



MINUTES

Council Work Session/Special Meeting
Thursday, June 16, 2022 - 6:30 pm
South Congaree Town Hall
119 West Berry Rd.
West Columbia, SC 29172

The public was duly notified of the date, time, and place of this meeting.

In attendance

Mayor Cindy Campbell
Councilmembers Jim Drennan

Mayor Pro-Tem Mechelle Mabry
Councilmember Brian Jackson

Councilmember Kitty Spires

Staff

Municipal Clerk, Teresa Benjamin

I. Call to Order

Mayor Campbell called the Council Work Session to order at 6:39 p.m.

A quorum was present.

Mayor Campbell led in the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the Invocation.

II. Items for Discussion

1. Open Bids for Lawn Care

Two bids were received for landscaping services to begin July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. Bids were opened as Per our Ordinance No. 32.21 & 32.23 (1985 Code, § 1-85)

Mayor Campbell opened the discussion and vote for this item. Mayor Campbell stated that the Town received a total of two bids. Mayor Pro-Tem Mabry questioned whether three bids were received. Mayor Campbell read Town Ordinance 21.21 and 32.23 and stated it does not say three bids are required. Councilmember Drennan asked could the two bids received be opened since council was in an open forum? Councilmember Drennan no need to hold up the process. Town Clerk Benjamin asked the Chair if she could add to this, and permission was given. Town Clerk Benjamin stated that once posted and publicized, the number of bids received should not be a factor. All the number pertinent information was publicized and bid submission received by deadline should be the one considered. Mayor Pro Tem Mabry read aloud the provisions set forth in the Procurement Ordinance (32.18); RFQ or IFB will be made from at least three vendors. Council discussed how to proceed without three bids. Councilmember Drennan suggested opening the two bids received. Councilmember Jackson asked where it was advertised, Mayor Campbell stated the town website and Facebook page.

A motion to unseal the bids and review the two that responded and rebid if too high: Councilmember Drennan; Seconded by Councilmember Spires. Mayor Campbell called for a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote –
Councilman Drennan Yes
Councilman Jackson Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Mabry No
Councilwoman Spires Yes
Mayor Campbell Yes

The motion passed with four in favor and one opposed.

Mayor Campbell opened the bids and read aloud each candidates' proposal for the record: Prosperity Lawncare (Joseph B. Longshore Representative; \$26,500 – Twenty-Six Thousand, Five Hundred Dollars) and Palmetto Unlimited Enterprise (\$17,450 – Seventeen Thousand, Four Hundred and Fifty Dollars).

During the opening of bids, Mayor Pro Tem Mabry asked Mayor Campbell if the additional information she requested was included to the bid advertisement? Councilmember Spires stated yes, the Bid Opening Date and time had been included in the bid advertisement.

Councilmember Drennan asked for the previous cost for lawncare; Councilmember Jackson responded that it should be indicated in the budget information that was provided, \$15,600.00 is what was budgeted for the prior year. Councilmember Spires asked if both bids were comparable. Prosperity Lawncare is the contractor who currently is performing this task. Councilmember Jackson and Councilmember Spires both provided clarification.

A motion to award Palmetto Unlimited Enterprise for the Town's Lawncare needs in the amount of \$17,450 (Seventeen Thousand, Four Hundred and Fifty Dollars) beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2023: Councilmember Drennan; Seconded by Councilmember Spires. Discussion: Councilmember Jackson asked if the Town should try to reach other contractors. Councilmember Drennan stated that both bids were in the Town's price range; if there were no bids within the price range, then it would need to be re-submitted. Since that is not the case, it was decided to make a choice between the two submissions.

Roll Call Vote –
Councilman Drennan Yes
Councilman Jackson Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Mabry Yes
Councilwoman Spires Yes
Mayor Campbell Yes

The motion passed with a unanimous vote of council.

