

City Council Workshop
February 27, 2018
6:00 P.M.
City Hall

Council Members Present:

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

Council Members Absent:

Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Phillips

Staff Present:

City Administrator Jake Broom; Assistant City Administrator Daniel Moore; City Clerk Kelly J. Lovette; Director of Public Works Chuck Denson; Director of Recreation TJ Rostin

Staff Absent:

None

Press Present:

None

Guests:

I. Call to Order:

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

II. Comments from the Audience:

There were no comments or questions.

III. Business:

- 1) **Request from St. James Wind Ensemble – Cultural Arts Commission (CAC):** Mr. Broom stated the CAC was approached by the St. James Wind Ensemble regarding \$1,000 grant match. He stated the CAC spoke with Mr. TJ Rostin, Director of Recreation, but Mr. Broom did not want the CAC to promise funds without City Council’s approval. Mr. Broom stated the City can afford to match the grant; however, this was not a budgeted item. Mr. Broom recommended developing a fund policy for the Culture Arts Commissions and asked for City Council’s guidance. Councilmember Cox stated he was still waiting for the CAC to make a presentation. Councilmember Esarey inquired if this should be tabled until all the information is provided. Mayor Heitzler stated he felt this should be tabled as the CAC was created to brainstorm cultural activities. He stated City Council knew the CAC would provide ideas and that City Council would have to find a place in the budget. Mayor Heitzler inquired as to what information would be needed before moving forward. Councilmember Cox stated a plan needed to be created detailing where the money would be going. He stated it was his intention to find funding, but a plan would need to be presented. Councilmember Habib stated there was a budget procedure and in order to support things like this, it needs to be a part of the budget process. Mr. Broom stated he would wait to receive information from the CAC and he would make a presentation to City Council at a future workshop. Mayor Heitzler stated this would not need to be tabled as Mr. Broom has the authority to approve the funding as it is only \$1,000. Mr. Broom stated he wanted City Council to be made aware since this was not a budgeted item.

- 2) **Liberty Hall Road Water Main - Re-Location Project:** Mr. Broom stated this item would be presented at the March City Council meeting as an expenditure request under the City Administrator’s Report. He stated in 2015, the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) coordinated the relocation of utilities for the Liberty Hall/Henry Brown Boulevard Phase 1 Project. He stated this relocation included one (1) of the City’s 10-inch water mains. Mr. Broom stated at SCDOT’s request, the City needed to relocate 750-feet of water line, which was done in 2016. Mr. Broom stated two (2) weeks ago, SCDOT met with the City’s engineer stating their plans were wrong, as they discovered by digging ditches and hitting the City’s water line. He stated SCDOT was requesting the City relocate an additional 725-feet of water line. He stated since the City’s water line is in their Right-of-Way, the City must pay for the relocation. Mr. Broom stated Mr. Chuck Denson, the City’s Director of Public Works, received bids for this project and the company that did the work the first time was the only one that submitted a complete bid. Mr. Broom stated the associated cost is a little less than \$82,000. Mr. Broom stated City staff was proposing to pay for this with the fund balance in the Water Fund which was about 1.4 million dollars. Mr. Broom stated Mr. Denson was present to answer any

questions. Councilmember Cox inquired as to who's fault this was. Mr. Broom stated either the SCDOT surveyor, the SCDOT engineer or both. Councilmember Habib inquired if SCDOT asked the City to move the wrong 750-feet or did they discover that not enough was moved. Mr. Broom stated they discovered not enough was moved. Mayor Heitzler thanked Mr. Broom for briefing City Council.

