in Richland District One to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and they are committed to laying a strong foundation for academic success.

4. Greetings from the Hollywood-Rosehill Neighborhood Association – Ms. Georgianna Graham, President

Ms. Georgianna Graham, President of Hollywood-Rosehill Neighborhood Association welcomed everyone to the Hollywood Rosehill Neighborhood. She said that they are one of Columbia's oldest neighborhoods and they will be celebrating their centennial in 2014. She distributed publications for the History and Walking Tour, which is sponsored by the Historic Columbia Foundation and the Homes for the Holidays Tour, which is sponsored jointly with the Shandon Neighborhood Council. She reported that they raise \$10,000, which is shared between the two (2) neighborhoods and four (4) schools serving the neighborhoods. She said that the center of the neighborhood is Hollywood Park, which is a gathering place for families and neighborhood events. They are the recipient of a small grant from Columbia Green and will be doing additional planting in the park in partnership with the City of Columbia Parks and Recreation Department.

5. [Recognition of the 1st Quarter Business Spotlight Honoree \(Andy's Deli\)](#) – Mr. Ryan Coleman, Business Liaison for the Office of Economic Development

Mr. Ryan Coleman, Business Liaison for the Office of Economic Development introduced Mr. Andy Shlon, Owner of Andy's Deli as the 1st Quarter Business Spotlight Program Honoree for 2013. Andy's Deli opened in 1978 and serves as a local icon, it's a destination for families and students, and it remains a cornerstone for Five Points.

Mr. Andy Schwan, Owner of Andy's Deli thanked everyone for the recognition. He hopes to continue to do good things in the City of Columbia.

Councilor Baddourah said that Andy is like a father to him and he is an institution in Columbia. He thanked Mr. Schwan for all that he does in the City of Columbia and for being his friend.

Mayor Benjamin and the members of Council proclaimed the 1st Quarter of 2013 as Andy's Deli Quarter in the City of Columbia.

Mr. Ryan Coleman, Business Liaison for the Office of Economic Development invited everyone to join him at Andy's Deli for lunch tomorrow.

6. Recognition of City Roots – The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin

Mayor Benjamin stated that City Roots has been a real community building effort; it's a great business model; it improves the quality of life; and it has given us international recognition.

Mr. Eric McClam, City Roots Farm Manager announced that City Roots received the Green America's People & Planet Green Business Award. City Roots was one of three businesses to be recognized nationally as the top energy and sustainably efficient businesses. City Roots received a \$5,000 grant to further its energy and sustainability projects. He said that they hope to expand the farm and work with the city to find other sites. He thanked the City of Columbia for their support.

7. Update from the City of Columbia Animal Services Division – Ms. Marli Drum, Superintendent

Ms. Marli Drum, Superintendent of Animal Services thanked Mr. Baddourah for taking the initiative to acquire a puppy from the Animal Shelter for an elderly citizen who lost her pet. She reported that in fiscal year 2008/2009, Animal Services took in 13,895 animals, but over time they've seen good change. This past year they took in 11,770 as a result of a very aggressive spay/neuter program. The Animal Mission provided free spay/neuter vouchers for our city and county residents for the past seven (7) years. She believes that the numbers will drastically decrease over the next three (3) years. Over a year ago, Animal Services formed a partnership with Pawmetto Lifeline called Help Every Animal Reach Tomorrow (HEART). The Animal Shelter also partners with 147 rescue organizations in 21 states. These partnerships have resulted in a 41% increase in our live release rates. Through a \$20,500 grant from Pet Smart Charities, Animal Services will focus on a specific area of town where they are experiencing an increase in intakes. This will be used as a pilot program and additional grants are being sought for the expansion of the program.

