

City Council Workshop
October 30, 2017
6:00 P.M.
City Hall

Council Members Present:

Mayor Michael J. Heitzler; Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Phillips; Councilmember James (Kimo) Esarey; Councilmember Debra Green-Fletcher; Councilmember Brandon Cox; Councilmember Gregory Habib; Councilmember Kevin Condon

Council Members Absent:

Staff Present:

City Administrator Jake Broom; Assistant City Administrator Daniel Moore; Director of Economic Development Matt Brady; Director of Information Technology Ryan Byrd; Director of Finance Tyler Howanyk; Director of Public Works Steve Price; Director of Planning and Zoning Kara Browder

Staff Absent:

City Clerk Kelly J. Lovette

I. Call to Order:

Mayor Heitzler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Comments from the Audience:

Mayor Heitzler recognized a lady from the audience, a resident of Beverly Hills, who stated she has a small business in the City and thanked City Council for having her.

III. Business:

Presentation: Goose Creek Village: Mayor Heitzler introduced Mr. Matt Brady who stated the proposed location for Goose Creek Village is located behind the Mattress Firm on Plantation North Boulevard. Mr. Brady stated it is going to be a great project with retail, commercial spaces and restaurants. Mr. Brady introduced Mr. Gary Berenyi who stated the developer was stuck in traffic. Mayor Heitzler stated he would change the order of the Agenda so Mr. Berenyi would not have to rush his presentation.

Community Center Wi-Fi: Mr. Broom stated the subject regarding the lack of Wi-Fi in the Community Center was brought before City staff as a complaint that the Mayor received. Mr. Byrd received a quote regarding the cost of expanding the Wi-Fi which also included the existing Community Center, at a total cost of almost \$14,000. Mr. Byrd was present to answer any questions.

Councilmember Condon inquired if there were plans for Wi-Fi in Phase II of the new Gymnastic Center. Mr. Byrd stated yes, this would extend the Wi-Fi to the Community Center as well. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips inquired if Mr. Byrd was familiar with the new fire code regarding signals for emergency services inside public buildings. Mr. Byrd stated he was not familiar with the new code. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated a new law was created stating antennas be installed inside facilities such as schools and larger buildings to strengthen signals for emergency responders. Mr. Broom stated the new law affects eight-hundred (800) megahertz (MHz) radios to which repeaters are installed, typically this is done for a wide campus like an elementary school or large high school. Mr. Broom stated the Gymnastic Center and Community Center should not present any problems for the City's radio signals. Mayor Heitzler stated he liked the idea of extending the contract from Phase II because he understands that a piece of apparatus is missing in the Community Center. Mr. Byrd stated that appears to be one of the issues.

Councilmember Habib inquired if \$14,000 was per year or the total cost. Mr. Byrd stated the \$14,000 is for equipment and the installation; there will be a yearly fee; however, he did not have that figure. Councilmember Habib inquired as to why there is Wi-Fi in Phase II of the Gymnastic Center. Mr. Byrd stated Wi-Fi was requested by the Recreation Department when it was designed. Councilmember Habib inquired as to the purpose for Wi-Fi. Mr. Byrd stated the purpose is for citizens and employees to use. Mr. Byrd explained there will be two Wi-Fi channels; one channel for citizens and the other for employees; the citizen's channel will be completely off the employee network, and the employee channel will be available for things like music or payments when away from a register. Mr. Byrd stated Wi-Fi can be added to the Community Center before the Gymnastic Center is completed.

Councilmember Habib inquired as to how employees currently work without adequate Wi-Fi. Mr. Byrd stated there was not a current need for Wi-Fi, but it was determined there would be a need with the new Gymnastics Center. He stated the Gymnastic Center will hold meets to which a lot of people are traveling from out of state to attend, the Wi-Fi will be for their use, as well as to post scores. Mr. Broom stated employees are currently hardwired into the network.

Councilmember Habib inquired as to where the money would be coming from for the Wi-Fi. Mayor Heitzler stated the Hospitality Tax. Mr. Broom stated the Hospitality Tax would be his proposal. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated citizens are expecting to have access to Wi-Fi everywhere. Mayor Heitzler stated if the City can cost effectively deliver more in recreation, he sees this as a recreational expense and is in favor of adding Wi-Fi. Mr. Broom stated City Council did not need to act that evening, he just wanted to brief them before the topic was added to the November Agenda. Mayor Heitzler inquired if City Council was opposed. Councilmember Esarey stated he is not opposed, however he would like to know what the yearly cost will be for the addition of Wi-Fi. Councilmember Habib stated he had to think it over. Mayor Heitzler thanked Mr. Broom and Mr. Byrd for the information.

