

City Council Workshop
August 22, 2017
6:00 P.M.
City Hall

Council Members Present:

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

Council Members Absent:

Staff Present:

City Administrator Jake Broom; Assistant City Administrator Daniel Moore; City Clerk Kelly J. Lovette; Chief of Police Harvey Becker; Economic Development Director Matt Brady; Director of Public Works Steve Price; Assistant Director of Public Works Chuck Denson

Staff Absent:

Press Present:

Guests:

I. Call to Order:

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

II. Comments from the Audience:

No comments or questions.

III. Business:

Municipal Association Economic Development Grant Application (Matt Brady, Economic Development Director): Mr. Brady discussed launching a certified program for local business. He stated the Town of Mt. Pleasant recently started a program called Town Proud to showcase local business, show support and make it attractive and welcoming to businesses. He stated the Town of Mount Pleasant worked with an organization called Lowcountry Local First, an advocacy organization for local businesses. He stated Lowcountry Local First offers technical assistance, as well as create a vetting process. Mr. Brady stated they must meet certain criteria to be accepted and Lowcountry Local First would also help create the collateral such as a sticker to put in the window of businesses that were accepted into the program and digital images to market the selected business as a local business. He stated the selectees would be included on the City of Goose Creek's website. Mr. Broom stated he included a draft Resolution in City Council's packet for approval to have the Municipal Association of South Carolina to consider the City of Goose Creek for the Hometown Economic Development Grant. Mr. Broom and Mr. Brady requested City Council's input. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips inquired if what they were requesting was to get local businesses certified. Mr. Brandy stated yes. Councilmember Habib inquired if it was to promote locally owned businesses to the citizens of the City. Mr. Brady stated citizens of the City as well as others and that locally sourced things were popular. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips inquired if the businesses had to be locally owned. Mr. Brady stated yes, McDonald's would not be considered. He stated it would come down to the vetting and application criteria that City Council and City staff settled on. Mr. Brady stated the program was based on the Municipal Association awarding the City of Goose Creek with the Hometown Economic Development Grant. Councilmember Habib inquired if the Resolution needed to be added to the Agenda for the next City Council meeting for Mr. Brady to proceed with the Grant Application. Mr. Brady stated yes. Councilmember Esarey instructed Mr. Brady to research the cost and the details to use Lowcountry Local First.

Police Department Marked Vehicle Design (Harvey Becker, Police Chief): Mr. Broom stated some officers have expressed an interest in redesigning the City's police cars. He stated a committee of nine (9) members from different divisions within the Police Department was created to discuss the subject. He stated the committee came up with three (3) designs and chose one (1) by unanimous vote. Mr. Broom introduced Police Chief Harvey Becker who stated the current design on the police vehicles is about thirty (30) years old and the Police Department would like to modernize the design. At this time, Chief Becker shared with City Council an image of the proposed design. Chief Becker stated the colors in the proposed design coordinate with the Police Department's dark blue traditional police uniform. Chief Becker stated his officers wanted a scheme that would not be dedicated to one model police vehicle; this scheme can work on any police vehicle such as a Dodge Charger or SUV. Mayor Heitzler stated it looked fine, but in the past City Council wanted the color schemes to be that of park rangers. Mayor Heitzler stated also in the past City Council did not want the Goose on the logo flying backwards. Councilmember Habib stated he liked the design and thought it was clean and contemporary; however, he had two (2) issues, the cost and the optics of paying to redo all the police cars while at the same time raising taxes does not look good. Councilmember Habib stated he was of the understanding it can be phased in, but he also did not like the idea of two (2) different looking cars and inquired as to the total cost if all the vehicles were to be redesigned. Chief Becker stated to decal the nine (9) new 2017 police vehicles it would cost \$4,275.00, which would be \$28.00, more than if the City stayed with the current design. The cost of the nine (9) new vehicles, as well as the 2015 and 2016 Dodge Chargers, eleven (11) in total, would cost \$11,150.00. Councilmember Habib stated the new Ford Explorers would also need to be included in the redesign. Chief Becker stated he felt the Police Department's budget could absorb having all the vehicles done at once, but he would have to discuss it further with Mr. Broom. Councilmember Habib inquired of Chief Becker as to how he felt having two (2) different cars on the road. Chief Becker stated he did not like it, but he must be realistic. Councilmember Cox stated there was a lot of tradition in the color blue. Mayor Heitzler inquired if Chief Becker had the funds for this in his 2017 budget. Chief Becker stated the nine (9) new vehicles were already budgeted, the rest would need to be discussed with Mr. Broom. Councilmember Habib inquired of Mr. Broom if the cost for the rest of the vehicles could be absorbed in the 2017 budget. Mr. Broom stated yes.