- 3) **Foster Creek Boat Landing:** Mr. Broom stated in the 2017 Goals and Objectives an item under the one-year plan is to evaluate and provide access to the Goose Creek Reservoir. He stated \$10,000 of the Hospitality Tax budget was set aside to design a boat landing in Foster Creek Park. Mr. Broom stated he was requesting guidance from City Council as there are significant wetlands on the property, of which was a concern that will elevate the construction cost. Mr. Broom presented a layout of the property to City Council and stated there is a significant distance from the parking lot to the water, and the simplest solution to fix this would be to increase the size of the parking lot to accommodate more vehicles. He stated the boat landing would be used for kayaks and canoes only; not motorized boats, as discussed in the past. He stated the existing fence would need to be reconfigured to control access to the baseball fields, and the gravel trail would need to be created from the parking lot to the kayak/canoe launch. Mr. Broom stated some of the other issues he foresees dealt with lighting, as currently there is a 900-foot walk from the parking lot to the launch; and, he predicts maintenance will be a problem, as the City will need to find funding to maintain the boat landing; and, he perceives foreseeable issues during the construction process due to the wetlands. Mr. Broom presented a general drawing of a proposed plan and stated City Council discussed using the side of the property that is closer to the powerline easement; however, the wetlands were substantial at that location which creates a longer walk. He stated the field located by the powerline easement was currently in use, therefore a new parking lot would need to be created. Mr. Broom stated the simplest way to fix this would be to expand the current parking lot.

Mayor Heitzler stated it sounded like it would be too expensive to move ahead with the project due to the substantial wetlands. Mr. Broom stated hand tools would need to be used, as no heavy equipment is allowed when working with wetlands, which makes the process more expensive. Mayor Heitzler stated it did not seem worth the effort or money. Councilmember Esarey stated he agreed, as the City has other objectives that it could work on. Councilmember Esarey made a motion to omit this item from the one-year plan. Councilmember Cox seconded the motion. Following no further discussion, Mayor Heitzler called for the vote. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

- 4) **Hiker/Biker Master Plan Update:** Mr. Broom stated Mr. Moore along with Mr. Rostin prioritized four (4) recommendations for the Hiker/Biker Master Plan. He stated the first is to connect the trails owned by the City, that are being constructed, as part of Henry Brown Blvd Phase II; the second, to extend the final 1,500-feet of sidewalk on Liberty Hall Road; the third, to create a signalized pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Highway 52 (N Goose Creek Boulevard) and Liberty Hall Road; and the last recommendation, he stated was a bit unrealistic, to create a trail from the 1-million-gallon tank across from Walmart to the hospital located at Carnes Crossroads.

Councilmember Esarey stated grants were used for the trails that already existed within the City. Mr. Broom stated it is a three-year cycle to apply for the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Grant. He stated the TAP Grant was the grant that was award for the sidewalk in Boulder Bluff. Mr. Broom stated the City could try to apply for the grant, but it was unlikely the City would be selected. Mayor Heitzler stated City Council would Mr. Broom's recommendations under advisement.

- 5) **Fire Station IV Update:** Mr. Broom stated another item on the Strategic Plan was to create a plan to construct and staff a fire station at Carnes Crossroads called Fire Station IV. Mr. Broom stated he wished to discuss the Liberty Hall situation. He stated prior to building the new Headquarters Fire Station, City staff assumed the City would need two (2) new fire stations; one (1) located at the Carnes Crossroads subdivision and the other located at the Liberty Hall subdivision. Mr. Broom stated the Liberty Hall Development Agreement states a fire station needs to be in or near the Liberty Hall subdivision. He stated the new Headquarters Fire Station was located 1.7 road miles from the entrance to the Liberty Hall subdivision and 1.5 miles by the shortest possible route. Mr. Broom stated that assumes the City's fire responders would be using Water Tower Road to access Liberty Hall Road. He explained that Water Tower Road was a dirt road that runs in front of the 500,000-water tank. Mr. Broom stated this road has become impassable for firetrucks due to a water system improvement project. He stated the City's engineer has designed a Road Improvement Plan to stabilize the existing road to which materials have already been ordered. He stated the project should be complete in a couple of weeks. Mr. Broom stated that county-wide deficiencies in the fire service have caused a lot of unrest to which he felt was unwarranted. He stated the City's Fire Department has an Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating of two (2); stating a rating of one (1) is the best and a ten (10), the worst. Mr. Broom stated the City's Fire Department was last evaluated in January 2015, which was before Fire Station III and the new Headquarters' Fire Station were online, and the City still received a two (2) rating. He stated there was almost no difference in insurance rates between a class two (2) and class one (1) agency. Mr. Broom stated that the ISO report evaluated 49,010 fire departments across the country and only 810 were rated class two (2) or class one (1). He stated this puts the City of Goose Creek in the top 2% in the country. He stated City staff recommended that Station I adequately serve Liberty Hall Road and the Henry E. Brown Jr. Boulevard corridor, and there is no immediate need to build an additional fire station in that area.

