

Council Work Session  
July 12, 2021

Mayor Womack called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He welcomed everyone. Councilman Dykes returned thanks for the meal. All members were present. The press was notified by email on July 9, 2021. The meeting was streamed on YouTube.

Mayor Womack announced that there would be a public hearing to discuss impact fees before the regular meeting. He then turned the meeting over to Mr. Holcombe to go over the agenda.

Agenda Items:

A. Impact Fees: There have been no changes since the first reading. He gave a brief overview of the ordinance. He explained that there is no impact on the parks and recreation from commercial construction.

Councilman Robinson asked if there was a category for streets and sanitation. Mr. Holcombe said that was in the transportation part.

Councilman Garrison asked Mr. Harmon if we would have to budget or bond the money that we are responsible for. Mr. Harmon stated we could do either one.

Councilman Dykes stated that we need to make sure we can uphold our end of the agreement.

Councilwoman Webb commented that this fee is based on law that was passed by the legislature and we are in compliance.

Mayor Womack commented that we didn't take this lightly. Councilwoman Webb's committee worked very hard on this and have educated us on it. She was asked to work on this before she was elected.

Councilwoman Webb stated that the company who did the study has done it for many cities. We have met with citizens, realtors, home builders, etc. It has been looked at and evaluated. The study looked at how it would affect the affordable housing market. There will be a reward for putting this fee out there.

Councilman Robinson asked City Attorney, Brian James if he had any concurred with what Councilwoman Webb said. Mr. James commented that he had researched it and believes we are on safe ground.

Councilman Robinson stated the he fully supports the concept of the impact fee. Commends Councilwoman Webb on what her committee did. He went over some of the aspects of the study concerning the building of parks, trails, new complex, new police and fire stations. Assumes the city is going to spend \$27million in road maintenance. Where is the city going to find another trail and acquire that property? Is this collecting the money and finding a way to spend it in a short amount of time.

Mayor Womack stated that if building slows down we will not have money coming in and we can't do those things. Council will have to go by the formula and our needs.

Councilwoman Webb commented that some of the things talked about were using the basement of the police department for a training center. Those are goals defined. Chief Littleton can tell us if they need another station, or more equipment. Do we buy land? That is unknown at this point. We will have to scramble for the money and keep on the right path. If it doesn't work, we have to give that money back. I want us to be a success with this.

B. Ordinance No. 2021-14 to annex certain pieces, parcels or lots of land lying and being in the State of South Carolina, County of Pickens, being shown and designated as tax map numbers 5038-05-19-3676 and 5039-17-10-2194; totaling 15.4+/- acres on Couch Lane and provide a zoning designation of FRD.

Mr. Holcombe briefly went over the ordinance. There have been no changes since the first reading. This was denied by the planning commission but passed first reading in June. Councilman Robinson recused himself discussion ordinance.

Councilman Garrison asked if there any recreation included in this project?

Mr. Holcombe stated there will be a pool and a work out area.

Councilman Garrison stated that he has had a lot of comments from citizens. They have asked why we can't work more closely with the county concerning the donut holes we have around the city. It is the state that prohibits municipalities from annexing properties in the county that are within the city limits.

Mr. Holcombe commented that there are several avenues for annexations. We only do annexations by request. Most of the annexations are so they can get utilities.

Mayor Womack stated that it is difficult especially with police and fire to educate people about the donut holes that are in the middle of the city.

C: Ordinance No. 2021-15: authorizing the sale of real property comprised of tax map #5019-15-74-0316 to Scout Realty Group, LLC for \$37,200.

Mr. Holcombe went over this ordinance. This ordinance was tabled at the last meeting. A developer wants to purchase these 3 acres to put 10 single family homes with an offer of \$37,200. This will be first reading.

Councilwoman Breazeale commented that this is the property that Devine Purpose Outreach also wants to buy.

Councilman Garrison ask for some background on this.

Mayor Womack commented that the pastor approached us first about using it as a cemetery. After a lengthy review on his side that was not possible. He now wants to build a church. We have not set down with him to hammer out the details.

Councilman Robinson asked if we had done an appraisal.

Mayor Womack stated that we had not.

Mr. Holcombe explained that we purchased this when we extended the Doodle Trail. We tore down several houses and it has been vacant since.

