

**CITY OF LIBERTY WORK SESSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 4, 2008 - 6:00 P.M.
ROSEWOOD CENTER
MINUTES**

This meeting was called to order by Mayor Deese. Present were Council Members: Josh Harrison, Brian Petersen, Walt McJunkin, Michael Sheriff, Dwight Yates, and Rick Clark.

Others Present: Chief Sargent, Chief Miller, Barry Chappell, Ray Clark Shirley Worden and Roger Duncan.

Mayor Deese welcomed everyone and the meeting started at precisely 6:00 p.m.

DISCUSSION: RECOMMENDATION FORM FROM PLANNING COMMISSION

Mayor Deese stated there were a couple of issues on this matter. One, we tabled the property at 327 West Front Street because of a tie vote. Even though we voted, there was some discussion on rezoning the property at 327 West Front Street as well as the property located on 109 S. Peachtree St. When we received the recommendation form from the Planning Commission, both of these properties were put on the same recommendation form and we voted on both pieces of property in a single vote. However, the applications were submitted to the Planning Commission separately. CM Sheriff stated he found out later that each piece of property was a separate application. CM Sheriff stated we voted on two pieces of property on one recommendation form and I believe we acted improperly there. CM Petersen stated he thought we needed to vote on each one independently. Mayor Deese stated whoever made the motion and second needed to rescind the motion and second, if that is proper protocol, and we will put this on the agenda for the next council meeting on Monday night if that is acceptable to everyone. Mayor Deese asked Mr. Duncan if he wanted to comment on this. Mr. Duncan stated he just wanted them to vote on the two properties separately. Mayor Deese asked Ms. Worden if she had anything she wanted to comment on since her property had a tie vote. Ms. Worden stated she would still like to have her property rezoned as stated in her application. CM Sheriff stated there was some confusion on that because they were told you wanted to rescind your application. Ms. Worden stated no, she did want to proceed with the rezoning request. CM Clark asked if the main purpose for Ms. Worden's rezoning was so that she could bake in her home. Ms. Worden stated no, her purpose was to have a sign in her yard so people would see that she does catering and call her. Mayor Deese stated she could not do that under residential unless the sign is attached to her house. Ms. Worden stated that was correct. Ms. Worden stated no one's ever driven down the street and looks at a person's house all the time, so they would not see the sign. That is the main reason for the rezoning. CM Sheriff asked if we needed to go back and ask the Planning Commission to re-submit their recommendation form? Mayor Deese asked Barry Chappell to be sure the Planning Commission at their next meeting re-submitted their recommendation form on those two properties. CM Clark asked Mr. Duncan if he was rezoning for the future and he answered yes. CM Clark asked why there was not a Request Number on the Application Forms. Barry Chappell said he would check to see what the sequence was. Sue Woods stated there had never been any request numbers filled out on the application forms, at least not in the files she has seen. Mayor Deese stated it might be a good idea to assign numbers to the application form.

DISCUSSION: PICKENS COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY MEETING:

Mayor Deese reported that he and Olen Hamlin had met with the Pickens County Water Authority this past week. He stated he had the Clerk record the minutes of this meeting and pass along a copy of them to you. Mayor Deese stated he wanted council to read over the minutes and

they will be discussing this meeting in the Vision Retreat. We were informed that the Greenville Water Authority is in studies now, which could be concluded within a year, of peak water usage. If any of their users go above their peak, they could be fined as much as \$250,000. We are not confirming this, it is just a possibility. That would bankrupt most communities. Mayor Deese stated we are looking at the methodology of going over that peak rate or at least having a back up system in the event that we approach those peaks, we can shut it off and go to another user. Those are some of the avenues we are looking at. CM Sheriff stated we looked at the possibility several times of off peak pumping into out tanks. Are we doing that now or are we full? Mayor Deese stated right now we are filling the tanks and emptying them ever so often, but we do not have an automatic fill and drain system. Mayor Deese stated we are looking into ways to make out system function automatically without manually doing this. You will never know when you are hitting your peaks unless you have a system set up. CM Sheriff stated they looked at that a couple of years ago and talked about bringing that ground storage water tank back to use. Mayor Deese stated that was another possibility as well. CM Sheriff stated we could do a lot of our pump storage after midnight.

DISCUSSION: LIBERTY IDOL/HOSPITALITY TAX

Mayor Deese stated the Liberty Idol would be starting April 12th. He stated the past two years have proven very successful. I believe a good use of hospitality funds would be to allow Liberty to be the prime sponsor for the Liberty Idol. It would be the City of Liberty presents the Liberty Idol, not someone else's name as the prime sponsor. What better way to use some of our Hospitality Tax than promoting the Liberty Idol. I would like to use \$10,000 of the Hospitality Tax to use for the City to be the primary sponsor. CM Sheriff asked if that was a budget he was requesting annually to do? Mayor Deese said it would be in the budget annually and could increase over the years. Mayor Deese stated he would like to see council approve that amount for the Liberty Idol. CM Sheriff stated there was no question about the value of the Liberty Idol to the community and the return to them. CM Sheriff stated he would like to see a line item budget as to where that \$10,000 would go. Mayor Deese stated we would still be sending out sponsor letters but the City would be the main sponsor. Mayor Deese stated it takes about \$30,000 to run the Liberty Idol and could increase over the years. Mayor Deese stated this year the Idol would run through July 5th and we will be planning a July 4th festival encouraging people to come out on the 5th and participate. Mayor Deese stated he wanted to put this on the agenda for next week. Mayor Deese stated we have applied for an advertising grant that would help with the Liberty Idol funding. We will not know if we get any money until May and would not get any money until July. CM Sheriff asked who handled administering the funds. Mayor Deese replied that the City sets up a separate account and administers the funds. CM McJunkin asked if the Mayor was going to have a committee be in charge of administering the funds. Mayor Deese stated Roy Costner is the committee and he has people under him. The Mayor stated Chief Miller, Sue, Josie and him have meetings with Roy periodically to go over the spending and see where we are. Mayor Deese stated he would be glad to print a spread sheet out for council as we move forward. CM Clark stated can we do something so every business from Subway to Panchos can benefit from that. Mayor Deese stated we have the signs up around the stage. He stated those who are sponsors can put something on the door of their business. CM Clark stated can we do printed advertisements or something. Mayor Deese stated if there is a printed advertisement all the sponsors go in it, like if something is put in the newspaper. CM Clark stated that was before we were using tax payer dollars. CM Clark stated we ask these restaurants to go through all this and tell them here's your benefit from the town and then if we get a chance to give them something in return, we need to do what we can and not exclude them because they are not a \$1000 sponsor or something. Mayor Deese stated there are certain perks for a \$2500 sponsor because if Charter Media comes in and they run their program again, if you are a \$2500 sponsor you're going to get a commercial run on that video whereas if you are a \$600 sponsor you will not. CM Petersen

stated he thought CM Clark's point was that every business in the City that pays Hospitality Tax was already sponsoring this. CM Sheriff stated no, they are not sponsoring this already, none of the Hospitality Tax comes from the business owner, it comes from the customers. The business owner will only benefit from the Liberty Idol which is drawing the people downtown. CM Clark stated we want them to benefit more then. Mayor Deese stated he believed the business owners do benefit from the Liberty Idol. Mayor Deese stated we would be controlling the vendor situation better this year also.

DISCUSSION: LADDER TRUCK PARTS/HOUSING LADDER TRUCK

Mayor Deese stated he wanted to bring up a point regarding the ladder truck. Chief Sargent received a letter from LaFrance stating that they are in Chapter 11 Bankruptcy now so parts are hard to come by. LaFrance plans on coming out of Chapter 11 in 90 days. We need to repair the seals on the ladder truck. Other places have experienced difficulty in LaFrance getting their parts to them in a timely manner. What we plan on doing is let the service company go ahead and put the parts order in and they will house the truck during that time. Another issue is once we get the truck repaired and back, where can we house it. One suggestion is to add on an extra bay at the end of the building sufficient to house the ladder truck. If you have other suggestions we need to discuss it. We will bring this issue up at our work retreat for discussion. We can be getting some estimates on the costs of housing the ladder truck. I have asked the staff for their capital expenditures for next year. Mayor Deese stated Gresham Barrett stopped by today because we received the \$44,000 for turn-out gear and we had some pictures made with him.

DISCUSSION: VISION RETREAT MARCH 1ST

Mayor Deese reminded everyone that the Vision Retreat is March 1st and to be sure to have that on their calendars. Mayor Deese invited everyone to a meeting on March 3rd with the Community Design Dream Team. Mayor Deese reported that he ran into Shirley Sarlin who said she had some funds set aside for a memorial to Ralph Sarlin in the park. I think a happy conclusion came out of it as to a water fall fountain of some type. Maybe a piece of black granite with some inscription on it with water falling over it placed somewhere in the courtyard. One possible place is next to the stage where the ivy is growing there facing Commerce Street. In talking with Barry Anderson who is part of our art design team, and he indicated that he knows a lot of people who do this sort of thing. I wanted everyone to be thinking about that. CM Clark asked who was going to maintain it. Mayor Deese stated the City will maintain it. It will not need a water line, it will be recycled water. CM Clark stated we cannot even keep the weeds out of the park and fill in the dirt where it was graded six months ago. CM Sheriff stated the solution to that was not to develop more. Mayor Deese stated that is one of the perks with the art and design program. They have a beautification committee, and as long as the beautification committee is active, we should not see those kinds of problems. Of course active is the key word there. Mayor Deese stated another discussion for our work retreat is the county has indicated for their fire and EMS training center they really like the location at the end of Hedgepath, by the old treatment center. It looks to be about 6 to 8 acres they would like to convey over. They have \$450,000 in their budget for their training center. I think it would be a win win situation for Liberty. We will look at the maps and discuss this at work retreat. Also, we will have the recommendation from the Planning Commission on the council meeting agenda and the Liberty Idol Hospitality Tax.

