

Special Called City Council Meeting Minutes
September 8th, 2021

Mayor Womack called the meeting to order at 7:35 a.m. Councilman Moore gave the invocation. Councilmen Robinson and Dykes were absent. The press was notified. Lisa Chapman City Clerk served as the recording secretary.

Resolution 2021-20: To designate an authorized representative and contact person for purposes of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Councilwoman Webb made the motion to approve with a second from Councilwoman Breazeale.

Mr. Harmon gave a brief explanation. This is authorizing representatives for the City to receive the ARPA funds when they become available.

Mayor Womack commented that some of the requirements was for us to open a special bank account for these funds. That has been completed and all the required information has been sent into the MASC. A committee has been formed that will oversee the spending of the money.

There was no further discussion. Councilman Moore called for the question and the motion passed 5-0. Councilmen Robin and Dykes were absent.

Resolution 2021-21: A resolution supporting the repeal of the Pickens County Road Maintenance Fee. Councilman Moore made the motion to approve with a second from Councilwoman Breazeale.

Mayor Womack explained the county is no longer charging the road maintenance fee. They are wanting to raise the millage to compensate for the lost revenue. They have started their process and the ordinance will take three readings. They are trying to get it pushed through before tax bills go out. This resolution is us supporting their efforts to improve the roads.

Councilwoman Webb stated that the county has not increased taxes in 14 years.

Councilman Garrison asked if we knew when the road money would be available to us.

Mayor Womack stated that instead of getting the money monthly it will probably come in lump sums during the first quarter of the year.

Councilman Garrison called for the question and the motion passed 5-0 with Councilmen Dykes and Robinson being absent.

Discussion of bond for Operations/Maintenance facility/Fire Station one, Parks and Rec. Mayor Womack commented that he wanted everyone to be up to date on the money for these projects. He turned the meeting over to Dennis Harmon.

Mr. Harmon asked Public Works Director, Eddie Fortner to give an update. The department is now operating out of the new building. There are a couple work orders for leaks. There was a sewer issue but it has been resolved. A shed needs to go over the wash station. It has been paid for but is back ordered,

Fire Chief Littleton gave an update on station one. The old part is now under construction. The new portion is being occupied with shift personnel and administrative personnel. A few punch list items are being done. They poured the pad for the 3rd truck bay. They are hoping to be completed by early December.

Recreation Director, Christman Short gave information about the rec's portion of the bond. Money was used to for the construction of the Nalley Brown Nature Park and the Doodle Trail early in the bond. The Doodle Trail extension came out of that bond. The flooring for the walking track in the gym and one court have been refinished out of the bond.

Mr. Harmon went over some of the financing. There were three sources of funding for \$12,990,200. There was \$9.7 million used on the Public Works and Fire Station facilities, and \$1.9 million in recreation funding.

The balance to complete the fire station by JDavis is \$801,000.

There is a reserve of money for the Brushy Creek Greenway.

During construction on both facilities it says GMP (Max price) that was part of the negotiation contract. There have been \$568,208 in change orders. They are all legitimate and were needed and will go to a complete and accurate project. It will show less funds for recreation projects. The fire station is now a renovation project and you never know what will be uncovered. There could be more change orders.

It was managed in a workmanlike process. The only thing is that City Council was not made aware of the changes. There is a potential to be over budget. We are trying to keep it in budget. The city is in adequate financial position to handle any over runs.

Councilman Garrison asked why Council was not notified?

Mr. Harmon said that a previous administration and he did not know. If he had been managing this project he would have advised and informed council more than on a monthly basis.

Councilman Garrison asked if there was an ordinance during this process for authorized spending.

Mr. Harman stated that these funds were appropriated initially, these are just change orders. There are no problems but it is eating into funds that were designed for other projects. The two buildings are magnificent buildings that will serve the City for many years.

Councilman Garrison asked about the time frame for completion and would the project be within budget?

Mr. Harmon stated that Chief Littleton had talked to the superintendent and we hope to be completed by December.

Mr. Holcombe commented that there is a meeting today at 2:30 with JDavis to go over the project.

Mayor Womack stated that two change orders have come up that no one approved. They were not given permission to make the changes. There is one change order that we paid for that was not our fault. It was a beam that was not correct.

Mr. Holcombe commented that in the future council would be notified at the work session of any changes and the cost.

Councilwoman Webb asked about the beam, was it not the right size, in the right location?

Chief Littleton explained that the beam was at the firepole. The ceiling joists were too low. It was a design error from DP3 that had to be fixed.

Mr. Holcombe stated that the change order was approved by the former city representative.

Mr. Harmon said there needs to be a discussion about who is responsible for certain cost. There are two that we are not comfortable approving until it is discussed with council. One is the epoxy coating for the floor in the bay for \$35,000. The other is a memorial wall that was verbally approved by the city and there are approximately \$8,000 in change orders to finish. From this point moving forward Council will be notified and get your approval before any change orders are approved.

Councilman Garrison commented that there is a potential that there could be a budget amendment based on how all of this plays out.

Mr. Harmon stated that there is a thin margin that we are working with and an amendment is possible.

Councilman Garrison asked what the procedure would be moving forward.

Mayor Womack commented that Council will see the numbers and meet to approve.

Mr. Harmon stated that he doesn't want anything to hold up the completion of the project. He would like to have approval for the two change orders. Council was given a list of every payment that has been made on all the projects.

Mayor Womack suggested that Councilmembers look at all the information and talk with Mr. Harmon about any of your concerns.

Councilman Moore asked what did he consider minor changes.

Mr. Harmon said that would be \$5000 or less.

Mr. Holcombe commented that the epoxy for the floor is not minor. They were given the directive to do these two by previous administration.

Councilman Garrison asked if those are now on hold.

Mr. Harmon commented that we are asking you to approve those two changes today.

Mr. Holcombe stated that the changes are eating into the recreation budgeted projects. The money has already been approved.

Councilmembers Garrison, Webb, and Breazeale all stated that they are not comfortable approving anything until they can look at all the information.

Mayor Womack commented that the recreation project is to finish the Brushy Creek Greenway. There is \$500,000 budgeted for that. This project started back in 2012 it is supposed to go from the complex to Pearson Road. It was done in wetlands and had to be taken out. Public Works staff has had to get permission from the property owners to complete. Justin Durrell, Deputy Director of Public Works has worked on this tirelessly to get it were it is today. Justin and Christman are working together to get a bid package together to put out to bid. We are hoping to get a bid that is within the \$500,000 budget.

Councilwoman Webb asked how are we with the Core of Engineers concerning the wetlands.

Justin commented that the trail has been realigned to bypass the wetlands. It caused us to go back to the property owners. We have provided the Core an update on a yearly basis. We have done everything they have asked. The wetland area has grown a little bit. The holdup was trying to get the property owners to agree to an easement. All the environmental work has been completed. The final plans are being reviewed and the bid package has been approved. Then we can look at what construction cost will look like. Material has gone up since originally planned.

Councilwoman Webb asked if we have easements or acquired property.

City Attorney, Brian James said it was done by right of way easements.

Justin stated that some property was acquired by deed. Covid slowed a lot down getting everyone together. There were some issues with Brushy Creek Church and the property that they own. It has all been worked out. There were some issues with the energy company with the power poles. They have signed a no conflict letter so we can proceed.

There was no further discussion.

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Councilman Garrison made the motion to adjourn at 8:15 a.m.

Mayor, Butch Womack

ATTEST:

Lisa S. Chapman, CMC
City Clerk