Mayor Benjamin said that he wants to continue what we're doing and be as aggressive as we can in towards becoming a no kill community and lowering the amount of pets euthanized. He said that this can be done by expanding existing efforts to spay, neuter and license pets and in conjunction with the partnerships. He wants to find out how we can aggressively resource the operations of Animal Services and find ways to have a

community focus on spaying and neutering while stressing the importance of all available options. He asked Ms. Drum to be clear about what she needs from City Council and how we can engage the community to ensure that we are all in this together.

8. Update on the Storm Drainage Pilot Program within District III – Ms. Melissa Gentry, P.E., Assistant City Manager

Ms. Dana Higgins, City Engineer reported on the Shandon Neighborhood low impact development (LID) green infrastructure approach to handling flooding and storm water issues. The LID approach is restoring storm water to the natural hydrology, avoiding structures such as piping and catch basins and using more permeable pavements, bioretention areas, bump outs, infiltration chambers and modular storage. She outlined the following: they are completing the design portion; construction plans should be done in February 2013; advertisements for bids will go out in March; Council will be asked for approval on April 16th; a notice to proceed will be issued to the contractor in June; and a five-month construction period is anticipated. Upon completion the plantings will be done as part of the LID design. The project will be on Wilmot Avenue, Maple Street and Amherst Avenue in the amount of \$913,000. Staff will bid an alternate for Wheat Street in the amount of \$400,000. With a 10% contingency the project will cost \$1.326 million. Additionally, Cox and Dinkins received a notice to proceed in December to look at improving downstream restrictions and working in conjunction with the low impact development. She said that Cox and Dinkins is currently looking at models and an update is not available at this time.

Councilor Baddourah said that this is a huge concern for everybody that lives in this neighborhood and he wanted to let them know that we are doing all we can to resolve this problem.

Mayor Benjamin asked Ms. Huggins to keep the Council informed, because this project has so much incredible promise.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

9. Council is asked to approve an [extension of the contract](#) between Bright-Myers and the City of Columbia for the Assembly Street property for an additional one hundred eighty days (180). - *Approved*

Councilor Plough thought they talked about a cost being associated with the extension.

Mr. Steven A. Gantt, City Manager said that the language will be added to the contract.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Baddourah and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted unanimously to approve the extension of the contract between Bright-Myers and the City of Columbia for the Assembly Street property for an additional one hundred eighty days (180).

10. Council is asked to approve an [extension of the contract](#) between Magic Ice USA, Inc. and the City of Columbia for the management and operation of the Ice Skating Rink located at Boyd Plaza through January 27, 2013. – *Approved*

Mayor Benjamin announced that we've had over 13,000 skaters at the ice skating rink.

Ms. Alexandra Chauhan said that her family has enjoyed the ice skating rink tremendously. She is from Poland and thinks it's a great idea to have a little winter in the hot city of Columbia. They have brought friends to and made friends at the ice skating rink. She presented letters from children expressing their gratitude and their request for an extension of the rink for this month and bringing it back next year, if possible. She introduced her sons Sonjeev and Benjamin. – [Kids Support Letters](#)

Master Sonjeev Chauhan read the following: *“Dear City Council and Mayor please keep the ice skating rink open. My friends and I enjoy ice skating a lot. Ice skating is really fun, it makes more money for the city, it's neat that it's outside. So please, please, please keep the ice skating rink open. Thank you for having it this year. I hope we can have it next year.”*

Master Benjamin Chauhan read the following: *“Dear City Council and Mayor please keep the ice skating rink open. Here are some reasons why: it is very fun, anyone can do it and it is quite close. Usually, me and my friends come every Friday. Please keep it open. I really liked it this year.”*

Mayor Benjamin jokingly disagreed with Benjamin. He said not everyone can do it; you obviously didn't see the Mayor out there.

Councilor Plough asked staff to share the numbers, impact and source of funding used to support this initial effort.

