



CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

City Council Chambers

Monday, May 10, 2021 at 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present

Mayor, Becky S. Smith, Council Members: Alfred Carpenter, Kay McCathen, Brenda Boyd, Dan Boling, Joe Will, and Donnie Griffin were all present. Assistant City Manager, Jamie Ramsey and City Attorney, David Smith was present as well.

Call to Order, Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order. First Wesleyan Church Pastor, Matt Mitchell led the audience in prayer. Mayor Smith led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adjustment and Approval of the Agenda

By motion of Brenda Boyd and unanimous vote, the May agenda was approved.

Request to Speak/Opportunity for Public Comment

Mayor Smith opened the floor for public comment. There was no one present to speak.

Special Presentations

Central Drug - Mayor and City Council recognized Robby and Melissa Putnam for their service to the City. Central Drug has been dedicated to the Bessemer City citizenry for over 94 years.

Consent Agenda — The following items on the Consent Agenda were unanimously approved by motion of Alfred Carpenter:

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Regular Meeting Minutes of April 12th, 2021
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Work Session Meeting Minutes of April 27th, 2021
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Special Meeting Minutes of April 30th, 2021
4. **Capital Project Budget Amendment:** City Staff is seeking the approval of the reformatted capital project budget amendment regarding Stinger Park. Said reformatting is needed to meet LGC requirements.
5. **National Day of Prayer:** The National Day of Prayer was Thursday, May 6th. A proclamation that Mayor Smith read aloud recognizing the day needs to be ratified.

Asset Management Plan

Kenneth Orié and Devin Owen, of Withers Ravenel addressed Council regarding the asset management plan. Mr. Orié thanked Mayor and City Council for allowing them to work with City Staff and contribute to the betterment of the City. Mr. Orié discussed the AIA program and the results. The AIA program is a risk management tool started in 2015, to aid City administrations to develop an asset management plan for their water and sewer utilities. The program assesses the following: current status, what's the level of service, and what paving improvements are needed. Overall, the program determined that the Bessemer City systems are in good condition. Withers Ravenel mapped the entire water and sewer systems of Bessemer City with GEO referencing. This mapping can now be accessed by internal GIS systems. Assessments of man holes, pipe materials, age, and proximity to wetlands were done to collect data for the program. Next steps are to understand the finances and review recommended projects and determine how they can be completed simultaneously. The program will start this year, and going forward we have scheduled projects according to our capital outlay budget. Additionally, City Staff will be trained on how to add items to the system and keep it current.

Summer Feed Program Presentation

Event & Recreation Supervisor, Andrea Nixon addressed Council regarding the creation of a Summer Feed Program in Bessemer City. The program is administered by Gaston County Schools and is federally funded. The program will start June 7th, 2021 and is served during a pool break. Discussion was held regarding possible programming at the pool to engage youth who participate. This would be an open site for all youth 18 and under to receive a free lunch. This program is intended to positively impact families in the area and help them stretch their dollars. It is free for the City to be a host site. This will give City Staff an opportunity to connect and do programming with local Bessemer City children. This program will be heavily advertised through the City's website and social media pages.

Establish Public Hearing for 2021-2022 Proposed Budget

City staff requested that a public hearing regarding the 2021-2022 proposed budget ordinance be established for Council's next regular meeting.

By motion of Dan Boling and unanimous vote, a public hearing regarding the 2021-2022 proposed budget ordinance will be held at 7:00PM in Council Chambers on Monday, June 14th, 2021.

Public Hearing - Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Update

According to NC General Statute City Council held a public hearing to consider the adoption of the revised and updated Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). This public hearing was advertised in accordance with NCGS.

Code Enforcement Officer, Nathan Hester addressed Council regarding the public hearing. To meet new statutory requirements, a new Land Development Code and changes to the Zoning map are required. This new Land Development Code addresses changes to accessory structure requirements, single family homes, new business placement and parking requirements. After this public comment period, Staff will report to the planning board for a formal recommendation to City Council.

By motion of Dan Boling and unanimous vote, the public hearing regarding the UDO update was opened at 7:49 PM.

Mayor Smith asked if there was anyone to speak in favor of the UDO update. There was none.

Mayor Smith asked if there was anyone to speak in opposition of the UDO update. There was none.

By motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, the public hearing regarding the UDO update was closed at 7:50 PM.