Presentation: Goose Creek Village: Mr. Berenyi introduced Mr. Brent Case, the developer of the Goose Creek Village project. Mr. Case stated the project is called a Village because he wanted to create a gathering place the City can use to entertain, socialize and shop, that is walkable to the community and interconnected with sidewalks, the design includes five buildings to which four surround a traffic circle. He stated it was his hope to work with the City to create a historic or art and cultural element in the traffic circle. Mr. Case feels this could be the first project of its kind in which the City and developers work together. Mr. Case stated the property had been deemed brownfield which was why he was presenting the project before City Council. Mr. Case stated he would like this project to be included in the incentive zone. He stated developing the property would require digging out six to eight feet throughout the entire site and filling it in with fresh dirt. Mr. Case stated there was also a flood plain behind the parking lot and residences have complained of a drainage issue in that area to which the work that would be done would not only improve the drainage for the Village, but also for the residents. Mayor Heitzler inquired as to how the drainage would be improved. Mr. Case stated he would be improving the downstream flow on the western side of the property; the plan would secure the ditch that the neighbors are worried about, but also help with erosion and clapping of the sides. Mayor Heitzler does not feel it is the developer's responsibility to fix this problem.

Mr. Case stated another challenge he was facing is that the grade is low hence sewer is unavailable. The solution for this is to install a private pump station. Mayor Heitzler inquired where the pump station would be located. He stated it would be on the western side of the property so it can run down the lot line. Mayor Heitzler stated he had concerns regarding the possibility of odor from a pump station. Mr. Case stated the only time odor is present is when it turns septic and the system that was chosen will keep it from never becoming septic. Councilmember Esarey inquired as to the location where everything would be pumped; Mr. Case reiterated it pumps down the western lot line and explained there would be three intakes to the pump station. The first intake runs from north to the south, the second will run from the south to the north, and the third will run from east to west. Mr. Case explained the sewer line is exposed through the ditch and he will have to go to the eastern side of the ditch to tie into the sewer. He stated the pump station has been approved, in theory, by Berkeley County and by the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC).

Mayor Pro Tem Phillips inquired if a new retention pond would be installed. Mr. Case stated yes. Councilmember Esarey inquired if all the trees that are currently on the property would be retained. Mr. Case stated yes as that was where the flood plain starts. Mr. Case stated the buildings that would be in the Village are different than other developments. He stated because this is a walkable area the buildings are four-sided; which means they are finished and look attractive on all four sides, which also requires additional development money.

Mayor Pro Tem Philips inquired if outdoor patios would be available. Mr. Case stated there is enough space to create another patio if needed. Mr. Case stated Tequila and Taco's has outdoor seating as well as Thousand Degree Pizza; and businesses that will be in the circle are: Saki house; Charleston Sports Bar and Pub; Groucho's Deli; and, a space available for a pretzel concept. Councilmember Cox inquired if the restaurants were leased and signed. Mr. Case stated they were negotiating some of the final details. Councilmember Cox stated he believed this was exactly what was needed in that part of the City and what the City's residents have been requesting.

Mayor Heitzler stated City Council identified a part of the City as blighted and he felt incentives were needed for the property to be occupied and improved. Mayor Heitzler inquired if Mr. Case felt the area was blighted. Mr. Case stated the property had been deemed brownfield, which was not the same as a naturally occurring issue; there were man-made environmental issues on the property that were going to make it very difficult for development without a great expense.

Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated the City was willing to give incentives on the old fire station head quarter's property, and inquired if it was possible to transpose those incentives to this site. Mr. Broom stated the fire station was in the incentive zone. Mr. Broom stated since no mechanisms exist outside of that zone, City staff believes the easiest alternative would be to add this parcel to the incentive zone. Mr. Case stated the restaurants that would be coming in will contribute to the

Hospitality Tax, whereas others may not. Councilmember Cox stated he made a key point; if a big box store or storage facility came in they would basically pay a business license, but not generate any money collected under the Hospitality Tax. Councilmember Cox stated this would be a powerhouse for the Hospitality Fund.

