



MINUTES
CITY OF GOOSE CREEK, SOUTH CAROLINA
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2020 – 7:00 PM
CITY HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS
519 N GOOSE CREEK BOULEVARD

Mayor/Council Present:

Mayor Gregory S. Habib
Mayor Pro Tem Kevin Condon
Councilmember Debra Green-Fletcher
Councilmember Christopher Harmon
Councilmember Corey McClary
Councilmember Gayla McSwain

Executive Staff:

Interim City Administrator Tyler Howanyk
City Clerk Kelly J. Lovette
Public Information Officer Frank Johnson
Director of Economic Development Matt Brady
Police Chief LJ Roscoe
Interim Fire Chief Norm Cutshall

Press Present:

Harve Jacobs - Channel 5

Guests Present:

None

PURSUANT TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT SC CODE 30-4-80: WRITTEN NOTICE WAS DELIVERED TO THE PRESS BY EMAIL ON FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2020 AND DULY POSTED AT CITY HALL LOCATED AT 519 N GOOSE CREEK BOULEVARD, AN ACCESSIBLE FACILITY, AND ON CITYOFGOOSECREEK.COM

Mayor Habib called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and requested Pastor Rodney Richard of Northwood Church lead in the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS:

It was stated on the meeting Agenda to send all comments via email to the City Clerk. All comments were forwarded to City Council. There were no comments submitted by the general public.

MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF:

May 12, 2020 - Regular City Council Meeting

Motion: Councilmember Green-Fletcher; Second: Councilmember Harmon; Motion carried: All in favor.

PUBLIC HEARINGS, PRESENTATION & PROCLAMATION:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF GOOSE CREEK, SOUTH CAROLINA, PROVIDING FOR THE CREATION OF AN ELECTRIC UTILITY SYSTEM; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO (Introduction & First Reading)

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Condon; Second: Councilmember Tekac; Motion carried: All in favor.

AN ORDINANCE PURSUANT TO SECTION 5-3-150(3) OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED, TO ANNEX PROPERTIES IDENTIFIED AS TMS # 223-00-00-033, # 223-00-00-034, AND # 223-00-00-035 INTO THE CITY OF GOOSE CREEK AND ESTABLISH A ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS THEREFOR; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO (Introduction & First Reading)

Mayor Habib stated the property being proposed for annexation is part of the Century Aluminum property, parcels B, C and D (approximately 621 acres) and it is the property that essentially runs halfway down Old Mt. Holly Road and then from Old Mt. Holly Road up to Highway 17A on Highway 176, and approximately ½ mile up Highway 17A towards Moncks Corner. This includes three (3) of the five (5) parcels that are being brought into the City at this time and they are coming in as zoned Commercial.

Motion: Councilmember McClary; Second: Councilmember Green-Fletcher; Motion carried: All in favor.

AN ORDINANCE TO SELL REAL PROPERTY OF THE CITY OF GOOSE CREEK, A SOUTH CAROLINA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 5-7-260 (6) OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED, PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS, 0.055 ACRES, A PORTION OF TMS 235-00-00-035 AND, .076 ACRES, A PORTION OF TMS 235-00-00-038 (Introduction and First Reading)

Mayor Habib stated this property is being sold to Berkeley County so improvements can continue to be made on the intersection at of Montague Plantation Road and US Highway 52, as part of the Henry Brown Boulevard extension project, which stretches all the way down Montague Plantation Road to US Highway 52.

Motion: Councilmember Green-Fletcher; Second: Councilmember McClary; Motion carried: All in favor.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF GOOSE CREEK TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT OF COOPERATION WITH BERKELEY COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA PURSUANT TO PROVISIONS OF THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1974, AS AMENDED (First & Final Reading)

Mayor Habib stated the proposed Resolution from Charleston Berkeley Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG) is a Block Grants Program from the Federal government, typically and now too, for the next three (3) years, is what City Council is voting on to join forces with Berkeley County and apply together for different things in and throughout the County to include the City of Goose Creek for the good of all of the area.

Motion: Councilmember Harmon; Second: Councilmember McClary; Motion carried: All in favor.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF GOOSE CREEK TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH CHARLESTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION IN A PARTNERSHIP TO CREATE A REVOLVING LOAN FUND AND ALSO INITIATE THE “KICKSTART THE CREEK” BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (First & Final Reading)

Mayor Habib stated the Resolution was regarding a revolving loan fund that will provide working capital loans for small businesses in the wake of COVID-19, but then beyond. He stated the Local Development Corporation will underwrite and administer the loan program whereas principal and one percent (1%) interest will be reinvested in the loan program to make future loans.