Mr. Jeff Caton, Director of Parks and Recreation thanked Council and all of the departments that came together to make the ice skating rink successful. He reported the generation of total revenues in the amount of \$119,699 with 13,804 skaters. He reported that hospitality tax funds were utilized as the funding source. The majority of the customers came from within a 50-mile radius and the Conventions and Visitors Bureau estimated that there was a \$198,778 economic impact on hospitality related businesses.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to approve the extension of the contract between Magic Ice USA, Inc. and the City of Columbia for the management and operation of the Ice Skating Rink located at Boyd Plaza through January 27, 2013.

- 10a. Council is asked to approve the [conclusion of City Manager Steven A. Gantt's employment](#) with the City of Columbia as its City Manager. - *Approved*

The following sentiments were openly expressed to Mr. Steven A. Gantt:

Mayor Benjamin: *In the 2 ½ years that I've had the opportunity to serve as Mayor of this great city, the relationship that I've built with this genuinely good man has been great and it has been a blessing to me and I look forward to continuing that. It's rare when you can have that kind of relationship with someone in which sometimes you're in charge and sometimes you're being quiet and learning a lesson. But, it has become a great symbiotic relationship and I'm thankful to Steve Gantt.*

Councilor Baddourah: *I just want to add on to exactly what the Mayor said; it has been a pleasure. I know it hasn't been a long time since you and I started working together officially, but you have a lot of respect at City Hall; not only from this Council, but from every employee, the department heads that you work with. I don't want to say that it's a loss, but it has been a pleasure with you serving the City of Columbia as its City Manager. Not only that being our friend and taking care of business. For that, we thank you and we wish you good luck.*

Councilor Plough: *It is a sad day, but it's a happy day for him in many ways. He has been a guiding light the whole time he has been at the city. I happened to have the opportunity to hire him many years ago. That was one of the best hires that I ever did. It has been a joy to work with him in any capacity and I think he is well respected throughout this community, both by the staff he has supervised and by the businesses and the residents of this whole city. I want to stand up and say thank you!*

Councilor Davis: *I've had a good time working with Steve. One thing I do like is his follow up and there was never any question regarding requests or when you bring things to his attention. A lot of it had to do with this city process, services and those things that we know municipalities are expected to do; good or bad. There are areas that I am particularly interested in and I can obviously tell you that you've made a difference and you left the city better off than it was before you came. I know there are people who rely on our services and respect our decisions that would say the same thing about you. I think that feeling is mutual throughout the city. Good luck to you!*

Councilor Runyan: *I just want to very briefly say thank you as well. I know that we have not had a long time to get to know each other, but those of you who know me my two favorite words in the English language are how and why. I have thrown those pair of words at Mr. Gantt more times than I can remember and his breadth and depth of knowledge is just amazing and his great ability to teach. My great lament is that I won't have years to learn from you, but I thank you for the time that you've given me and I appreciate all the work that you've done for the city.*

Mr. Allison Baker, Senior Assistant City Manager: *On behalf of the staff who has worked with Steve for twelve or thirteen years, I'd like to thank him for allowing us to make a difference as individuals and guiding us through our level of trust and your level of confidence. We appreciate it. All of us love you and truly will miss you being around. I would have been remised if I had not come and had somebody to say something from a staff perspective.*

Councilor Newman: *Mr. Gantt, I will keep my comments brief as I know you appreciate how I normally do that. I do personally want to thank you for helping me with the transition, being that I am heading into 2 ½ years on Council. I distinctly recall coming to City Hall the day after I was sworn in to the surprise that I did not have an office at City Hall; Mr. Gantt made me aware of that. Nonetheless, I appreciate you taking time and directing staff to help me coordinate all of this. As you can imagine being a 27 year old first year private attorney and trying to balance that and having clients and everybody from every neighborhood calling my cell phone 24/7, it was a great deal to manage. I appreciate you helping provide that structure and helping ensure that my constituents were served to the utmost. I reluctantly and actually sadly in this bittersweet moment, move that we approve the conclusion of City Manager Steve Gantt's employment with the City of Columbia.*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to approve the conclusion of City Manager Steven A. Gantt's employment with the City of Columbia as its City Manager.