2. MASC Conference Approvals

Mayor Campbell stated that the MASC Conference is to be held July 14-16, 2022, in Charleston, SC, Councilman Drennan, Councilwoman Spires, and Mayor Campbell have registered and received confirmation through MASC to attend. Mayor Campbell asked for discussion or a motion to approve the attendance for herself, Councilmember Drennan and Councilmember Spires.

Discussion: Mayor Pro Tem Mabry asked what is the total cost for attending the conference? Mayor Campbell responded with she was not sure of the total cost, but read the information stated on the Municipal Association website associated with the estimated cost at \$574.00 hotel for 2 nights, \$200.00 Registration fee and \$75.00 for the preconference class that she and Councilmember Spires signed up for and \$90.00 for the class Mr. Drennan signed up for. Councilmember Drennan stated that when he ran for office, he never expected compensation for education and is all about being responsible for all charges and feels all of council should be also. He asked what benefit would our businesses get from this conference? Councilmember Spires stated that she thinks this is an effective way for councilmembers to network and learn from other towns and professionals to learn and manage budgetary items effectively. Mayor Campbell stated that not all sessions costs. Mayor Campbell read the costs and classes that Councilmember Drennan signed up for. Councilmember Drennan stated he will refund the town; he feels it is too much for our town to pay, this is not a certification. Councilmember Spires stated that is very gracious of him, but we are also able to be compensated because we spend our own personal time doing this. Councilmember Jackson stated that he is fine with them going, but to keep in mind that when the Keep Highway Beautiful conference comes around, that he would like to go to this year since the Town can receive grants through this program.

A motion for the approval of three registration for the MASC Annual Conference: Councilmember Spires; Second: Mayor Campbell. Councilmember Jackson discussed the allowance for meals and mileage. Mayor Campbell responded the daily stipend for attending conferences or training that the town pays is \$35 (Thirty-Five Dollars) a day for meals. Mayor Campbell also stated the rate change in mileage rate .585 to .625 per mile effective July 1, 2022.

Councilmember Jackson asked for the deadline to register for the MASC Conference. Councilmember Spires stated he could register that day. The Town Clerk Benjamin will check to see what he will need to do.

A motion to approve Mayor Campbell, Council members Drennan, and Spires attend the MASC Annual Conference: Second by Mayor Campbell.

Roll Call Vote –

Councilman Drennan	Yes
Councilman Jackson	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Mabry	Yes
Councilwoman Spires	Yes
Mayor Campbell	Yes

The motion passed with a unanimous vote of council.

3. Palm Pantry formal response

During the May 17th meeting, Mr. Neal Patel appealed to council after being denied a business license for an ABC Package Store to be located at 1251 Main Street. Mayor Campbell stated the request was denied based on the Town Ordinance §110.1. Mayor Campbell stated council discussed the matter but did not vote to send a formal response. Town Clerk Benjamin prepared a letter for council to review and sign. Councilmember Jackson asked if Mr. Patel went to the Zoning Board of Appeals. Mayor Campbell stated yes, and his request was denied. Mayor Campbell called for a roll call Vote.

A motion to send a formal denial response to Mr. Patel's request, citing the town ordinance:
Councilmember Spires; Second: Councilmember Drennan.

Roll Call Vote –

Councilman Drennan	Yes
Councilman Jackson	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Mabry	Yes
Councilwoman Spires	Yes
Mayor Campbell	Yes

The motion passed with a unanimous vote of council.

