



LIBERTY CITY COUNCIL - REGULAR SESSION AGENDA

May 13th, 2024, at 6:30 PM

Rosewood Center - 419 E Main St. Liberty, SC 29657

- **Welcome and Call to Order Mayor Erica Romo Woods at 6:30 pm**

- **Invocation** Giving by: Potters Clay Pastor, Carlton Cleveland

- **Pledge of Allegiance**

- **Roll Call-**

- Robbie Shoenleben (Ward 1) – Present
- Lavant Padgett (Ward 2) – Not Present
- Daniel Graybeal (Ward 3)- Present
- Jeff Massie (Ward 4) – Present
- Rhonda Whitaker (At- Large) – Present
- Zachary Arms (At- Large)- Present

- **Mayor Announcements:**

-Mayor Woods will address various topics.

West side cemetery off stone street, also known as the African American cemetery, has been brought to the City's Attention. Mayor Woods researched and went to the County's Assessors Office as well as the Registers of Deed Office and Delinquent Tax office. The city does not own that cemetery. It is owned by Farmers Aid. The city is not responsible for the upkeep of the cemetery but will do their best to keep it up and not let it go neglected. Please be patient while the city works for a solution for a better handle to keep up and work toward positive growth.

- **Recognitions:**

- Recognition of Liberty youth in Eagle Scouts.

- **Proclamations:**

- Building Safety Month (May)
- Municipal Clerk Week (May 5th- May 11th)
- Public Service Recognition Week (May 5th- May 11th)

- **Citizens wishing to address the City Council:**

- Speakers must reside within city limits, are allowed 3 minutes in total, and must have signed up prior to 4:30 pm on 05/10/2024.
- See attachment.

- **Approval of Minutes:**

-April 8th, 2024- Regular Session

Motion: Councilmember Graybeal, 2nd: Councilmember Shoenleben, Discussion: None, Vote: 6-0

- **Unfinished/ Old Business: (2nd Readings)**

None

- **New Business: (1st Readings & Resolutions):**

-2024-02, 100% Annexation for Parcel Number: 4088-15-64-938- 109 Wiley Rd. Liberty SC 29657

Motion: Councilmember Massie, 2nd: Councilmember Graybeal, Discussion: None, Vote: 6-0

-2024-03, 100 % Annexation for Parcel Number:4097-00-54-7766- 201 Reeves St. Liberty SC 29657

Motion: Councilmember Shoenleben, 2nd: Councilmember Whitaker, Discussion: None, Vote: 6-0

- Council will consider approval of a location for art sculpture by Duncan Burns.
Motion to approve the location for the sculpture by Duncan Burns Motion: Councilmember Arms, 2nd: Councilmember Massie, No Discussion, Vote: 6-0

1st READING OF THE 2024-2025 ANNUAL BUDGET WILL BE JUNE 4TH 2024- SPECIAL CALLED, FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC HEARING.

- **City Administrator Report**

-Administrator's Report/ City Activities Report

- **City Council Remarks:**

- Robbie Shoenleben (Ward 1)- No Remark
- Lavant Padgett (Ward 2)- Not Present
- Daniel Graybeal (Ward 3)- See Attachment.
- Jeff Massie (Ward 4)- Censored by Mayor Woods.
- Rhonda Whitaker (At- Large)- No remarks
- Zachary Arms (At- Large)- Thank you to the nine citizens who emailed me. The most I have ever gotten. Thank you, Philip and City staff. Thank you behind the scenes working especially the collaboration with the county. I understand how difficult this situation is. I would like to look at sale the parking lot on 1-78. Everyone must understand the process. Now is the time. Passions are high. If you are wanting to talk, I will be at Lizzy Sues this upcoming Saturday at 9 am. I understand the severity. Remember who we are and who liberty is and what is supposed to be. We are tight knit. Facebook is a great tool. But not a lot of Facebook groups but a community. I would like to thank our surrounding schools Teacher and employees of the year.
- Primary- Tracey Reece and Tyann Reece
- Elementary- Jamal Roper and Emily Smith
- Middle- Steve Amderskow and Leighanne Reece
- High- Becky Hooper and Tammy Bice

- **Motion to Enter Executive Session:**

Motion: Councilmember Graybeal, 2nd: Councilmember Shoenleben, Discussion: None, Vote: 6-0

1. SECTION 30-4-70. (2) Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property, the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim.

(a) Pickens County- Contractual

2. SECTION 30-4-70. (5) Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body.

(b) Retail Strategies- Economic Development

- City Council may or may not take action on any or all of the matters discussed in the Executive Session.