Mr. Steven A. Gantt: *Thank you. It has been a pleasure. I really enjoyed my twelve years with you.*

10b. Renaissance Foundation Hospitality Tax Funding - *Approved*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to approve reserving \$50,000.00 per year for seven (7) years beginning this fiscal year through fiscal year 2018/2019 in the Local Hospitality Tax Revenue Fund Balance for a contingency arrangement so the Renaissance Foundation may take advantage of Historic Tax Credits to complete the restoration and transformation of Historic Bethel Church into a cultural arts center. These funds are contingent upon availability through Columbia's annual budget process. The funds are not eligible to be drawn down for any purpose except in the case where the Renaissance Foundation should fail to meet its debt service obligations and require the issuance of the funds provided in this motion. The Renaissance Foundation shall provide a letter of request and a current balance sheet demonstrating the necessity of the funds. Approval is also contingent upon the Renaissance Foundation obtaining a new market tax credits loan. This commitment is restricted to payments on behalf of the Renaissance Foundation only.

Mayor Benjamin directed the City Attorney to draft the documents as directed.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilor Plaugh noted that **Item 11** took advantage of our local business preference program, which allows a local vendor that comes within 5% of the lowest bid to match the low bid. This keeps the money circulating in the Columbia area.

Upon a single motion made by Mr. Runyan and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted unanimously to approve the **Consent Agenda Items 11** through **14**.

CONSIDERATION OF BIDS, AGREEMENTS and CHANGE ORDERS

11. Council is asked to approve the [Purchase of Two \(2\) Tandem Dump Trucks](#), as requested by the Street Division. Award to Shealy's Truck Center, Inc., under the Local Business Enterprise Program in the amount of \$265,541.24. This vendor is located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: Streets Storm Drains/Auto, Trucks, Heavy Equip-Capital; 5534203-658500 – Approved*
12. Council is asked to approve [Capital Improvement Project CM1038](#); Phase I Renovation of the Roofing and Installation of new Heating Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) Units at the Bellfield / Booker Washington Heights Cultural Art Center, as requested by Utilities and Engineering. Award to MAR Construction, the lowest, responsive and responsible bidder in the amount of \$447,000.00. This vendor is located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: PY 2010 Community Development Block Grant Entitlement Funding – **Note:** The original budgeted amount for this project is \$410,000.00 – Approved*

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

13. [Ordinance No.: 2012-110](#) – Granting an encroachment to Pearlz Oyster Bar for installation and maintenance of a landing, step and railing in the right of way area of the 1100 block of Park Street adjacent to its building at 936 Gervais Street – *First reading approval was given on December 18, 2012. - Approved on second reading.*
14. [Ordinance No.: 2012-112](#) – Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Lease Renewal Agreement between the City of Columbia and TN Development Corporation for lease of a portion of the second floor of the building located at 1225 Lady Street – *First reading approval was given on December 18, 2012 – Approved on second reading.*

ORDINANCES – FIRST READING

15. [Ordinance No.: 2013-014](#) – Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Lease Renewal Agreement between the City of Columbia and the United States House of Representatives for lease of a portion of the second floor of the building located at 1225 Lady Street – *Approved on first reading.*

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Newman, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2013-014 – Authorizing the City Manager to execute a Lease Renewal Agreement between the City of Columbia and the United States House of Representatives for lease of a portion of the second floor of the building located at 1225 Lady Street.