Review of Council Meeting Procedures (Mayor Heitzler and Mayor Pro Tem Phillips): Mayor Heitzler and Mayor Pro Tem Phillips requested Mr. Broom provide a copy of the rules and procedures for Council Meetings in City Council's meeting packet. Mr. Broom stated he was proposing that only department managers that have an item(s) on the City Council Agenda be required to attend future meetings for City Council. He stated he could create a rotating schedule for department managers who do not have items on the Agenda so City Council would not go the full year without seeing them. Mayor Heitzler stated having department managers attend the City Council meetings was a tradition that started many years ago; however, he agreed with Mr. Broom. Councilmember Condon inquired as to what would happen if a citizen attended a City Council meeting for a specific reason and that department managers did not have anything on the agenda. Councilmember Habib stated the people who were elected to deal with that can answer the questions. Councilmember Esarey stated if a citizen has a question they can contact the director ahead of time and ask them their questions. Councilmember Esarey stated the director will have a lot more information in their office than they are going to have in their hands here at a City Council meeting. He stated most of the general questions can be answered by City Council. Councilmember Cox stated other municipalities make citizens send the City Clerk the topics they want to discuss at the City Council meetings to have the proper department manager attend the meeting. Mayor Heitzler stated he still wants the City to have a small-town character and if a citizen wants to sit and watch government in action and ask City Council questions he felt they should be able. Councilmember Habib stated he agreed with Mayor Heitzler as every citizen should have the opportunity to speak to City Council on whatever they want to speak about, but he would like to see them sign in, discuss the topics they would like to speak about and have some order as to what is going on. Councilmember Esarey stated he did not feel there was a need to change anything regarding having citizens ask questions. Councilmember Esarey and Councilmember Habib stated they agreed and did not feel it was necessary to have department managers attend the City Council meetings.

City Building, Park Space, Etc. Naming Policy (Jake Broom, City Administrator): Mr. Broom stated staff came up with a proposed policy to give City Council the authority to name facilities, streets and parks after individuals or organizations. He stated it also allows for naming points of entry, trails, rooms, patios, etc. Mr. Broom inquired of City Council for their input. Councilmember Cox stated the only thing he would change would be the deceased policy and added that if someone was a servant of the City for a long time, he felt the City could honor that person while they are still alive. Councilmember Habib stated he agreed with Councilmember Cox. Mayor Heitzler stated he wished to have guidance for statues and portraits. Mayor Heitzler recognized Mr. Alan Wall, Chairman of the Planning Commission, who stated the Planning Commission oversees the naming of streets. Mr. Broom stated he meant naming streets after an individual or organization in an honorary fashion.

City Purchasing Policy (Greg Habib, Councilmember): Councilmember Habib stated one of the items in Mr. Broom's evaluation is his ability to keep City Council out of unnecessary decisions. Councilmember Habib discussed the City's Purchasing Policy stating he felt the policy was outdated by limiting Mr. Broom to approving only up to \$10,000, before requiring approval from City Council. Councilmember Habib stated the good thing about a \$10,000, limit was that Mr. Broom can make a presentation to City Council every month to purchase something and it is transparent as to what the City is spending; however, it delays Mr. Broom's ability to purchase and implement the budget that City Council has already approved. Councilmember Habib suggested mimicking other municipalities by placing every check run online. Mayor Heitzler inquired what Mr. Broom would like to see. Mr. Broom stated raising the thresholds to \$25,000, which is a standard number according research conducted the Assistant City Administrator, Mr. Moore. Mr. Broom suggested raising the threshold and posting the checks online. Councilmember Cox inquired about the department manager threshold. Mr. Broom stated it is \$500.00, before it needs his approval. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated sometimes when bids are presented City staff does not always recommend choosing the lowest bid. Councilmember Habib stated we can write a policy that states if City staff chooses to accept a bid that is not the lowest it will need to be brought before City Council for an explanation. Mr. Broom stated an ordinance would be prepared and presented before City Council to approve these changes.