Councilman Moore wanted to know what size church they needed and would they have the income to support this project.

Councilwoman Breazeale stated that the church has had a plan for a while. They are currently renting the building they are in.

Brian James commented that if you have an offer for a fee, and you have a church you could be accused of favoring a religion.

Councilwoman Breazeale stated that this first started with a conversation with former City Administrator, Stephen Steese. It was decided that Council would have to decide. The pandemic is causing some problems that is why they are asking for 7 years.

Councilman Robinson asked if we have received a proposal from the church.

Councilwoman Breazeale commented that they have not presented anything yet they were waiting to see what Council did.

Councilwoman Webb stated that even if we don't have the agreement from Pastor Sutton, we are taking this trashy property and doing something with it. The developer wants to build \$160,000+ houses, the community can't afford that type of homes. The church has been very community oriented and it is a totally different concept.

Councilwoman Breazeale commented that the property is not being maintained by the City and the houses in the area are not that expensive. Once the church showed an interest a developer popped up. This is not a time and place for those 10 homes. Looking at what Ward 5 had about building the nursing home behind Burdine Springs. That is how she feels about that area. She has had people that applied for those affordable housing homes and have been denied. The worst thing you can do is take away the church for that community. It is the back bone of the community. We are elected to work together for the citizens.

D. Ordinance No. 2021-16: To rezone approximately 2.551 acres of real property located at the intersection of Liberty Drive and Old Liberty Road, Easley, South Carolina, 29640. Tax Map Numbers 5019-15-52-0660, 5019-15-52-1652, 5019-15-52-2615, 5019-15-52-2678, 5019-15-52-3713, 5019-15-52-3798, 5019-15-52- 0591 with a zoning designation of GR2.

Mr. Holcombe gave a brief overview. The developer has requested for rezoning from R10 to GR 2 it was one entire piece of property and it is now divided into 7 lots. They have decided to build duplexes instead of single-family residences. There will be one duplex on each lot. The Planning Commission did vote in favor of this. There was no discussion.

E. Ordinance No. 2021-17: To rezone approximately 21.81 acres of real property located at 1550 Brushy Creek Road, Easley, South Carolina, 29642. Tax Map Numbers 5037-05-09-3661, 5037-05-09-1711. 5037-05-09-3371 with a designation of GR2.

Mr. Holcombe went over the ordinance. This is 21.81 acres to be rezoned from FRD to GR 2. The original offer on the property fell through. This is a new developer. The Planning Commission approved this request. The new developer wants to go with multifamily.

Councilman Robinson commented that we have been told that FRD is good for the city and gives us more control with GR2 the developer could do whatever. The developer doesn't have to tell us what they plan to do.

Mr. Holcombe stated that the developer has looked at what has been going on around town and has decided to go with GR2.

Councilman Moore commented that we been pushing for FRD to control.

Councilwoman Webb stated that if Council approves then staff would handle the project.

Councilman Dykes asked if there would be green spaces and sidewalks, etc.

Councilman Moore asked if we would be responsible for the garbage pickup.

Mr. Holcombe stated that we don't pick up garbage on multifamily.

#### Project Updates Fire station 1

Chief Littleton stated that the fire station is progressing just not as fast as we want. Most of the living and office space is complete. Once fire and life safety are approved, they can occupy.

Councilman Moore commented that as chairman of the Fire Committee there has been so much changed and it looks wonderful. They are still working with all the work going on.

Council Meeting  
July 12, 2021  
Page 5

Mayor Womack commented that Brian James had sent out an email on moratoriums. It is not a good idea.

Mr. James commented that any kind of restraint on property has to be for limited duration.

Councilwoman Webb stated that it is not something that can be done lightly. Most people don't know what is involved with a moratorium.

Resolution No. 2021-18: to establish the fee schedule for residential garbage roll carts. Mr. Holcombe went over the resolution. In the original ordinance the fees for additional carts was not established. The first cart is free, the second is \$5.00 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> is \$10.00. The fees will be paid yearly. This is not ownership of the cart.

Mr. Fortner stated that the manufacture was behind and the carts are to be delivered sometime around July 26<sup>th</sup>.

