

City Council Meeting
October 13, 2015
7:00 P.M.
City Hall

Council Members Present:

Mayor Michael J. Heitzler; Mayor Pro Tem Mark A. Phillips; Councilmember James (Kimo) Esarey; Councilmember Debra Green-Fletcher; Councilmember John McCants; Councilmember Jerry Tekac

Council Members Absent:

Staff Present:

City Administrator Dennis C. Harmon; Assistant City Administrator Jake Broom; Police Captain Dave Aarons; Fire Chief Steve Chapman; Finance Director Ron Faretra; Director of Public Works Steve Price; Director of Recreation Gary Stuber; Director of Golf Operations Troy Sanders; Public Information Officer Frank Johnson; Director of Planning and Zoning Sarah Hanson

Staff Absent:

City Clerk Kelly J. Lovette; Police Chief Harvey Becker

Invocation:

Councilmember Kimo Esarey

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mayor Heitzler

Press Present:

Guests Present:

I. Call to Order:

Mayor Heitzler called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Comments from the Audience:

Mayor Heitzler recognized and welcomed Boy Scout Troop 418 to the meeting. Mayor Heitzler recognized Mr. Joel Arenson who inquired about the record rainfall recently received by the City and whether or not the City would be working its Emergency Management Plan, and making any recommendations to maybe mitigate against another incident of this type that could come again in the future. Mayor Heitzler stated he believed the question was, if the City was going to take this past experience and examine our Emergency Management Plan to see if there were any necessary changes. He stated he did not know if they would be reviewing the Plan formally; however, he was absolutely relieved and exceedingly proud of the City's past accomplishments that saved a huge amount of property damage. He stated there may have been a dozen homes that ended up with wet carpets and floors, but because the laws in effect regarding the International Building Codes and the fact our City is relatively young, 99% of the homes throughout the City remained in safe elevations. He stated he went to each location where there was flooding and there were no ditches that were clogged when the events began to take place. Mayor Heitzler stated there were some problems relating to dams, but Mr. Price and his workers were out in the community to make sure those issues were addressed. Mayor Heitzler recognized a gentleman who inquired about the construction going on at Liberty Hall Road and Lindy Creek Road, and if they were implementing a turn lane. Mayor Heitzler stated yes, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) would be putting in a turn signal because traffic sometimes backs up and it affects Liberty Hall Road and US Highway 52 (N Goose Creek Boulevard).

III. Approval of Previous Minutes:

Joint City Council & Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting – June 4, 2015
City Council Meeting – September 8, 2015

Councilmember Esarey made a motion to approve the minutes, as stated by Mayor Heitzler. Mayor Pro Tem Mark Phillips. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

IV. Public Hearings:

Mayor Heitzler stated the first item under Public Hearings was the Fiscal Year 2016 City Budget at almost \$42,000.00, very similar to last year's budget. At this time, Mayor Heitzler reviewed and stated some of the critical elements of the proposed budget: the City would continue to provide excellent municipal services; it shows modest increases in expenditures and revenue; there is a proposed 5 mill increase to the millage rate for Ad Valorem Property Tax on houses and cars; and there are proposals to increase equipment and personnel. Mayor Heitzler inquired if there were any questions. Mayor Heitzler recognized Mr. Gerald Stenson who inquired if the budget called for an increase in police officers. Mayor Heitzler stated no. At this time, Mayor Heitzler read the title to the proposed Ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO RAISE REVENUE AND ADOPT A BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF GOOSE CREEK, SOUTH CAROLINA, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2016 AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2016 (Second and Final Reading)

Councilmember Green-Fletcher made a motion to approve the proposed Ordinance, as stated by Mayor Heitzler. Councilmember McCants seconded the motion. Mayor Heitzler inquired if there was any discussion.

Councilmember Tekac stated he wished to respond to Mr. Stenson's inquiry. He stated the City would be adding twelve (12) new firefighters moving forward. He stated City staff and City Council discussed adding new police officers, but the City is not fully staffed with the number of police officer positions it currently has now. Councilmember Tekac stated once those numbers are being maintained and Chief Becker feels there is a need for additional police officers that is something City Council would be happy to entertain. Mayor Heitzler thanked Councilmember Tekac for bringing that up and added he believed the City only had one (1) opening left to fill and the City was closing that gap by doing a good job and hiring quality applicants. Hearing no further discussion, Mayor Heitzler called for the vote. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Mayor Heitzler stated the next item under Public Hearings was the second and final reading to an Ordinance that would allow the City to transfer property to Weekley Homes in Carnes Crossroads. He stated this was a small, unimportant piece of property located in Carnes Crossroads and is owned by the City; however, the developer would like to use the small parcel (3,500 square feet) to square off a corner lot. Councilmember Esarey also mentioned the property was originally given to the City by the developer. Hearing nothing further, Mayor Heitzler read the title to the proposed Ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE PURSUANT TO SECTION 5-7-40 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA 1976, AS AMENDED, TO CONVEY PROPERTY (TMS#: 222-07-01-143) OF THE CITY OF GOOSE CREEK, SOUTH CAROLINA TO WEEKLEY HOMES, LLC (Second and Final Reading)

Councilmember Tekac made a motion to approve the proposed Ordinance, as stated by Mayor Heitzler. Councilmember Moore seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Mayor Heitzler stated the third item under Public Hearings was the introduction and first reading to an Ordinance that would amend the City's Zoning Map to provide for change to the zoning districts of the City. He stated the property consisted of 4.4 acres located on St. James Avenue (US Highway 176), located inside the City limits. Mayor Heitzler stated the property was currently zoned as High Density Residential (R-3) and the owner of the land was requesting to rezone the property to General Commercial. At this time, Mayor Heitzler read the title to the proposed Ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF GOOSE CREEK, SOUTH CAROLINA, TO PROVIDE FOR CHANGES IN THE ZONING DISTRICTS OF THE CITY OF GOOSE CREEK BY CHANGING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY:

A PORTION OF THE PROPERTY, 4.4 ACRES, LOCATED ON ST. JAMES AVENUE, DESIGNATED AS TMS# 222-00-00-046, FROM HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (R-3) TO GENERAL COMMERCIAL (GC) (Introduction and First Reading)

Councilmember Esarey made a motion to approve the proposed Ordinance, as stated by Mayor Heitzler. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips seconded the motion. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips requested confirmation from City staff that the Planning Commission was recommending approval by City Council. Mrs. Hanson stated yes, it was reviewed by the Planning Commission and they were recommending approval of the rezoning. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Heitzler called for the vote. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

V. Department Reports:

Police Department – Mayor Heitzler recognized Captain Aarons who was filling in for Chief Becker who was away attending a National Association Meeting of the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). Mayor Heitzler inquired if there were any questions or comments for Captain Aarons. There were no other comments and no questions.

Fire Department – Mayor Heitzler inquired if there were any questions or comments. Mr. Joel Arenson inquired if the new fire station on Old Mt. Holly Road was now in operation. Chief Chapman stated that station will be known as Fire Station III and it will be a few more months before it is finished. Mr. Arenson inquired if the new equipment would be located at Fire Station III. Chief Chapman stated yes, the Pumper was purchased for Fire Station III.

Department of Public Works (DPW) – Mayor Heitzler recognized Mr. Joel Arenson who stated he was really surprised to see the bridge over the Goose Creek Reservoir was closed due to flooding. He stated that was a major evacuation route if there were a hurricane and he inquired if the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) would possibly raise the bridge. Mr. Price stated he did not know the answer to that question, but if Mr. Arenson wished for him to speculate, he would have to say, based on his experience, the answer would probably be no. Mr. Price stated the City had an intense rain fall in a short period of time and we had almost 20 inches of rain in the gage at DPW between 8:00 a.m., that past Friday morning to 8:00 a.m., the following Monday morning; and following that, we had some additional rain, several inches, on both Wednesday and Thursday as well. He stated the area of US Highway 52 (S Goose Creek Boulevard) that crosses under the bridge at the Goose Creek Reservoir, just became so surcharged that it finally over topped the road. He stated he was sure there would be discussion at the State level, throughout South Carolina, relating to major thoroughfares, as because US Highway 52 was a Federal highway, he was sure that would be addressed as well. Mr. Price stated his department would participate in any way they could by providing feedback to SCDOT as to what the City observed during the storm. He stated for something that was an unusual rainfall, and not a regular reoccurring event, typically funds are not expended for an improvement of that sort, but the City would pay attention to what would be going on in the post planning phase and pay close attention to see what happens with the State and City staff would certainly provide input. Mr. Arenson thanked him for his feedback. Councilmember Esarey stated it looked to him like things seemed to drain very well considering everything that had occurred, and inquired if there were any issues that Mr. Price may have seen and that now needed to be addressed. Mr. Price agreed with Councilmember Esarey regarding drainage and stated considering long term maintenance and system improvements, they have had a good cooperative program working with Berkeley County Roads and Bridges through the years as well. He stated there were a couple of areas where the water could flow better and the City was currently communicating with Berkeley County to review some “choke points” for very high flow; however, City staff was very pleased considering the amount of rainfall that fell in such a short period of time, and that the City handled it as well as it did.

Administration Department & Municipal Court – Mayor Heitzler inquired if there were any questions or comments. Councilmember Esarey stated he appreciated all of Mr. Faretra’s work on the budget. Mr. Faretra also gave credit to his staff for their assistance.

Recreation Department – Mayor Heitzler inquired if there were any comments or questions from the audience. Hearing none, Mr. Stuber stated the Recreation Department has moved the Fall Festival from October 10th, to October 31st, and it will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., behind City Hall; and, the City still had the same number of vendors and sponsors.

Golf Department – Mayor Heitzler recognized Mr. Joel Arenson who inquired if all the recent rainfall caused any problems for the golf course. Mr. Sanders stated the golf course was closed up until that past Wednesday, when they opened 9 holes and Thursday there were no issues; but, the green in the back, at the number 6 hole, was under water for two (2) days and they had never seen that happen before. He stated the golf course was doing well now.