Mr. Broom stated the Liberty Hall Subdivision Home Owner's Association (HOA) agreed with the City's assessment and stated they would rather not have a fire station due to the noise alone. He stated Fire Station IV was an immediate need. Councilmember Esarey inquired if adding a road behind Fire Station I to Lindy Creek Road was doable and inquired as to the distance. Mr. Broom stated the distance was 500-feet; however, there are wetlands on the side which could impact the cost. Mr. Broom stated he believes adding a road connecting to Lindy Creek Road would be ideal; however, Tower Road provides access to Liberty Hall Road. Councilmember Esarey stated this was something that could be discussed at the Strategic Planning Workshop. Mr. Broom stated if City Council would like to add this road it would need to be added to the budget. He stated currently adding ROC and renting equipment to compact the ROC is something that is doable this year and does not have a significant impact on the budget. Councilmember Habib stated he was interested in building a road connecting to Lindy Creek Road, as he preferred ideal instead of what gets by. Mayor Heitzler inquired of Fire Chief Chapman if he was concerned with the distance from Liberty Hall Road to the Headquarters Fire Station. Chief Chapman stated he was not concerned, as their response time for the last 15 years has been pretty good and improved since connecting Montague Planation and Liberty Hall Road. Chief Chapman stated this connection has allowed Fire Station III to get to Liberty Hall Road faster.

Mr. Broom stated the Development Agreement with the Daniel Island Company requires they donate a portion of land to the City for Fire Station IV. He stated currently negotiations are for two (2) acres of land. Mr. Broom stated the City has larger fire station sites which are more expensive to maintain. He stated the Daniel Island Company sent him three (3) proposed locations which are all slightly northwest of the main intersection, roughly across the entrance from the new Roper Hospital. Mr. Broom stated City staff recommends the facility house one (1) company, which would consist of four (4) firefighters and one (1) pumper truck. He stated the fire station could be designed for future expansion, if necessary. Mr. Broom stated City staff does not think a ladder truck would be necessary as it would be more valuable for the first responding vehicle to put water on the fire. Mr. Broom stated there was a 95-foot ladder truck in Pine Ridge, located on Meyers Road, which is 1.5 miles away and is available via mutual aid. Mayor Heitzler inquired as to what kind of aid the City has with Meyers Road. Chief Chapman stated mutual and automatic. Mr. Broom explained it was dependent on the type of call. Mr. Broom presented a map to City Council showing the proposed location of the fire station. Councilmember Habib inquired if there would be access behind the fire station directly into the Carnes Crossroads subdivision. Mr. Broom stated eventually there would be, as the sites the developer sent him were on a road the does not exist yet; however, they think in the next three (3) to five (5) years there will be a road built.