There was no further discussion and the meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

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Butch Womack, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Lisa S. Chapman, CMC  
City Clerk

Council Meeting  
July 12, 2021

Mayor Womack called the public hearing for the Impact Fees to order at 7:00 p.m. He asked everyone to silence their phones. Each speaker will have three minutes.

Michael Day: He is the Vice President of the Home Builders Association. Their official position is they oppose the fees. The City is doing it correctly and gone the extra mile with the phase in. The homebuyers pay for them with higher home prices. New home buyers will pay a fee that a lot of homeowners did not pay for. Home builders are currently meeting a high demand for homes when there is no inventory for sale. Many homebuyers are already out priced on new homes. The average price for a new home is \$300,000 with the average income in Easley is \$68,000.

Chris Bailey: Representing the Greater Greenville Association of Realtors. Their position is opposed to impact fees. It will have a negative effect on housing. Thanked the City for going above and beyond to work with them.

No one else spoke on the impact fees.

Mayor Womack adjourned the Public Hearing and called the regular meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. All members were present. The press was notified by email on July 9th, 2021. Lisa Chapman, City Clerk served as the recording secretary.

Councilman Moore to give the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes from the June meeting were approved as written.

Report from Council:

Ward 1: Happy belated 4th of July. There has been a lot of good feedback for the July 4<sup>th</sup> event downtown. Hats off to all of our departments. Mayor Bagwell is getting better. Reminded all citizens that our comp plan is being updated. We are in the process of scheduling ward meetings for citizen input.

Ward 2: Had the opportunity to attend the 4th festivities it was a good event. All departments worked so well together. The weather was great. The fireworks were great. The comp plan is coming up. The last one we had was updated in 2003. Many of the important items were accomplished but some were not. Our challenge is to learn from what we did last time and improve.

Ward 3: Thanked all the city departments that worked on the 4<sup>th</sup> event. We had a great turn out. It was good to be out enjoying a festival. We are already into hurricane season. We have had 5 named storms. If you have a problem or think you might have a problem with flooding don't forget to protect your home with flood insurance.

Ward 4: Went to the July 4th festival, a great crowd showed up. The bands were great. Everyone seemed to have a great time.

Toured the new fire station, it is really great. They are still responding out of the old building with all the construction going on. We received a letter from Palmetto Plating about our fire department and the good work they did when they had a fire in their building.

Ward 5: Thanks to all that participated for the July 4<sup>th</sup> event. Residents of Ward 5 be on the lookout for our meeting concerning the comp plan.

Ward 6: Good to see Bucky Garrett here this evening.

Updates on city activities:

Mr. Holcombe thanked all the departments for working hand in hand. The July 4<sup>th</sup> was a big hit. All departments working hand in hand. The Farmers Market is open every Saturday from 8-12 in Old Market Square. On the 24<sup>th</sup> they are going to have Christmas in July with Santa, games, and fun for all.

Citizens wishing to address council:

Michel Propes: He lives in Middle Creek at Sheffield and Brushy Creek that area is really dark and it could use a street light.

Angela Dalton: She spoke in support Pastor Tim Sutton and Divine Purpose Outreach Church. He has always helped in the Shine Soup Kitchen and the Dream Center. He has a dream for what his outreach center can do.

Tim Sutton: Requested that council vote no on ordinance 2021-15 selling West 4<sup>th</sup> property to a developer. He would like for it to be sold to his church in order for them to continue to do outreach and ministry. The community has a need and they are trying to fill it. They have an adoptive grandparent program. They helped a lot during COVID to get PPE for residents that could not get out. They have a big thanksgiving dinner. A lot of the neighbors don't have family and we are their family. That community cannot afford housing at \$160,000. Please don't discredit this community.

Carolyn Graham: She is the Associate Pastor of Divine Purpose the city attorney stated that you did not have to bring the ordinance back up if it was table. If that is the case Divine Purpose could have been on the agenda tonight. Please support our representative, Councilwoman Breazeale and vote no on Ordinance 2021-15.

Mary Blandin: She is a lifelong resident of Easley. She is speaking in support of Divine Purpose Outreach and Pastor Tim Sutton. They are being God's hand and feet of the community. They served over 500 people last year with a Thanksgiving dinner. They fed local stores and the police department. They make sure the seniors have something to eat. Please vote no on ordinance 2021-15 and allow the church to continue to serve the community.

Sharon Reed: Asking Council to vote no on ordinance 2021-15 and sell to the church. She is a member and attends with her daughter who has special needs. They show love to her daughter and others in community with special needs. They have an event for people with special needs to make them feel welcome in Easley and at the church. They want them to know they have a church family that cares about them. They would like to continue this ministry with a larger event.

Annett Blake: Divine Purpose is a church that is always there for the community. She volunteers and offers classes, blood drives, etc. it would be nice to have a place to go. The community needs all kinds of help.

Bo Mahaffey: He is in full support of Pastor Sutton and his church. They consistently strive to support the community. He has witnessed what Tim has accomplished. He works tirelessly with youth, he mentors them and shows them how to be good citizens. Divine Purpose has a higher purpose other than economic gain. They need long term stability. They encourage growth in spirit and heart. As brothers and sisters in Christ I trust that you will do the right thing and vote no on this ordinance.

Doris Hagood: She is in support of Divine Purpose Outreach. Her son went to church there and got her involved. She has known Pastor Sutton for years. She has lived in Easley all her life. Happy Hollow used to be a good place to be, praising God, having fun, etc. Money is good but God's faith is the best. It is all about money. Money is not good if you don't have love. She took people on a bus to get registered to vote, then took them to vote. On June 10th they put their church in a parade at Clemson, it was a great success. We love Easley and want to keep being involved.

Lisa McAdams: She is against the annexation of Couch Lane and McAlister Road. She is ok with a development but not 214 apartments. Is it the right fit for our community? McAlister Road is two lanes, it can't handle the traffic. Cars are lined up a mile down the road at Forest Acres Elementary. At the last Planning Commission meeting Mr. DiPietro made a motion to deny this request. The Planning Commission has listened to our concerns and agreed with us. I am asking you to vote against this apartment complex. In the zoning ordinance revision #3 is to guide growth and land use throughout the city. Doesn't believe this is the right place maybe on a 4-lane road. #5 states a provision for safe traffic and a reduction of congestion. Be selective we don't have to take everything that comes our way.

Denise Davidson: We have been told if you oppose you need to show up. The Planning Commission is to prepare and recommend for adoption to the governing authority. There is a reason for the commission, they voted this down. The comprehensive plan is still viable, table this annexation until you can review and see if it is in line of the comp plan. Is it the developer's way or the regular people way? We are invested in this community and want to work with Council and the City. Pause, plan and then proceed.

Gloria Dunlap: In the Comp Plan done in 2003 it recognized we were losing our small-town feel. Under National Resources there are design guidelines stating that areas (5 acres per 100 lots) need to be maintained in their natural state when part of a larger development. It lists citizen committees that are to work with the city departments. She would like for these committees to be reactivated. She would like for specific guidelines to be on line for the public to see. Thinks the City needs to hold back on large developments.

Sue Petkus: She moved here from Illinois three years ago. Apologize to Mayor for email about litter. Heartbroken that people think they can through their trash out. Growth and development are threatening to overtake us. The comp plan has been mentioned and glad you are working to update it but you need to follow the one you have now. Collaborate with the residents. We need good ways to share comments and suggestions. What about coffee with a Councilman maybe at the farmers market. The Couch Lane project doesn't go with the neighborhood.

Christy Coffee: She is an Easley resident and is opposed to the sell of property to Scout Realty. It should be given to Divine Purpose. You do not know what you will get from a developer. We know what we are going to get with Divine Purpose. It is essential that they continue their work in the community. They follow a different model than other churches they do a day in and day out ministry. Meeting the needs of their congregation. You cannot put a price on that.

Rev. Artis Buford: He is opposed to sale of property to Scout Realty. He is in support to sale to Divine Purpose. If there is no vision and guide for growth it can be a burden. It should not be just for financial gain. Make an investment in the citizens of Easley. I would like for you to try and get \$140,000 for that property. Don't overrule Councilwoman Breazeale to get money. Vote no, don't play politics allow them to continue their work. It is about doing what is right.

Amber Lange: She lives in Ward 5 and has heard a lot of good things about Divine Purpose. Councilwoman Breazeale is their elected representative. She knows the needs of the community. Why would you vote against her? It is not just a place for new housing, it is a place where citizens of all races call home and our needs should be met. Please vote no for ordinance 2021-15.