FY 2018 Budget Discussion: Mr. Broom stated City staff had made few changes and one (1) proposed change since the budget meeting. He stated the first was regarding mosquito abatement and it had been removed from the Maintenance Division, as City staff would be requesting Berkeley County cover the City limits as they should be doing anyway; second, was the expense to create new "city limits" signs had been added; third, City staff budgeted to contract the maintenance of right-of-way's and grounds to a private company. He stated regarding city limit signs, City staff found that \$10,000.00, per sign was a conservative estimate for foam craft monument signs and was recommending that four (40 entrances be improved with these signs: Carnes Cross Roads area; Highway 176 (St. James Avenue), coming from Cane Bay; Highway 17A from both directions and lastly north of City Hall on Highway 52 (N Goose Creek Boulevard). Mayor Pro Tem Phillips inquired if the entire monument is made of foam. Mr. Broom stated yes.

Mr. Broom presented the contracting proposal for Right-of-Way and grounds maintenance by stating Mr. Price and Mr. Denson compiled estimates using actual contract numbers from primarily South Carolina Department of Transportation contracts. Mr. Broom stated if the City contracted its Right-of-Ways and ground maintenance, except for ditches, it would cost \$230,413.00, per year; and, currently the City's grounds Maintenance Division cuts about every two (2) weeks. If we contract, it will be once every three (3) weeks.

Mr. Broom reviewed with City Council the current staffing within the Maintenance Division and possible changes should they decide to contract with a private entity to maintain the City's Right-of-Ways and routine ground maintenance and stated it would be the potential for the elimination of five (5) budgeted positions; four (4) are currently vacant and one is filled. He stated the flex crew would add a fourth garbage route and a third yard debris route when we are fully staffed; the Maintenance Technician would be responsible for work orders and facility maintenance and there would not be grounds keeper. Mr. Broom stated the financial change would be that the Sanitation Division's budget would go up by \$186,000.00, and

the Maintenance Division's budget would go down almost \$400,000.00. He stated the net change would be a savings of \$211,768.00. Mr. Broom stated this does not include maintaining ditches, for that, Berkeley County would have to be relied upon. Mr. Broom stated if City Council decides to contract the Right-of-Way and grounds maintenance, it would be hard to start back up if City Council changed their mind next year due to the elimination of staff and equipment. He stated another point was should City Council agree to contract, the contractors would not be employees of the City, the City would be at the mercy of their schedule.

Mayor Heitzler stated Berkeley County's maintenance of the ditch was based on whether water is flowing through it or not, and the City's maintenance of the ditch had a lot to do with appearance. He stated the City would surrender that appearance to Berkeley County in this scenario. Mayor Heitzler inquired if the City was saving money, why had they not done it before. Mr. Broom stated the assumption was Mayor Heitzler wanted the budget to be based on maintaining the current level of service. He stated City staff would not propose something they felt would decrease the level of service the residents received. Councilmember Esarey inquired how often the City currently maintained the ditches. Mr. Price stated almost weekly, the large part of ditch maintenance is done in the late fall, winter and early spring. Mr. Price stated his department receives a lot of complaints from the residence regarding their ditches and they do preemptive ditch maintenance. Councilmember Habib stated Berkeley County was not maintaining the bare minimum in regard to ditches. Mr. Price reviewed the Right-of-Ways within the City: Highway 52, each side of the road and the median; Highway 176 all the way to Highway 17A; Old Moncks Corner Rd; Montague Plantation Road; Planation North Boulevard; Liberty Hall Road and Red Bank Rd. Mayor Heitzler stated Plantation North Boulevard was a Berkeley County road and the County accepted the roadway, but they would mow the high grass only a couple times a year, the people that lived there were not happy so the City took responsibility for maintaining the median. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated there was a significant difference between urban land scaping and rural land scaping, if the City decided to go with Berkeley County it will receive rural landscaping in throughout the City. Mayor Heitzler stated that is why the City took over the areas being discussed. Councilmember Habib stated he is not sure why the City mows Montague Plantation and Red Bank Road. Councilmember Habib stated Red Bank Road was all commercial, and inquired why the commercial entities did not take care of their own properties. Mr. Price stated we take care of Red Bank Road because we landscaped it. Councilmember Habib stated the problem is we must pay for this and Berkeley County is actually responsible and we do it because people call the City and complain.