Mr. Broom stated his proposal for paying for Fire Station IV. He stated Wilden Financial Services was currently studying the City's Impact Fees and would be recommending they be increased, as the last increase by the City occurred in 1988. He stated the City could bond the revenue using Installment Purchase Revenue Bonds, which was what the City did to build Fire Station I and Fire Station III. He stated the early cost estimate could be about 3.5 million dollars. Mr. Broom stated the impact fee could also be used to pay for trucks and equipment, everything but the salaries for the firefighters. He stated an issue he came across is that the Development Agreement with Carnes Crossroads from 2006 states the City will never raise their impact fees. He stated this is where a lot of new homes are being built. Mr. Broom stated he spoke with the Daniel Island Company and they are willing to listen to the City's proposal and may voluntarily raise their fees, however, the City cannot force them. Mr. Broom stated the developer is aware that it is in their best interest to agree as the higher they are willing to raise their impact fees, the faster the City can build the fire station in their neighborhood. Mayor Heitzler inquired if there was any other fee that could be applied. Mr. Broom stated no, not that he was aware of. Mr. Broom presented a rough timeline and stated this year the City would finish the Impact Fee Study and find the site for Fire Station IV. He stated next year, the City would hire an architect to design the fire station. Mr. Broom stated in 2020, the City will get financing, hire a contractor, begin construction, and order the fire truck as it can take nine (9) months to a year to assemble. He stated in 2021, the City will hire staff, get the truck, and open Fire Station IV for a partial year depending on the construction schedule. Lastly, he stated in 2022 Fire Station IV will be fully operational for the entire year. Mr. Broom presented the anticipated staffing cost. The approximate cost for twelve (12) fire fighters that work four (4) at a time and three (3) shifts is \$750,000, per year. Over the past five (5) years our General Fund Revenue growth is averaging 6.5% per year which does not include the years the City increased taxes. Our expenditures have grown about 4%. Our revenue is growing faster than our expenditures by about 2.5%. Mr. Broom stated if the City can maintain a 2% gap between how fast the City's revenues is growing and how fast the City's expenditures are growing, by 2021 the City's revenue will exceed the City's expenditure by a little over 1 million dollars. He stated this is net of the retirement increases that the City is aware are coming. Mr. Broom stated one (1) option is to cover the equipment costs using Impact Fees and to budget conservatively, the City can cover the cost of the people with the revenue growth only if our revenue continues to outpace expenditures. Mr. Broom stated a second option would be to increase taxes, similar to what was done to finance Fire Stations I and III.

Councilmember Condon inquired after Fire Station IV is built when the City could anticipate a ladder truck. Chief Chapman stated in the next ten (10) years the City would know for sure if one would be needed. Councilmember Habib stated he was less comfortable with using Impact Fees to finance Fire Station IV. He stated it was premature to discuss how this will be paid for as the Impact Fee Study was not complete. He stated he believes this is a conversation that needs

to be had when all the data has been acquired. Mr. Broom stated he agreed as the City could not strictly bond the Impact Fee Revenue as it is considered too volatile. He stated the City would opt for an Installment Purchase Revenue Bond which would be backed by however the City would choose to pay it back.

Mayor Heitzler recognized a gentleman from the audience who inquired if CSX Railroad could move back their arms. Mr. Broom stated it may be an option, but that CSX was difficult to work with and there could be a potential to have car trapped between the arm and a train and he was not sure if CSX would be willing to accept the liability. Mayor Heitzler recognized a gentleman from the audience who shared his views on widening Liberty Hall Road and Henry Brown Boulevard, as well as the fire stations and inquired if Impact Fees could be raised regarding commercial properties that are coming into the Carnes Crossroads area to build Fire Station IV. Mr. Broom stated no.

IV. Executive Session

Councilmember Esarey made a motion to go into Executive Session. Councilmember Condon seconded the motion. Mayor Heitzler called for the vote. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried. (6:49 pm)

Councilmember Condon made a motion to come out of Executive Session. Councilmember Cox seconded the motion. Mayor Heitzler called for the vote. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried. (6:54 pm)

Mayor Heitzler stated while in Executive Session City Council received information regarding contract negotiations and potential contract negotiations. He stated the topics discussed were regarding the possible sale of City property and the Goose Creek Village application for incentives.

V. Comments from The Audience

There were no comments or questions.

VI. Adjournment:

Councilmember Esarey made a motion to adjourn. All in favor, non-opposed. Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Date: April 10, 2018

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.