16. [Ordinance No.: 2013-016](#) – Authorizing the City Manager to execute an Amended and Restated Agreement of Sale and Purchase between the City of Columbia and Baker and Baker Real Estate Developers, LLC for the sale of Parcel "A" containing approximately 27,664 square feet (0.64 acre) and Parcel "B" containing approximately 25,444 (0.58 acre) square feet located on the eastern side of Gist Street between Laurel Street and Blanding Street and known as Richland County TMS No.: 09005-02-44 and 09005-02-23– *Approved on first reading.*

Councilor Plough explained that City Council passed a policy a couple of years ago where if we decide to sell a parcel, we are able to negotiate with the adjacent property owner before we put it on the open market and that's what we've done in this case. She said that we can also adjust the sales price below the fair market appraised value if there is some justified economic development job generation opportunity that can come from selling this parcel. She noted that we are doing that in both instances in compliance with the policy.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Runyan, Council voted unanimously to give first reading approval to Ordinance No.: 2013-016 – Authorizing the City Manager to execute an Amended and Restated Agreement of Sale and Purchase between the City of Columbia and Baker and Baker Real Estate Developers, LLC for the sale of Parcel "A" containing approximately 27,664 square feet (0.64 acre) and Parcel "B" containing approximately 25,444 (0.58 acre) square feet located on the eastern side of Gist Street between Laurel Street and Blanding Street and known as Richland County TMS No.: 09005-02-44 and 09005-02-23.

RESOLUTIONS

17. [Resolution No.: R-2013-007](#) – Authorizing the Mayor to execute an Employment Contract between the City of Columbia and Teresa Wilson – *Approved by a vote of four (4) to two (2).*

Councilor Plough sought clarification of the contract for the public.

Mr. Kenneth E. Gaines, Esq., City Attorney explained that at the last special called meeting, City Council made a conditional offer of employment to Ms. Wilson to be City Manager subject to the parties negotiating a mutually satisfactory employment contract. He stated that Ms. Wilson has accepted that offer and the terms of her contract are as follows: she will be employed as City Manager commencing on January 8, 2013; her duties are described by state law and she will serve other functions and duties as Council

may assign from time to time; Ms. Wilson, as City Manager will work for City Council and all city employees will be under her umbrella; her base salary will be \$190,000; she'll receive full city employee benefits; she'll have use of the city vehicle consistent with our Fleet Services Management Policy; there is no term on the contract; she serves at the pleasure of Council and can be removed by a majority vote of Council subject to some other provisions in the contract; if she is removed for any reason other than malfeasance, which includes refusal to enforce or administer the duties of the office or criminal conduct which renders her unfit to perform the duties of City Manager; upon acceptable release she will receive severance pay equivalent to one year of her salary at the time of termination plus any accrued sick or annual leave that would be payable to any other city employee under our handbook. He explained that under state law, City Managers have a right to request a hearing if they are terminated. If she accepts the payment of the severance, by this contract she waves that right to a hearing. As with most contracts, if the parties seek to amend or modify it, they can do it in writing.

Mayor Benjamin stated that it became clear to them when they first advertised the position that in comparison to other cities, particularly the ones that attract the best talent, our City Manager was underpaid. We looked at the comparable salaries for a number of our peer cities to include Augusta, GA; Charlotte, NC; Coral Springs, FL; Greensboro, NC; Greenville, SC; Raleigh, NC; Savannah, GA; Tallahassee, FL; and Wilmington, NC. He said that he consulted with experts at the third largest labor law firm in the country and the assessment was that a good place to land would be below the median and average salary of our peer cities. He further explained that the county recently had gone through its negotiation with Tony McDonald and came up with a salary that was almost exactly what we've offered to the new City Manager; \$181,000 with a \$9,000 automobile allowance. This does not include an automobile allowance. And that's how we landed at \$190,000. The average salary of the city managers in the comparison is \$193,690 and the median is \$190,575.

Councilor Baddourah thanked the Mayor for clarifying the salary. He said that Mr. Gantt had more experience in terms of years and was paid less. He doesn't see how they justify paying Ms. Wilson more money for a lot less years of experience. I don't think I can support this contract.