National Police Week Proclamation

Mayor Smith read the proclamation aloud and proclaimed Sunday, May 9th-Saturday, May 15th as National Police Week here in Bessemer City, NC. Mayor Smith thanked the Police Chief Ellis and the police department for their dedication.

By motion of Joe Will and unanimous vote, the proclamation regarding National Police Week in Bessemer City was adopted.

Juneteenth Week Proclamation

Mayor Smith read the proclamation aloud and proclaimed Sunday, June 13th until Saturday, June 19th as Juneteenth week in Bessemer City. Mayor Smith encouraged all present to attend the 3rd Annual Juneteenth Festival on Friday, June 18th in downtown Bessemer City.

By motion of Kay McCathen and unanimous vote, the proclamation regarding Juneteenth Week in Bessemer City was adopted.

Resolution- Opposition to HB 401/SB 349

Code Enforcement Officer, Nathan Hester addressed Council regarding the adopting of a resolution opposing two bills regarding single family homes regulations. The bill is currently being proposed to become State Law along with 160 D by the general assembly to expanding housing types within residential districts, however; multiple cities are in opposition of it. The passing of this bill will permit duplexes and triplexes in a single residential family district. City Staff would like to recommend that Council oppose this bill. Furthermore, it exposes low income residents and creates density on infrastructure produces more stress on Police and Fire services.

By motion of Joe Will and unanimous vote, the resolution regarding HB 401 and SB 349 was adopted.

Resolution - Authorizing A Policy for Mutual Aid Assistance with Other Law Enforcement Agencies

Assistant City Manager, Jamie Ramsey addressed City Council regarding the adopting of a resolution in support of a mutual aid assistance policy. This is an existing agreement that we currently operate under. At this time, it must be renewed.

By motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, the resolution authorizing a policy for mutual aid assistance with other law enforcement agencies was adopted.

Approval of Building Rehab Incentive Grant (BRIG)

Director of Administration, Josh Ross addressed Council regarding the consideration of approving grant funds for building improvements at 128 & 130 West Virginia Avenue. An application from the property owner has been submitted to bring the buildings up to code. Said owner has plans to renovate both buildings at the same time. Renovations will highlight the historic features of the building and offer outdoor dining and seating. Discussion regarding budgetary funds were discussed. Money is in the budget to be allocated to the following project. BRIG funds are given as a reimbursement up to \$10,000 in matching funds per project. Funds will be dispersed once the property owner has all occupancy certificates and work has been completed.

By motion of Kay McCathen and unanimous vote, \$20,000 of BRIG matching funds will be reimbursed to the property owner of 128 and 130 West Virginia Avenue.

Ordinance- Vacate & Close 205 East Maryland Avenue:

Code Enforcement Officer, Don Mauldin address Council regarding a vacate and close order for property at 205 East Maryland Avenue. In an effort to continue with the revitalization throughout the, City Staff try to maintain nuisances. City Staff has addressed residents at this location about high grass, sewer leaks, and other minimum housing issues since of May 2020. Thus, City Staff is requesting a close and vacate order until the minimum housing issues have been addressed.

Light discussion between Council, City Attorney, and City Staff ensued.

City Attorney Smith instructed Code Enforcement Officer, Don Mauldin to inform new owners about the close and vacate order.

By motion of Joe Will and unanimous vote, the ordinance to close and vacate property located at 205 East Maryland Avenue was approved.

Pedestrian Plan Update:

Director of Administration, Josh Ross addressed Council regarding the pedestrian plan update. In 2019 the City received a grant to revise our existing pedestrian plan which outlines existing walking conditions, identifies needed improvements, and recommends the location and type of pedestrian paths that should be installed. NC DOT had a lapse in funding causing a delay in the plan. In an effort to determine the greatest need and areas of impact, the City conducted a community survey to explore and identify existing conditions. City Staff is currently working to complete this plan, and submit it to Council for adoption.

Assistant City Manager's Report

Assistant City Manager, Jamie Ramsey addressed Council regarding FY 2021-2022 Budget books. By general consensus, Council decided to complete the budget review at the May 2021 Work Session. Mr. Ramsey addressed Council about general updates and progress of Stinger Park.

Council General Discussion

Mayor Smith opened the floor for Council general discussion. There was none.

Adjourn

Being no further business to come before the board, by motion of Alfred and unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM.