

**CITY OF COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION MINUTES  
APRIL 30, 2013 – 1:00 P.M.  
PARKING SERVICES CONFERENCE ROOM  
820 WASHINGTON STREET**



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The Columbia City Council met for a Work Session on Tuesday, April 30, 2013 at the Parking Services Conference Room located at 820 Washington Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. The following members of Council were present: The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine, The Honorable Leona K. Plaugh, The Honorable Brian DeQuincey Newman, The Honorable Cameron A. Runyan and The Honorable Moe Baddourah. Also present were Ms. Teresa B. Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

**CITY COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP**

1. Fiscal Year 2013 / 2014 Proposed Budget

- Direction for Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. (CEZ)

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager explained that CEZ, Inc. would like to be treated as a component unit of the city.

Councilor Devine inquired about the budget for CEZ, Inc.

Ms. Felicia Maloney, Executive Director for CEZ, Inc. explained that they operate with a \$200,000 budget that includes two (2) salaries and the CEZ, Inc. covers all other costs.

Judge Mildred McDuffie, CEZ, Inc. Board Member encouraged the city to support the CEZ, Inc., because they want to be a total part of the City of Columbia.

Mr. Henry Hopkins, CEZ, Inc. Board Member expressed his support of the request. He emphasized the need for collective marketing.

Councilor Davis recalled that the CEZ works well with the Eau Claire Development Corporation (ECDC) and they recently held a joint board meeting. He added that the CEZ doesn't only focus on North Columbia. He suggested that they merge with ECDC to create a wider span of involvement.

Mr. Kenneth E. Gaines, Esq., City Attorney advised Council that he will need to look into the liabilities associated with the request.

Councilor Plaugh inquired about the funding source.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said it would be from the Water and Sewer Fund.

Mayor Benjamin clarified that \$60,000 will be added. He asked the City Attorney and the Chief Financial Officer to take the proper steps to effectuate including the CEZ, Inc. as a component unit of the city.

Councilor Plough stated that funding for Development Corporations is up \$27,000 in the Water and Sewer Fund; we are spending over \$1 million; and we are spending \$2.4 million on all economic development opportunities. She asked for an economy of scale. She respectfully declined her support.

Mayor Benjamin stated that it would be helpful to have measured outcomes for the component units.

Councilor Plough proposed that staff or consultants calculate what a franchise fee might look like and suggested that we would transfer that amount from the Water and Sewer Fund to the General Fund.

Councilor Devine asked what East Richland pays in franchise fees to Richland County for sewer.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Devine and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted five (5) to two (2) to recognize the Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. as a component unit; to direct staff to identify thresholds that need to be met; and to provide deliverables for all component units. Voting aye were Mr. Davis, Ms. Devine, Mr. Newman, Mr. Runyan and Mayor Benjamin. Voting nay were Ms. Plough and Mr. Baddourah.

Councilor Devine requested quarterly reports on all deliverables.

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to refer a review of policies and matters related to the Board of Zoning Appeals approval of exemptions to the zoning ordinance to the Administrative Policy Committee.

Mayor Benjamin asked that all options be explored to have neighborhood representation involved.

- Security Cameras

Mr. Ruben Santiago, Acting Police Chief presented the following two (2) options for security cameras to be installed by Statewide Security, Inc. He reported that cameras significantly reduce crime statistics. He said the cameras can be relocated and the communities can use slogans to create awareness.

- Option 1: twenty-five (25) intersections with 200 cameras to include 12 parks costing \$298,000 or \$3,900 a month.

- Option 2: Fifty (50) intersections with 400 cameras to include 24 parks costing \$598,000 or \$7,900 a month.

Councilor Runyan stated that it's important to have a visibility aspect.

Mr. Ruben Santiago, Acting Police Chief added that cameras will be placed strategically as not to violate privacy.

Councilor Baddourah asked how many cameras are located in the hospitality districts and at the I-77 extension.

Mr. Ruben Santiago, Acting Police Chief outlined their goal to create a spider web effect around the city. He noted that most cameras are in the hospitality district.

Councilor Plough asked for a list of the parks.

Mr. Leslie Wiser, Deputy Police Chief advised Council that it will be a coordinated effort to avoid duplication; choke points were identified to cover egress and ingress.

Mayor Benjamin asked if a Request for Proposals (RFP) is required.

Mr. Kenneth E. Gaines, Esq., City Attorney said it would be a competitive bid process.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager added that they are looking at using seizure and hospitality funds as a possible funding source.

Councilor Devine asked if there is homeland security grants that could help cover the costs.

Mayor Benjamin emphasized the need to prioritize camera locations and asked that the RFP process be started.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager advised Council that they have added \$100,000 as a line item in the Hospitality Tax budget for the purchase and installation of cameras; staff will bring back other funding options to include grant dollars; and we will determine how much we can do during Fiscal Year 2013/2014.