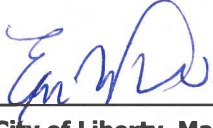
- **Motion to Exit Executive Session:**

Motion: Councilmember Massie, 2nd: Councilmember Graybeal, Discussion: None, Vote: 6-0

● **Adjournment**

Motion: Councilmember Arms, 2nd: Councilmember Graybeal, Discussion: None, Vote: 6-0

Date of Approval: 6/10/24



City of Liberty, Mayor Erica Romo Woods

Attest:



Clerk of Council, Ballee Locke



To sign up to speak at the next council meeting, please email or call our Clerk of Council by 4:30 pm the Friday prior to the meeting.
Blocke@libertysc.com - 864-843-3177

May 13th 2024 RS Speakers:

Peggy Edwards

Gisela Sais

Robert Friedman

Gerald Wilson

Evelyn Tobie

Peggy Melton

William Melton

Andrea Wagner

Ted Edwards

Eileen Carroll

Daniel :

In the past week, my inbox has been inundated with emails from concerned constituents reacting to misinformation circulating on social media about our recent budget work session. Sadly, many of these messages resort to personal attacks, insinuating a lack of moral fiber on mine and my fellow council members parts if we dare to support any fee or tax increases. What's consistent among these messages is their reliance on partial truths and incomplete information cherry-picked by those who are posting social media snippets, devoid of context and important facts.

In addition, one of my esteemed council colleagues has taken a hardline stance, adamantly opposing any increase that

might result in citizens paying anything above current tax and fee rates. While this sentiment may sound appealing, it may not be feasible and it is irresponsible, especially given that we've yet to receive a full budget proposal for review. Our task thus far has been to evaluate preliminary recommendations from our city staff to ensure financial stability and compliance with mandates from the SC state constitution requiring a balanced budget each year.

Let's be clear: no one on this council likes the notion of raising taxes or fees, knowing full well the impact it has on our own households and those of our constituents. However, if it becomes necessary to raise taxes or increase fees

to safeguard essential services and maintain fiscal stability, we owe it to our city to consider all options, however unpopular they may be. The challenges facing the City of Liberty didn't materialize overnight; they stem from years of poor financial management over multiple administrations and demand decisive action, even if unpopular.

To my fellow councilman, Mr Massie, if you have a viable proposal for balancing the budget without tax or fee increases of any sort, I would expect that you would share it with the council as a whole before the proposed budget's unveiling on June 4th, allowing us all time to complete thorough examination and review. Absent such a proposal,

public posturing on social media serves only to undermine the integrity of the budgeting process and offers little substance beyond empty rhetoric tailored to a vocal and toxic minority. It is political grandstanding and pandering and is inappropriate and beneath the office of councilman.

Furthermore, it's disheartening to witness our county council representative overstepping boundaries, injecting himself into municipal affairs beyond his jurisdiction. While claiming credit for the idea to exchange properties with the county, an idea that was created by Liberty city council and has been in the works within City Hall for some time, he's conveniently ignored pressing

community concerns. Those include the issue of pornographic material being made available to children in our public libraries. This was addressed by more than one hundred county citizens, including several local pastors, just a few days ago and went largely ignored by the current county council members, including our own representative for the Liberty area. I am aware that management of the Pickens County library does not fall under our role as city council, but as we have a library in the center of our city, it does directly impact our constituents. Ignoring the impact this could have on a generation of youth living in our town, while instead inserting himself into city management and day to day function is little more than an election year

gimmock. Such politicking, particularly in an election year, detracts from the serious work at hand and does a disservice to our city and its constituents and should stop immediately.

Our city's future should not be a pawn in anyones political gamesmanship. It's on each of us to rise above that, rejecting the toxicity and divisiveness spewed by a select few via their computer keyboards. We can't allow the honor of public service to be further damaged by baseless personal attacks and cynical political posturing. The actions of a few very vocal people who prefer to cast stones via their social media accounts only serves to push those who would be great assets

to our city further from ever considering running for office themselves. We have seen what happens when these people don't get their way, they simply quit and walk away saying the work is too slow and too hard. Instead, they criticize and attack those who are doing the hard work required. We should instead focus on our shared vision for a thriving Liberty community and the path we need to take to reach that goal together.

I will not sit in this chamber and tell anyone how to vote, that is not appropriate in my role, but I do urge my fellow citizens to discern fact from fiction, to always engage in informed decision making, to ask questions of their elected officials and potential

candidates, and to reject the negativity and toxicity that consistently pervades social media echo chambers. Together, we can overcome the challenges that lie ahead and realize the full potential of our great city, but only if we do this together and say emphatically to those who would tear our city down that enough is enough.