



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

City Council Chambers

Tuesday, January 25, 2022 at 3:00 PM

MINUTES

Call to Order

Mayor Becky S. Smith called the meeting to order.

Members Present

Mayor, Becky S. Smith, Council Members: Joe Will, Brent Guffey and Donnie Griffin were all present. City Manager, James Inman was present as well. Council Members, Kay McCathen, Brenda Boyd, and Dan Boling were absent. A quorum was present.

Audit Presentation

Tony Brewer, CPA of Eddie Carrick, CPA addressed Council regarding the 2021 Budget Audit. Mr. Brewer informed Council that his organization services over 28 municipalities and have over 15 years of experience. Per new Local Government Commission guidelines, auditors are required to give a report to Council addressing any concerns from the year end audit. Mr. Brewer had no concerns to address Council regarding the budget. The Bessemer City 2021 budget was in great shape. All performance areas met the LGC's requirements. The City met all requirements per NC General Statutes.

Resolution Approving an Installment Financing Contract- Stinger Park Lighting

City Manager, James Inman addressed Council about the resolution approving an installment financing contract. A public hearing was held on Monday, January 24th at 3:00 PM to allow the public time to address Council regarding the resolution to enter into installment financing for Stinger Park lighting. There was none. Bids were received from HomeTrust and Truist. City Staff recommends that the Truist financing proposal for 10 years with a fixed interest rate of 2.27% be selected.

By motion of Joe Will and unanimous vote, the resolution approving an installment financing contract with Truist for 10 years with a fixed interest rate of 2.27% was approved.

Department Head Reports

Bessemer City department heads gave reports on their department's status:

Josh Ross, Director of Administration- Mr. Ross addressed Council regarding the Osage Mill Redevelopment project, the 85 Commerce Project, the business accelerator program, and a recent visit from the Ambassador and Consul General from Belgium. The Ambassador and Consulate from Belgium came to visit the Dhollandia plant in the Southridge Business Park.

JoD Franklin, Parks and Recreation Director- Mr. Franklin addressed Council regarding the two new hires, Doug Ross and Larry Boone. One will be filling a vacant position and another will be taking over Mark Nichols place. Mark Nichols will have a retirement reception tomorrow at 12:00 Noon at the Community

Center. Stinger Park is still coming along well. Shannon Ramsey will be hired as temporary part time to help with the Kiser Senior Center. The Center will be opened on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8AM to 12Noon, and at 4PM to 8PM on Tuesday and Thursday nights.

Charlie Harbin, Fire Chief- Mr. Harbin addressed Council regarding modifications and work being done to the Fire Station. Also, call volume is beginning to rise. Defibrillators have been ordered for the Police Department. Once they have arrived, the Fire and Police Department will be dispatched to cardiac arrest calls in Bessemer City, which will decrease citizen response time.

Jamie Ramsey, Assistant City Manager- Mr. Ramsey addressed Council regarding a 5% sewer rate increase from the City of Gastonia. This rate is a direct increase from the City of Gastonia. Dole is back in operation, and we have seen their water usage rates rise. A budget amendment may have to be done at a later date to balance the budget. This will be determined at a later date.

David James, Captain/Patrol Commander- Mr. James informed Council that the Police Department is doing well.

Diane Jenkins, Finance Director – Ms. Jenkins addressed Council regarding the annual audit and general Finance and Customer Service department progress.

Nathan Hester, City Planner & Code Enforcement – Mr. Hester addressed Council regarding the town homes project, the Lennar Homes project, and a DOT traffic study. Lennar Homes will have a public hearing at the February 2022 Regular City Council meeting.

City Manager's Report

Mr. Inman informed Council on the progress of Stinger Park, the annual Planning Retreat, the creation of two positions and the general City affairs. The annual Planning Retreat will be held on Thursday, February 17th and Friday, February 18th. City Staff request that two positions be created to aid in the City's landscaping. Previously the City had contracted with a third party to handle most of our landscaping needs. However, said contractor has seen a huge reduction in his workforce and has had to close his business. Thus, a financial analysis was done to determine if contracting out City landscaping duties or doing them in house were more affordable. City Manager Inman explained that brining landscaping back in house would allow for more staffing hours to complete projects throughout the year.

By motion of Brent Guffey and unanimous vote, two new positions for landscaping were created.

Council General Discussion

Mayor Smith opened the floor for Council general discussion. Council member, Joe Will inquired about speed monitoring on Bess Town Rd and Sherwood Ave. Council member, Brent Guffey inquired about the plate readers on Costner School Rd. Council member, Donnie Griffin commended all City departments on a job well done throughout the holiday season and winter weather.

Adjourn

Being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:06 PM by motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote.

Becky S. Smith, Mayor

Hydeia Y. Hayes, City Clerk