



CITY OF COLUMBIA
WORK SESSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2013
2:00 P.M.
EDVENTURE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
211 GERVAIS STREET

The Columbia City Council conducted a Work Session on Tuesday, October 15, 2013 at Edventure Children's Museum, 211 Gervais Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Stephen K. Benjamin called the meeting to order at 2:18 p.m. and 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 Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

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

- Move the Police Benevolent Association Compensation Study to **Item 1**
- Waive attorney-client privilege on the discussion of the Palmetto Compress Warehouse and move to **Item 2**
- Move the Affordable Housing Taskforce Recommendations to **Item 3**
- Move the Employee Health Center Update to **Item 4**
- Move the Funding Requests from External Organizations to **Item 5**
- Waive attorney-client privilege on the discussion of the ongoing SLED investigation

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

1. [Police Benevolent Association Compensation Study](#) – Mr. Joseph John Czeladko, President of the City of Columbia Chapter of the Southern States Police Benevolent Association, Inc.

Officer Joseph Czeladko, President, MPO Ryan Medlock, Political Chair and Officer Kevin Rhinehart, Senior Vice President of the City of Columbia Chapter of the Southern States Police Benevolent Association, Inc. presented the Columbia Police Department and Personnel Comparison Study, which includes a review of budgets and starting salaries for peer cities.

There was an in-depth discussion among Council members and members of the Police Benevolent Association about retention, compression, take home vehicles, salaries/pay grades, training, incentives, retirement packages, the citywide compensation and classification study and other related matters.

2. [Palmetto Compress Warehouse](#) – Mr. Fred Delk, Executive Director of the Columbia Development Corporation – *Please refer to the regular meeting minutes Item 11a.*

Mr. Fred Delk, Executive Director of the Columbia Development Corporation (CDC) stated that the CDC is bringing forth a recommendation for a developer of the Palmetto Compress Warehouse Building. He explained that the CDC produced a Request for Proposals and evaluated the responses. On behalf of the CDC, he recommended that Council accept the proposal from Palmetto Compress Preservation Developers, LLC. He noted that the contract will be for \$5,750,000 in addition to the expenses incurred within the last six (6) months, which is \$100,000 more than the Corporation's purchase price of the building.

3. [Affordable Housing Taskforce Recommendations](#) – Ms. Deborah Livingston, Community Development Director – *Discussion of this item was deferred.*
4. Employee Health Center Update – Ms. Pamela Benjamin, Human Resources Director – *Discussion of this item was deferred.*
5. [Funding Requests from External Organizations](#) – *Please refer to **Item 33** in the regular meeting minutes.*

Mr. John Durst, Chair of the Hospitality Zone Taskforce recalled that Council adopted a recommendation for improved signage in and around Five Points. He requested that Council set aside \$20,000 to assist with the production of signs and other staff recommendations to include flashing LED lights to alert visitors that they are under surveillance while in Five Points.

Ms. Melissa Gentry, P.E., Assistant City Manager reported that staff is prepared to complete and install the signage without the requested funding. She suggested that the City could also purchase the LED lights, once the price is determined.

Mr. Ruben Santiago, Acting Police Chief said one priority in Five Points is to deal with violent crime and maximizing resources in those areas. He stated that they don't turn a blind eye to any violations of the law. They want officers to be concerned about people being robbed and assaulted or any other crime against the quality of life. He said there were 217 underage drinking violations last year and 147 year-to-date. He said Five Points is most occupied during festivals and football games. He reported that the canines are used to sniff out drugs and they assist with apprehension. He said the canines are visible 24/7, but they are mainly focused in the Vista, because it is not as congested. He said there is a roving patrol between the Vista and Five Points. He noted that there is a partnership with LRADAC, Irmo, Lexington, Cayce and West Columbia to address issues with bars through compliance checks. He said they also look for underage individuals being in places where they shouldn't be. He said they are involved with SLED's strategies. He explained that they are getting to know the doormen, bartenders and owners. He acknowledged that community policing relationships have helped.

6. Update on the SLED Investigation and Police Chief Search

Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager said she asked Chief Keel for the report that was submitted to the solicitor. She said that Chief Keel verified that he was not at liberty to release the report, because it goes to the appropriate agency for review and to consider if there is further action to be taken. She said that Chief Keel has been gracious and thorough; she appreciates what he has done.

Mayor Benjamin said Council anticipated launching the search for a police chief in July and no one anticipated waiting this long. He said we cannot affect that investigation, but we can control what we do on our side of the ledger.

There was an in-depth discussion among the members of Council to include moving forward with the search without a definitive answer from SLED; the process for completing the Solicitor's review of SLED's investigation; and the time needed to conduct the police chief search process.

- **Council recessed at 5:08 p.m.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

7. Receipt of legal advice which relates to matters covered by attorney-client privilege – *This item was discussed in Executive Session after the regular meeting. No action was taken.*
8. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements - *This item was discussed in Executive Session after the regular meeting. No action was taken.*

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Moore
City Clerk