Public Information Officer/Annexation Coordinator – There were no comments or questions from the audience. Mayor Heitzler inquired if Mr. Johnson wished to say anything. Mr. Johnson stated he wished to remind everyone that in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the City along with Joint Base Charleston Family Advocacy, would be holding a candle light vigil to remember the victims of domestic violence on Thursday, October 22nd, at 6:30 p.m., behind the Municipal Center. He stated the Halloween Carnival was scheduled for next Saturday, October 24th, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., and as Mr. Stuber stated, the Fall Festival was rescheduled to Saturday, October 31st.

Planning Department – Mayor Heitzler inquired if there were any questions or comments. Councilmember Esarey inquired if there was something being constructed below the Firestone Tires location (St. James Avenue). Mrs. Hanson stated yes, it was going to be a dental office.

VI. City Administrator's Report:

Request to Purchase – Fire Department (Fire Apparatus Equipment) – Mr. Harmon stated he had a request and supporting documentation from the Fire Chief to purchase equipment for the new E-One Fire Truck that was recently delivered and currently parked in front of City Hall. He stated the total amount requested to purchase various pieces of equipment from various dealers was in the total amount of \$92,847.98. Mr. Harmon stated the requested purchases were outlined in Chief Chapman's memo dated October 2nd. At this time Mr. Harmon requested City Council's consideration for approval and stated he and Chief Chapman would be happy to answer questions.

Councilmember Tekac made a motion to approve the purchase for the E-One Fire Truck, in the total amount of \$92,847.98, as stated by Mr. Harmon. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

Request to Purchase – Department of Public Works (Sanitation Truck) – Mr. Harmon stated he had a request and supporting documentation from the Director of Public Works to purchase a 31 Cubic Yard Side Loading Sanitation Truck from General Diesel of North Charleston, SC, as the low qualified bidder, in the total amount of \$269,152.00. At this time, Mr. Harmon requested City Council's consideration for the purchase.

Mayor Pro Tem Phillips made a motion to approve the purchase of the 31 Cubic Yard Side Loading Sanitation Truck, as stated by Mr. Harmon. Councilmember McCants seconded the motion. Councilmember Phillips stated just for clarification, there was a lower bidder, but they did not meet the specifications requested in the bid by the City. Mayor Heitzler inquired if there were any further comments. Mr. Harmon stated this is a budgeted item in the 2016 Fiscal Year Budget, that City Council just gave final approval to and City staff was ordering the sanitation truck early in order to save money and speed up the delivery date so the Department of Public Works will have adequate equipment to service the City. He stated the truck would not be received by the City, nor would it be paid for until fiscal year 2016. Hearing no further comments, Mayor Heitzler called for the vote. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

VII. Mayor's Report:

Develop Long Term Plan for Golf Course (#10 of the 2015 Goals and Objectives): Mayor Heitzler stated there were ten (10) items under the City's annual Strategic Plan and the last item was to develop a long term plan for the golf course facilities. He stated City Council and City staff believes there are opportunities to increase the amount of service availability and value at the City's golf course, as well as enhance the City, if improvements are continued. He stated it has not been completely decided as to the type of improvements that will be considered. Mayor Heitzler recognized Mr. Joel Arenson who inquired if the clubhouse was a deterrent to increasing the number of golfers that visit the golf course and he provided an example and stated, like the one located in North Charleston. Mr. Sanders stated they have discussed that and the golf course is only 18 holes, so the only thing a clubhouse would do is be able to feed more people. Councilmember Tekac stated a

larger clubhouse or pavilion would not necessarily add more golfers, but it would allow for more people to participate in various hosted events and gatherings, for example, a reception; and, it would also attract those who may not necessarily be golfers.

VIII. Comments and Questions:

Mayor Heitzler recognized one of the Boy Scouts who inquired if they wished to work on an athletic or golf Merit Badge, could they meet with Mr. Sanders to work something out. Mr. Sanders stated yes. The young man also told Mr. Stuber they would love to assist and volunteer with the Recreation Department in the same capacity. Mayor Heitzler recognized Mr. Wall who inquired about the current configurations of the lanes at US Highway 52 (N Goose Creek Boulevard) and Red Bank Road that were designed by SCDOT. After some discussion between City Council and a few members from the audience, Mr. Harmon stated the original design was to create another right-hand turn lane, but because of the railroad tracks and the unlikelihood they would be able to obtain an additional Right-of-Way from CSX, SCDOT abandoned that idea because it would back up traffic. Mayor Heitzler stated the roadways are overwhelmed and they need to get more lanes, the City needs an overpass on US Highway 52 (N Goose Creek Boulevard) at that intersection, otherwise there would be a gridlock with regard to traffic. Mayor Heitzler stated it was still not 100% efficient and it will get worse as the days go by, but the City is doing the best it can.

Adjournment:

Councilmember Tekac made a motion to adjourn. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Date: November 10, 2015

Kelly J. Lovette, MMC
City Clerk

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.