Mayor Benjamin expressed the need to clarify a matter that was reported in The State Newspaper today. He clarified that that the minimum qualifications in the first announcement called for a Bachelor's Degree, but a Master's Degree was preferred in Public or Business Administration or a closely related field. It also called for a minimum of ten (10) years of work experience as a county or city manager. He said that no one in this room meets those qualifications and as a result, they received six or seven applications in a nationwide search. Council then decided to broaden the field to what we could potentially receive applicants from. As a result, we decided to broaden it again and as a result we wound up with two dozen applications as opposed to the handful that we first received. It's so important to make sure that you ask the right questions then you get the right answers. Some of this chatter can be reckless when we're at a very strong and positive moment in the city's history.

Councilor Davis agreed with Mayor Benjamin. He said that he's had two conversations regarding those very points. He said that it is important that it be put out there and fully explained so that there's no room for misinterpretations or misunderstandings. I have no problems with it. I concur. I was a part of the process.

Councilor Plough said that we are moving on as a city; we are trying to move collectively and as best we can. She said there is indeed some disagreement. She stated that the issue revolves around whether or not you count education as experience. She said that has been the pattern of the city in the past and that's what makes the qualification count. She wanted everybody to understand that while they might disagree on the candidate in terms of the level of experience; the way in which we count qualifications has been fairly uniform. She said that you include both work experience and education when looking at an application.

Mayor Benjamin said that it's very important to be clear. He said that very clear statements were made by Ms. Plough last month that were not factual. He said that it may be a matter of opinion, but we are moving forward into a positive time and it's important that we all be very positive. He also said that Ms. Plough and Mr. Baddourah have made comments that he takes strong exception to. He said that the article in The State Newspaper suggested that there were some changes made to benefit any or all candidates. He made it crystal clear that no one in this room would meet those qualifications; that's just a fact. He said that is the reason why the full Council elected to change them.

Councilor Newman thanked Ms. Wilson for her work with the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA) and the Community Development Department, which has improved tremendously. He agrees with the median salary, because we needed to be competitive and put our city in the best position to move forward effectively and efficiently in order to grow to be the kind of city that we want to be. He said that he wholeheartedly supports this and looks forward to this new era in the City of Columbia.

Mayor Benjamin recognized the community leaders that were in attendance along with the family of Ms. Teresa Wilson.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Runyan and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted four (4) to two (2) to approve Resolution No.: R-2013-007 – Authorizing the Mayor to execute an Employment Contract between the City of Columbia and Teresa Wilson. Voting aye were Mr. Davis, Mr. Newman, Mr. Runyan and Mayor Benjamin. Voting nay were Ms. Plough and Mr. Baddourah.

Upon a single motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Mr. Baddourah, Council voted unanimously to approve **Items 18, 19 and 20**.

18. [Resolution No.: R-2013-001](#) – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine only at the "St. Pat's in Five Points Festival" - *Approved*

19. [Resolution No.: R-2013-003](#) – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine within Boyd Plaza adjacent to the Columbia Museum of Art for Arts and Draughts - *Approved*
20. [Resolution No.: R-2013-004](#) – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine within Boyd Plaza adjacent to the Columbia Museum of Art for the Contemporaries Oyster Roast – *Approved*

APPOINTMENTS

21. [Transportation Penny Oversight Committee](#)
Council is asked to approve the appointment of three (3) individuals

Councilor Baddourah nominated Charles Parnell, Ed Tilden and Todd Avant as appointees to the Transportation Penny Oversight Committee.

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Mr. Runyan, Council voted five (5) to one (1) to approve the appointment of Todd Avant, Franklin Trevor Bowers and Virginia Sanders to the Transportation Penny Oversight Committee. Voting aye were Mr. Davis, Ms. Plough, Mr. Newman, Mr. Runyan and Mayor Benjamin. Mr. Baddourah voted nay.

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports were given at this time.

APPEARANCE OF THE PUBLIC

No one appeared at this time.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Newman and seconded by Mr. Runyan, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Moore
City Clerk