Robin Bivens: She lives in Ward 1. Pastor Sutton currently mentors her son Preston. She has seen a big difference in him. Please vote against the ordinance. The Bible says where there is no vision the people perish.

Lawan Neely: She is a parent who has son in the Breakers program at GMS. Because of the mentorship program her son has developed into a good young man. Pastor Sutton teaches young people about how to be a good citizen, a good man, a man of good faith, your word is your bond. Vote against the ordinance. Listening to the heart beat of Easley here tonight. Devine Purpose is making a difference in people.

Daniel Blake: He has lived in Easley 30+ years and is the property manager at William Farr Apartments. Divine Purpose ministry came out during the pandemic to make sure everyone had food and groceries. They got their medicine for them. They have a purpose. They need this land to build a bigger church to reach more people.

Johnny Austin: He lives in Canaan Land since the 60's. There is a lagoon on one end and a trash dump on the other. They have had nothing to say about all of the building that has taken place around them like fire station #2, apartments, EMS, rescue squad, Habitat Housing, Mary's house. They heard it from the news media. There is an issue with traffic coming up Olive Street, you can't get out. Drivers are speeding, etc. Major problem leaving home. Traffic is backed up from Glenwood Rd passed the apartments. Can you make that area safer for our community? A developer is clearing land on Olive St. which is only going to make matters worse.

Old Business – Second Reading of Ordinances:

Ordinance No. 2021-13 Adopting procedures for the imposition, calculation, collection, expenditure and administration of impact fees. Councilman Moore made the motion to approve with a second from Councilwoman Breazeale.

Mayor Womack commented that we have went over these many times. We have really worked diligently to solve some of our problems.

Mr. Holcombe gave a brief explanation. There have been no changes since first reading.

Councilwoman Webb pointed out it is an agreement with the people that will be paying the fee, we will have to do our part. "There will be audits. We will have to perform. We will have to work with developers."

Councilman Garrison asked Mr. Holcombe to explain what happens after five years.

Mr. Holcombe commented that within five years we have to have projects started and following the guidelines or we have to revisit.

Councilman Dykes stated that in the revised Comp Plan an impact fee was proposed. This is not something new. It is needed.

Councilman Robinson thanked Councilwoman Webb and her committee for all the hard work on this project. He supports the basic concept of the fee. He reviewed the details of the study and it causes him to be concerned. We don't know where the City's money is going to come from. It seems like we are collecting the money and then finding a way to spend it. There was no further discussion. Councilman Dykes called for the question and the vote was 4-3 with Councilman Garrison, Councilman Robinson, and Councilwoman Breazeale voting no.

Ordinance No. 2021-14 to annex certain pieces, parcels or lots of land lying and being in the State of South Carolina, County of Pickens, being shown and designated as tax map numbers 5038-05-19-3676 and 5039-17-10-2194; totaling 15.4+/- acres on Couch Lane and provide a zoning designation of FRD. Councilman Garrison made the motion to approve with a second from Councilman Moore. Councilman Robinson recused himself due to a possible conflict of interest.

Mr. Holcombe went over the ordinance. There have been no changes since first reading.

Councilman Moore asked if there had been changes made since the Planning Commission denied the request.

Mr. Holcombe said there had been a few changes in the height of the buildings, and the plans were redone for 215 apartments with walking trails throughout the complex.

Councilman Garrison commented that this is in his ward and backs up to his street. He has talked to many neighbors about this and appreciates their input. He has struggled with this as well. It is not his ideal development. He has looked at it in every way. The property will be developed so it doesn't need to stay in the county.

Councilman Garrison called for the question and the motion passed 6-0. Mr. Robinson did not vote.

New Business – First reading of ordinances:

Ordinance No. 2021-15: authorizing the sale of real property comprised of tax map #5019-15-74-0316 to Scout Realty Group, LLC for \$37,200. Councilwoman Breazeale made the motion to bring to the floor for discussion with a second from Councilman Moore.

Councilman Moore stated that he walked the land and it is a small area for 10 houses. The area does not match what the developer wants to do. The church is a big part of the community. He can't in good faith vote for the sale. Pastor Sutton could do a lot of good work with a new church.