CM McJunkin stated he was waiting on the Department of Natural Resources to respond as to what they are going to do to help us out with the beaver situation. I hope to have a response this coming week.

Mayor Deese reported he had Bill McCall from the DOT come out and they looked at the roadway by the stadium as well as in front of the high school. Mr. McCall said as soon as the

weather warms up a little bit they will re-asphalt those areas. Also, around May the State will be repaving Peachtree Street and Front Street. The CDBG bids should go out March 1st.

CM Clark stated he agreed with what former Mayor Hughes has asked about in front of his building where we have made a mess. What are we going to do with that? Until we get our design completed, can we not put pressure run in there to open that access back up? Mayor Deese stated he keeps pushing it and it keeps dragging on. It has taken a lot longer than it should have. If we put pressure run back in there and open it back up we are just defeating our purpose. We've got it all lined out now. CM Clark said it thought the overall plan was going to tie in with the plans from the Mayor's Institute. CM Sheriff stated they are incorporating it in as part of their design. We will have a preliminary of what they have come up with in this next meeting on March 3rd. Mayor Deese said hopefully we will have our retaining wall in before then. CM Petersen stated he supported CM Clark in that he thought we should fill it and then when we get ready to put our retaining wall in we use the fill that we put in there are back fill. In the meantime it would be functional and not a hazard. Right now it is a hazard and a liability. CM Sheriff stated we are only talking about 2 more weeks to having something done. CM Petersen stated, with all due respect, we have been talking for a long time. When the action starts, Olen can move the few loads of dirt in 15 minutes or half an hour at the most with a skid steer. So, for the small cost we would incur it would be worth it. CM Sheriff stated that would be a real detriment to open that back up and then close it back up. We had a lot of negative comments about closing it up to start with and now those have died down and if we open it back up for 2 or 3 more weeks it will have another negative affect. Mayor Deese stated we just need to get in there and get it completed. CM Petersen stated if we have good weather the balance of this week we should see some activity there next week.

Mayor Deese stated we are applying for the DOT money and coming up with places that need sidewalk replacement. Front Street is part of that and CM McJunkin has some concerns about some sidewalk over at Ingles.

CM Clark stated we talked several months ago about putting a fence around the old sewer collection basin in the park. That is a law suit waiting to happen. I been over there two times in the past couple of weeks and there are kids playing near it. Mayor Deese stated we will have a fencing company come out and look at it.

CM Harrison asked what is included in Office Commercial in rezoning. CM Sheriff stated he needed to come by City Hall and the Clerk would give him a copy Planning and Zoning Ordinance Book.

Chief Miller stated he had 5 cars that have in the upper 90's in mileage. I have some extra money in my budget that I can put into vehicles. I lease vehicles for 3 years. A vehicle on the state contract is \$22,000 for a patrol car. I was thinking about getting 2 patrols cars. I can pay the first year's lease on those two cars by selling three of the cars that I have now. By transferring some money in my budget to another item and purchasing the other first year lease on the second car. Olen is fixing some damage to a fender and we are painting the cars, going back to black and white. We have a different design we're going to put on them. Instead of getting Reggie or someone to do this, Olen is doing it. Mayor Deese stated it would not take anything out of our budget this year, but there would be two more cars in next year's budget. Chief Miller stated that would give them a good rotation. Mayor Deese stated we are getting ready to look at the budget now and we will be getting with CM McJunkin to review the budget.

CM Clark stated we have an opportunity to apply for a \$1250 grant on air packs. They cost \$4,000. If I got the \$1250 could the City come up with the other \$2800 to get another air pack? Mayor Deese said he would take a look and see. He stated Chief Sargent usually runs a pretty tight budget.

Mayor Deese thanked CM Clark for all the grant writing he has done this year and all the accomplishments he has made that resulted in us receiving these grants. If we get the fire department grant, we will come close to \$2 million dollars in grant funds we have received this year.

Adjourn

- CM Clark made motion to adjourn.
- CM McJunkin seconded the motion.
- All voted in favor

Verification/Mayor

V. Sue Woods, Clerk

Approval Date