Motion: Councilmember Tekac made a motion to table the discussion so City Council can do some more investigating regarding the fund; Second: Mayor Pro Tem Condon;

Councilmember Tekac stated his concerns in that it is not with the program itself, it is because the City would be investing tax payer dollars at a time where he is not sure where the City's tax payer dollars will be twelve (12) months from now. He stated his other large concern is there are plenty of programs out there with the Federal government, particularly the Paycheck Protection Program that he worked on through his employment; but, there is still money out there and he would much rather see the City's local business owner's apply through that simple program that is basically going to be free as far as interest is concerned. He stated it's basically one percent (1%) max, and just on Friday, the President signed into law the fact that it will increase the likelihood of those monies being forgiven because they have extended the time period from eight to twenty-four weeks, lowered the threshold for payroll costs from 75% to 60% and those affected businesses don't have to rehire their employees until December 31, 2020. Councilmember Tekac stated he would much rather see those funds be exhausted prior to seeing the City of Goose Creek assisting distressed businesses in our City, because he felt the City sustaining losses are significantly high at this point. Mayor Habib stated he had the same concerns as Councilmember Tekac, and he felt one of the things they need to do was tighten up some of the regulations about how they plan to go about lending funds to businesses in the City. He stated he felt it was prudent to step back, take another look and evaluate it as to whether or not they wished to move it forward. Mayor Habib inquired of Councilmember Tekac if he would be willing to table the Resolution with a date to bring it back off the table.

Motion: Councilmember Tekac amended his original motion to table the Resolution for thirty (30) days;
Second: Mayor Pro Tem Condon;

Councilmember Harmon stated his only concern is that the timing of this is very important and he doesn't want the thirty (30) days to hurt any of the businesses in our community that could be helped by this program. Mayor Habib stated the idea was for the proposed program to come in behind the PPI program and there are still monies available, around \$100,000,000,000. Councilmember Harmon stated another concern was if there is that much available in PPI funding, was the Kickstart funding program really necessary; and, or businesses being assisted in finding other resources that would assist them with their needs.

Motion: Councilmember Tekac amended his second motion to table the Resolution until the regular City Council Meeting scheduled for July 14, 2020; Second: Mayor Pro Tem Condon. Discussions continued amongst City Council.

Mayor Habib stated the Resolution would be discussed further at City Council's upcoming Workshop scheduled for June 23rd. Hearing no further discussion, Mayor Habib called for the vote. Motion carried: Six (6) in favor; One (1) opposed (Councilmember Harmon).

DEPARTMENT REPORT:

Mr. Brady, Director of Economic Development, presented City Council with a PowerPoint presentation regarding the old Fire Station Headquarters that was sold to CityVolv wherein they will be leasing the property out to a tenant with plans for a restaurant, Creek City Grill and Brewery. Mr. Brady stated initial demolition is scheduled to begin in July, then the renovations will begin, and they project opening in the first quarter of 2021. Within the presentation Mr. Brady showed City Council renditions of what the outside and inside of the business will look like once the project is completed. Councilmember Tekac inquired as to the status of Goose Creek Village. Mr. Brady stated the developer anticipated Charleston Sports Pub opening during the summertime this year.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Request to Hire Contractor – John McCants Veterans Memorial Park

Mr. Howanyk, interim City Administrator, presented City Council with a request and supporting documentation wherein sealed bids were received from qualified contractors to build the John McCants Veterans Memorial Park; of the two (2) respondents, City staff is recommending to award the contract to the lowest responsive bidder, JF Contractors of Sumter, SC, in the total amount of \$1,794,338. He stated the City

has an assigned fund balance of \$1,900,000 specifically for this project; therefore, no financing is required. If approved, City staff will work with LandPlan Group South and JF Contractors to formalize the contract and start the project.

Motion: Councilmember Tekac; Second: Councilmember Condon;

There was a brief discussion regarding the funding of this project. Mr. Howanyk stated there were reserves that were available to be used for the project and it was always better to use reserve funding rather than financing a project.

Councilmember Harmon and Mayor Habib discussed sidewalks and Mayor Habib stated the City was still fighting with the State and Federal government to get the monies that the City applied for two (2) years ago and have yet to receive, and that were put in from Boulder Bluff Elementary School to Stephanie Drive, approximately one quarter of a mile and the cost of that is over \$1,000,000 to put a sidewalk on one side of the road. He stated sidewalks on those roads were extremely expensive and amazingly cost prohibitive and that is why the State has not put sidewalks on those roads, which are owned by them. He stated there are things the City can do to help get people to the park by building bike paths, and City Council can discuss those things as they go through the process and discuss the budget in the near future during their budget workshop.

Motion carried: All in favor.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Habib shared some thoughts about what has been happening since the City Council Meeting in May.