Councilwoman Webb commented that we are being asked to choose between two development plans. One plan is for houses which would be nice and the other is opportunity for a vibrant community church to continue its ministry. It would be within walking distance for many of its members. This church is a benefit to Ward 5 and the community. She will vote no and support Councilwoman Breazeale.

Councilwoman Breazeale stated that this has become a passion because the church is who we are. We live in that community and church is what we knew. Some of the houses are run down and not safe to live in. A developer will come in and they will not be sold, then they will be rentals. Sometimes the people don't care as long as they are getting the money.

Pastor Sutton can continue to do great things in the community and a new facility will help them shine. No on development.

Councilman Dykes commented that he thought Scout Realty Group was going to build affordable housing. He is now questioning the price for the housing on that small lot of land. The city bought the land thinking it would be used for affordable housing, some are and very nice but this is a different developer. It is unfair if they are going to sell at that price.

Councilman Robinson stated that when the issue first came to council, he looked at it from a monetary point of view. We do listen to you and hearing everyone this evening it has changed his mind. He is willing to vote not to sell to Scout Realty. There was no further discussion. Councilman Garrison called for the question and the ordinance was denied 0-7.

Ordinance No. 2021-16: To rezone approximately 2.551 acres of real property located at the intersection of Liberty Drive and Old Liberty Road, Easley, South Carolina, 29640. Tax Map Numbers 5019-15-52-0660, 5019-15-52-1652, 5019-15-52-2615, 5019-15-52-2678, 5019-15-52-3713, 5019-15-52-3798, 5019-15-52- 0591 with a zoning designation of GR2. Councilman Moore made the motion to approve with a second from Councilwoman Breazeale. Mr. Holcombe gave a brief explanation. The request is for rezoning from R10 to GR2. It was one piece of property and it has been divided into 7 lots. They decided to do duplexes instead of single-family residences. There will be one duplex on each lot. The Planning Commission did vote in favor of this.

The developer was in attendance and he stated that the units would be rentals. The rent will be between \$900-\$1000.

Councilman Robinson asked if this fit into the comp plan.

Mr. Holcombe stated that it calls for residential there. It was never meant to be commercial.

Councilman Garrison commented that the comp is a guideline. It does not designate zoning.

Councilman Garrison called for the question and the motion passed 6-1 with Councilman Moore voting no.

Ordinance No. 2021-17: To rezone approximately 21.81 acres of real property located at 1550 Brushy Creek Road, Easley, South Carolina, 29642. Tax Map Numbers 5037-05-09-3661, 5037-05-09-1711. 5037-05-09-3371 with a designation of GR2. Councilman Garrison made the motion to approve with a second from Councilwoman Webb. Mr. Holcombe gave a brief explanation. The original deal for this piece of property fell through. It had a zoning designation of FRD, but because of some issues with the land the owner asked to rezone GR2. The Planning Commission approved.

Councilman Dykes asked Mr. Holcombe to explain GR2. Mr. Holcombe briefly went over the zoning designation.

Councilman Garrison inquired about the pond on the property. Engineer with Daniel Gray Engineering stated it is an old farm pond and the plan is to remove it. The pond has some issues with trees growing along the bank. Working with DHEC to remove. They will be installing their own pond to the back of the property.

Councilman Moore asked if it was spring fed. The developer stated it is from street run off.

Councilman Robinson asked if any of it was wet lands. The developer said that they have approval to remove the pond and it is not wetlands.

Councilman Moore called for the question and the motion passed 6-1 with Councilman Garrison voting no.

New Resolutions:

Resolution No. 2021-18: to establish the fee schedule for residential garbage roll carts. Councilman Moore made the motion to approve with a second from Councilwoman Breazeale. Mr. Holcombe gave a brief explanation. In the previous ordinance there were no fees adopted for additional carts. The cost will be \$5 for the second cart and \$10 for the third cart. Fees are due yearly.

There was no discussion.

Councilwoman Webb called for the question and the motion passed 7-0.

Mayor called on Eddie Fortner, Director of Public Works for a brief update. They are still researching grass clippings and if there are any other options.

Councilman Moore made the motion to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

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Butch Womack, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Lisa S. Chapman, CMC  
City Clerk