Councilmember Habib stated we need to save \$211,000.00, a year and inquired as to what it was the City was willing to sacrifice to take care of the ditches. Councilmember Cox suggested taking some of the \$211,000.00, and contract out the ditches. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated the concept of changing the City's Right-of-Ways and ground maintenance from totally in house to outsourcing was fault with problems. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated they needed to phase this in and figure out what they could contract out.

Mr. Broom inquired if City Council would like to write the budget as though it would be contracted out. City Council agree to write the budget in its current state. Mr. Habib stated City Council needed to decide if they wanted to be all things to all people as it was becoming increasingly cost prohibitive to keep up. Councilmember Esarey stated he was not opposed to either one, but his biggest concern was the ditches. He stated he wished to see proposals and as the budget could be adjusted.

Adoption of FY 2018 Millage Rate and Local Option Sales Tax Credit Factor: Mayor Pro Tem Phillips inquired if City Council needed to act on the tax credit factor. Mr. Broom stated the auditor gave an extension to that Friday and Berkeley County needed to print tax bills, they needed the City's millage rate and rebate factor to move forward. Councilmember Cox inquired if once City Council gave the auditor the number, that number was set in stone and could not be reduced. Mr. Broom stated he was correct.

Councilmember Esarey made a motion to provide that number of the Local Option Sale Tax (LOST) Credit Factor. Mayor Pro Tem Phillips seconded the motion. Discussion occurred. Mr. Broom stated the auditor needed both the millage rate and the local option sale tax rate. Mayor Heitzler stated the millage rate does

not roll into the credit factor. Councilmember Habib stated the auditor needs the millage rate. Mayor Heitzler stated he would be opposed to making a motion on the millage rate that evening. Councilmember Habib stated they needed to provide them with a number, Berkeley County bills on behalf of the City. Hearing no further discussion, Mayor Heitzler called for the vote. All in favor, none opposed.

City Council discussed the budget and whether to adjust the millage rate. Councilmember Cox stated City staff and the Berkeley County Auditor needed an answer and City Council needed to move forward, Councilmember Habib agreed. Councilmember Cox stated he reluctantly made a motion to set the millage rate at 50.5 mills. Councilmember Habib seconded the motion.

Councilmember Habib – Yay
Councilmember Cox – Yay
Councilmember Phillips – Yay
Councilmember Condon - Yay
Councilmember Green-Fletcher – Yay
Mayor Heitzler – Nay

Motion carried.

Mr. Broom requested that City Council re-vote the LOST Credit Factor because the motion left out the number, which is needed for the record. Councilmember Condon made a motion to accept the proposed number of 0.001330 as the Local Option Sales Tax Credit Factor. Councilmember Esarey seconded. Hearing no discussion, Mayor Heitzler called for the vote. All in favor, none opposed. Motion Carried.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilmember Condon made a motion to go into executive session to discuss a contractual agreement concerning Charleston Baseball Academy's use of Dennis Park and the City Administrator's Annual Performance Evaluation. Councilmember Cox seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried. (7:38 pm)

Mayor Pro Tem Phillips made a motion to come out of executive session. Councilmember Cox seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried. No action was taken. (8:02 pm)

V. Adjournment:

Councilmember Esarey made a motion to adjourn. All in favor, non-opposed. Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Date: September 19, 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.