“At times over the past few weeks, I’ve been reminded of an old saying, and some people call it a curse, and it’s: “May you live in interesting times.” Ladies and gentlemen, in 2020, we are living in interesting times. Since the tragic and enraging death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, we have been exposed to both the very worst and, at times, the very best, of people and our country. Like many of you, the death of Mr. Floyd has caused me to confront my own thoughts regarding race, law enforcement, socio economics, governance, citizen rights, and more. Tonight, I want to share some of those thoughts. Not only do I want to share those with you as your Mayor, but more importantly, as a fellow citizen. None of us has a monopoly on the absolute truth. Our experiences shape our perspective and the ideals that drive us. Our environment often shapes our experiences.

We, all of us, have to be openminded enough to recognize and be willing to listen to and learn from one another. The outrage over Mr. Floyd’s death is certainly, understandably, and rightly, caused many to call for sweeping police reform. That conversation and analysis, again with open minds, I believe will lead to healthy changes in America. Having said that, I think that it’s appropriate to share with you tonight some of the policies that our own Police Department follows concerning the use of force. Goose Creek Police Department is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), Inc., and has been so accredited since 2002. CALEA publishes over 480 standards considered "best practices" for law enforcement agencies. Goose Creek Police Department proudly complies with all applicable standards and welcomes annual evaluations from CALEA Assessors to verify our compliance. It is worth noting too, that Chief Roscoe came to us from Dekalb County in Georgia, another accredited agency.

So, what does this accreditation mean? It means we follow the best practices, in law enforcement, and particularly in this case, for avoiding use of force and abuse of power. An example of what I’m talking about here is the choke hold policy. Some of you may have seen recently that Minneapolis City Council passed an ordinance last week to ban choke holds. Choke holds are already against our policy and have been for years. In fact, in 30 years of law enforcement, Chief Roscoe has never been in a department that’s allowed a choke hold. I get asked how can we make sure, how do we develop our police officer; or, how can we make sure we’re in compliance; or, that we don’t experience some of the things that the other departments have. Here is just a short list of what we do now, and have done for years:

- 1) Attitude Evaluation
- 2) Aptitude Evaluation
- 3) Psychological Evaluation
- 4) Pre-Academy Training
- 5) Academy Training
- 6) Field Training
- 7) Constant Incident Evaluation
- 8) Annual Evaluation
- 9) Community Policing Responsibilities
- 10) Ongoing Professional Training
- 11) Chief Ride-Alongs - Our Chief rides along with our law enforcement to ensure they're following the policies and things that we require of them.

Now, to be sure, a good policy is only as sound as those officers who carry it out. It provides a framework, not a guarantee. It should be comforting to you, however, to know that these policies, and this adherence to constant self and outside evaluation, is what is already happening at the Goose Creek Police Department. The Goose Creek Police Department is committed to upholding the law. But more than that, we are committed to the wellbeing of our community and our citizens. We don't just claim to do the right things, we evaluate and measure to ensure we are doing the right things. I challenge anyone to find an example otherwise.

This past weekend, Chief Roscoe and I had the opportunity to speak with a group of protestors here at City Hall. It was an enlightening conversation and I am thankful for having had it. I am also proud that all of us, myself, Chief Roscoe, the protestors, listened as much as we spoke. There was one question asked of Chief Roscoe that was somewhat upsetting, to her and to me. A young man asked what she thought of the George Floyd incident and what happened to him. Now, he didn't mean anything other than what he asked. He was a young guy, idealistic, trying to make a difference. What do reasonable, rational people think of what happened to George Floyd? Well, that's exactly what our Chief thinks about what happened to George Floyd. I believe she used the term "anyone in their right mind" would see this incident for what it was. Why would our Chief of Police see it any other way? To his credit the young man both shared his feelings, but he also listened to our responses. For both sides, a moment that began in frustration and anger, ended with greater understanding and empathy. I have often said, and I still truly believe, America's diversity is indeed its greatest strength. It's a strength that is unique in the world, unique among all other countries.

I do hope you are all well, and all safe, and I hope you all continue to feel good about living in the City of Goose Creek. As a society, there is no "if" with regard to this change in the mindset of people. We have to love more, we have to listen more, we have to engage more, we have to care more, we have to tolerate more. We have to just be better. As a City, I hope that we can be part of that solution, and I'm proud of the leadership that Chief Roscoe brings to her job every single day, and its reflection on our Department, and I appreciate your patience."

VII. Adjourn:

Motion: Councilmember Tekac; Second: Mayor Pro Tem Condon; Motion carried: All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Kelly J. Lovette, MMC
City Clerk

Date: July 14, 2020

A copy of this meeting's agenda was sent to the Post and Courier and The Goose Creek Gazette; it was posted in City Hall 24 hours prior to the meeting.