Councilmember Habib stated when Mr. Case talks about the encumbers he has come across, incentivizing sounds reasonable. He stated for the City to do something in the traffic circle, it would have to be owned by the City. Councilmember Cox inquired why the City could not support the traffic circle and bring them into the incentive zone. Mr. Broom stated spending public money on private property was unconstitutional. Mr. Broom stated he was not sure if any mechanism exists, outside the one that was already adopted, to offer a financial benefit to a private development. Councilmember Habib inquired as to how many entrances there would be to the Village. The developer stated there would be two entrances.

Mayor Heitzler stated he was trying to think of how City Council was going to use their own decision that evening to guide the City into the future. He stated he was listening to see if the developer could make a case with City Council before they decided whether to incentivize. Mayor Heitzler stated City Council also needed to decide if they wanted the development in the City. He stated he felt that deciding on the basis because City Council would be violating the free enterprise concept. Councilmember Habib stated he disagreed whole heartedly he believes the City is in the business of economic development.

Councilmember Cox stated it is City Council's prerogative to incentivize based on the incentive zone. Councilmember Habib stated there are two roles of economic development, the first is to create diverse revenue for the municipality and the second is to add to the quality of life of the residents who live in the City.

Councilmember Cox stated they are asking for the City's assistance to redeveloped that property which is what the incentive is for. Councilmember Habib stated the mitigating factor for him was a piece of property that was made more difficult to develop because of choices people made rather than choices nature made; therefore, incentivizing made sense. He stated the mitigating factor was the property, not the business. Discussion amongst City Council occurred regarding the initial intent of the incentive zone.

Councilmember Green-Fletcher inquired if the developer would cease the project if they were not approved for the incentive package. Mr. Case stated it would be difficult to pursue the project. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated residents have requested restaurants for years believes the City was at the point they could offer incentives. Mayor Heitzler stated if City Council allows the property to take part in the incentive package, the City would have a non-contiguous incentive zone. Mayor Heitzler stated this would mean anybody in the City could apply the same kind of argument.

Mayor Heitzler inquired of Mr. Broom if the location in question would need to be included as an amendment in the Incentive Zone Ordinance. Mr. Broom stated yes, he could work with the attorney to amend the Incentive Zone to include the parcel

Lake Moultrie Water Agency Contract Update: Mr. Broom stated the Lake Moultrie Water Agency contract update was an amendment to the City's original contract signed in 1992 and amended in 2006. Mr. Broom stated he was bringing this before City Council because it has been made necessary by the plant expansion, as it is expanding by 40,000,000 gallons of water per day; and this would expand the City's portion of capacity from 4.16 million gallons per day to 5.96 million gallons a day. He stated a new part of the contract brought on by the amendment was that it creates a table showing the guarantee maximum and minimum water of pressure at the City delivery points that is based on engineering data and it outlines how penalties for overages are calculated, which will not affect the City. He stated the last time the contract was amended in 2006 Mayor Heitzler signed it and Mr. Harmon briefed City Council, hence he was following suit. Mr. Broom stated the amendment to the contract did not need to go before City Council in a regular meeting. Mr. Broom inquired if City Council had any questions. Mayor Heitzler stated the City had about six (6) million gallons of water per day, that would be its portion of the capacity. Mayor Heitzler inquired as to how far this would project to meeting the City's needs. Mr. Price stated twenty-five (25) years. Mayor Heitzler inquired when the new addition would be in place with the additional 20-million-gallon tank added. Mr. Broom stated hopefully by the end of the year, but probably early next year. Mayor Heitzler stated Mr. Broom could move forward with the amendment to the contract.

Storage Facility Regulations (From Planning Commission): Mr. Broom stated the Planning Commission had provided recommendations for storage facility regulations which would be presented to City Council in the regular City Council Meeting in November. Mr. Broom stated for many fully enclosed storage facilities, the Planning Commission recommended they be in General Commercial, Commercial Industrial and Light Industrial zones; and the first floor be designed to accommodate retail and office space. Mr. Broom stated the Planning Commission also recommended the following: the façade facing the street must appear as a retail or office space to which it must incorporate an interesting architectural feature such as fountains, flagpoles, or rod iron fence; outdoor access storage would be in Commercial Industrial and Light Industrial zones; the central office building must be located to the front of the property which would screen storage activities. He stated

it is also recommended that all loading bays be orientated as not to be visible from any street unless it is screened by fencing or land scaping. Mayor Heitzler stated the proposals sounded good.

Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Budget: Mr. Broom stated the final item on the Agenda, before a brief Executive Session was the 2018 Budget. He stated he wanted to open this up for conversation to see if City Council could come up with a plan that could be presented at the November City Council Meeting and would receive a majority vote. Councilmember Esarey inquired what the rationale was for those members who voted no. Councilmember Cox stated City Council found real savings, and he believes it is part of City Council's duty to make the tough decisions. Councilmember Condon stated he felt the same and stated City Council had been aware the 3 ½ millage rate increase was coming due to the mandate for the State of South Carolina. Councilmember Condon stated he felt like City Council could find the other 1 ½ mills in the budget.

Councilmember Esarey inquired if cutting the Maintenance Department was how some of City Council wanted to save money. Councilmember Cox stated not necessarily cutting the Maintenance Department, but by looking at business in a different way. Councilmember Cox stated if there was an expense that will continue to grow, such as retirement, there are ways to mitigate that expense. Councilmember Condon stated a portion of what the Maintenance Department had been doing is what the citizens of Goose Creek already pay taxes to Berkeley County to handle. Councilmember Condon stated if the City could find a way to get Berkeley County to reimburse them for what City staff does, he would be in favor of keeping the Maintenance Department.

Mayor Heitzler stated this was something that could not be done overnight. Councilmember Habib stated he respectfully disagreed that they were are trying to do anything overnight, as most of the jobs City Council was asking to contract out were not the City's responsibility. Councilmember Habib stated instead of eliminating what the City did all together, he felt the compromise was to contract and save over \$200,000. He stated the City must start doing business differently. Councilmember Green-Fletcher stated the fact that a contractor forgot to add services on the original quote, and then came back to Mr. Broom to the add to the quote, scares her. Councilmember Green-Fletcher stated she was not objecting to trying to change anything, she felt three weeks was not enough time. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips apologized for missing the last City Council Meeting, but thought City Council had a consensus at the last City Council Workshop he thought City Council had a consensus. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated he thought what City Council agreed to was to phase in contracting and whatever was saved would be added to the City's Fund Balance; however, in the meantime move forward with the way the budget was written.

Mayor Heitzler stated he trusted the City Administrator and the Department Managers with their recommended budget, and that was the budget that he supports. Mayor Heitzler stated he believes City Council had a reasonable budget before them and he planned on voting yes at the City Council Meeting in November. Councilmember Habib stated he would not vote for the budget if it is the same.

Mr. Broom stated the last version of the proposed budget that was presented removed mosquito abatement, as he has worked with Berkeley County to make sure they are going to cover the areas in the City next year. Mr. Broom stated as for the ditches, City staff was currently working on this issue. He stated City staff has talked to the Deputy Supervisor about the responsibility for maintaining ditches, they know that our residents pay a Storm Water Fee and they need to have the same service that all the Berkeley County residents receive. City Staff was working to shift those things that are Berkeley County's responsibility back to them.

Mayor Pro Tem Phillips suggested waiting until next year to paint the master arms to save \$185,000. Mayor Heitzler stated he would not be opposed. Mr. Broom stated he did not know if that will solve everyone's concerns as it creates money the City does not spend, but it does not negate the need for the tax increase; and the City would have to spend it next year. Councilmember Habib stated not painting the master arms saves money now, but it does not address how the City operates and how the City does business.

Councilmember Green-Fletcher inquired if Berkeley Electric responded to Mr. Broom regarding his inquiry about street lights. Mr. Broom stated each neighborhood would have to vote whether they would be willing to institute a fee to pay for their street lights. He stated Berkeley Electric has stated they have never charged a "resident fee" for street lights before, but that was how they believe it would work, residents would have to elect to have it added to their bill.

IV. Executive Session

Mayor Pro Tem Phillips made a motion to go into Executive Session to discussion negotiations related to a proposed sale of property (7:31 p.m.)

Councilmember Green-Fletcher made a motion to come out of Executive Session (7:46 p.m.) All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried. Mayor Heitzler stated while in Executive Session City Council reviewed contract negotiations to a person's proposal. He stated City Council did not vote on anything and they gave Mr. Broom some direction to which he will report back to City Council in the future with his findings. At which time City Council can take public action.

V. Comments from the Audience

There were no comments or questions.

VI. Adjournment:

Mayor Pro Tem Phillips made a motion to adjourn. All in favor, non-opposed. Meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

_____ Date: December 12, 2017

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.