Mayor Benjamin asked if Statewide Security, Inc. can quickly deploy the cameras.

Mr. Leslie Wiser, Deputy Police Chief replied yes.

Upon a motion made by Mayor Benjamin and seconded by Mr. Runyan, Council voted unanimously to move forward expeditiously with the 2<sup>nd</sup> option in an amount up to \$700,000 (\$598,000 for set up and \$7,900 monthly) over twelve (12) to twenty-four (24) months and to charge staff with determining the priorities while deferring to the leadership of the Columbia Police Department.

- Water & Sewer Fund and Capital Projects

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget Director reported that the operating budget for the Water and Sewer Fund is \$128,208,385 with a \$4.25 million transfer to the General Fund.

- Parking Fund

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget Director reported that the operating budget for the Parking Fund is \$7,206,850.

Councilor Devine added that the Vista Guild has ideas on how to get people parking in garages to include signage.

Mayor Benjamin said the least business friendly thing we do is parking enforcement; we have an aggressive ticketing policy. He inquired about the status of the pilot parking program.

Councilor Baddourah inquired about the parking garage in Five Points.

Councilor Runyan contemplated the tradeoff for leasing versus selling retail space.

Mr. John Spade, Parking Services Director said they use those funds for other projects.

- General Fund Follow Up – Proposed Fees

*Ordinance 2013 – 059 – Hazardous materials for registration permits and cost recovery and Ordinance 2013-060 – Fire Code permit and conformance inspection fees*

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget Director outlined three (3) proposed fee increases for Parks and Recreation rentals and athletics; fire hazardous materials; and fire code permit and conformance inspections.

Councilor Devine asked if there would be a charge for repeat inspections.

Mr. Aubrey Jenkins, Fire Chief explained that the first annual inspection would be free, but there will be a charge for repeat inspections for conformance. He said that over 50% of buildings require re-inspections.

Councilor Baddourah said this will be hard for businesses to understand. He noted that DHEC does not charge for re-inspections.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager added that staff has to consider the types of violations.

Mayor Benjamin emphasized the need to focus on the larger issue of public safety. He asked his fellow members of Council not to pass Ordinance No.: 2013-060.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager directed the Fire Chief to have an open dialog with the Economic and Community Development Chair and the Chamber of Commerce in order to develop a business friendly plan.

Mr. Aubrey Jenkins, Fire Chief noted that Ordinance No: 2013-059 was modeled after Richland County's ordinance.

Mayor Benjamin stated that we need to make sure we avoid confusion and make the ordinance easy to understand. He asked that it be reviewed by Mr. Davis and the Chamber to make sure they aren't being charged by both Richland County and the City for registration permit fees.

#### *Ordinance 2013-046*

Mayor Benjamin advised the public that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will be presented on May 7, 2013.

Councilor Devine said deliverables are needed from the River Alliance going forward and asked Mr. Newman to introduce this to the board.

Councilor Newman said it would be an odd time to reduce funding and he agreed with the River Alliance producing deliverables.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager agreed to bring this back to Council as an agenda item for \$25,000, noting that we need to determine a funding source for \$50,000 going forward.

Mayor Benjamin said we are at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour in delivering on the eastern portion of the Greenway; we need to find a way to make it happen.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager added that the River Alliance needs to understand that they are not being funded based on the 2005 agreement.

Councilor Devine concurred; we need to clarify what our expectations are.

- Fire/Police/911 Salaries

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget Director outlined the budgetary impact of the Fire Department, Police Department, and 911's 3.33% pay increases. She reported that the proposed pay increase for the Fire Department is included in the fiscal year 2013/2014 proposed budget.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager asked if the increase is retroactive to January for the Fire Department only.

Mr. Jeff Palen, Chief Financial Officer said if we implement it all in January we would be able to fund it for all three (3) public safety departments without impacting the budget as presented today.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said we would be using money from vacancies to fund the 3.33% increase for the Fire Department, upgrades and a compensation and classification study.

Mayor Benjamin suggested that the increases be staggered with the Fire Department in the first quarter and the Police Department and 911 Communications following. He suggested that all budgets be reduced by 1% to fund the 3% increases.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager stated that we will implement the Fire Department increases now.

Mayor Benjamin asked that this be communicated to staff.

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager advised Council that she will be presenting a novel look at the budget approach on May 7, 2013 for the next fiscal year.

Ms. Melisa Caughman, Budget Director sought Council's direction to advertise the budget as is or to advertise it for June 4, 2013.

- Operations/Resources for requested new services or programs

#### *Busted Plug*

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager advised Council that staff is currently considering the use of hospitality funds for this project.

#### *Recycling Program*

Mr. Robert Anderson, Public Works Director reported that they are determining if end users will fund the cost of recycling containers, which would cost \$750,000.

Mayor Benjamin suggested that staff consider using a voluntary approach to pay for these.

- Council adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Moore  
City Clerk