4. RFPs for Municipal Attorney, Judge, Website Design

With the new fiscal year just around the corner, Council needs to discuss solicitation (aka RFPs) for a Municipal Attorney, Judge, Website Design and a Part Time Building Official. Mr. Rakowsky's contract ends next month; the floor is open to discuss. Mayor Pro Tem Mabry informed council that SC Code of Law 5-7-230 states that we do not have to put out an RFP, Council may elect or appoint a Judge and Attorney. Councilmember Jackson asked whether the current Town Attorney and Judge wish to continue serving. Mayor Campbell stated she had not spoken with Mr. Rakowsky and stated that she thinks it would be beneficial to our town to have a true municipal attorney who knows municipal law. Mayor Pro-Tem reminded council of the last time we spoke with a municipal attorney; they could not handle the courtside for the police officers and an additional attorney would have to be retained. Mayor Pro-Tem Mabry stated she was happy with the attorney and judge. Councilmember Drennan reminded council of the fifteen upcoming cases for the Police Department. Councilmember Spires made a motion to postpone an appointment for a municipal attorney and Judge; meanwhile they will remain in their role while a search for a municipal attorney with court experience is made. Second by Mayor Campbell. Mayor Pro-Tem Mabry amended the motion to table the motion indefinitely. Second by Councilmember Jackson. Mayor Campbell called for a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote –

Councilman Drennan	Yes
Councilman Jackson	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Mabry	Yes
Councilwoman Spires	No
Mayor Campbell	Yes

The motion passed 4 to 1 vote.

5. Website Design

Mayor Campbell opened the floor for discussion on an RFP for a website design. Mayor Pro Tem Mabry stated that a year ago, Council had put out a request for proposals from five website designers and asked were we going to post it again and what was going to be different? Mayor Pro-Tem Mabry stated she went to other towns websites to see who wrote their webpages and asked they present a proposal. Councilmember Spires has been in communications with CivicPlus, and her opinion is this product is what the Town of South Congaree needs. There are other local municipalities who use this product like (examples include but not limited to: City of Cayce, Town of Irmo, Blythewood and the City of Lake City). Councilmember Spires spoke to a representative with CivicPlus, and they informed her of the process for implementation. CivicPlus would send their employees to the site to assist and guide with the migration of information from the current website. Councilmember Spires suggested that a meeting be arranged with CivicPlus (via teleconference/Zoom), so they can explain their product to Council. Mayor Pro Tem Mabry stated a total of three or more bid requests will be required and due to the cost, it will have to be put out for Invitation to Bid/Proposal. Councilmember Drennan made a recommendation, that the Town put out an Invitation to Bid/Proposal for a webpage design. The packet will need to contain a list of bullet items from the proposals before and the one from Councilmember Spires. Councilmember Jackson agreed with this, and Mayor Pro-Tem Mabry stated that when the packet is put together, it needs to be brought back to Council for review before it is put out to bid. Councilmember Jackson requested that Council discuss at a workshop. Councilmember Spires stated that with the experience Town Clerk Benjamin has on this, she can put the bullet points together and email to council to discuss at the next Council workshop.

Roll Call Vote –

Councilman Drennan	Yes
Councilman Jackson	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Mabry	Yes
Councilwoman Spires	Yes
Mayor Campbell	Yes

The motion passed with a unanimous vote of council.

6. Part Time Building Official

Mayor Campbell asked for council discussion on a part-time Building Official. Councilmember Jackson asked could this position incorporate a part-time Code Enforcement Officer? Mayor Pro Tem Mabry requested it be a Zoning Administrator and Building Official.

A motion to advertise an Invitation to Bid/Proposal for a Building Official; Second: Mayor Pro-Tem Mabry. A motion to amend the motion for a part-time Building and Zoning Administrator: Councilmember Spires; Second: Councilmember Jackson. Mayor Pro-Tem Mabry asked would the position be a town employee or 1099. If a 1099, they would not need to drive a town vehicle. Councilmember Jackson added that a sticker or placard be provided to place on their vehicle; if it is not a Town issued vehicle.

Roll Call Vote –

Councilman Drennan	Yes
Councilman Jackson	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Mabry	Yes
Councilwoman Spires	Yes
Mayor Campbell	Yes

The motion passed with a unanimous vote of council.

7. Progress on 2019-2020 Audit

Mayor Campbell informed council of the outstanding items needed to complete the audit. A list from the Auditor was sent of the items needed to complete this audit. The Finance Department provided some of the items, A list of the items needed was read aloud by Mayor Campbell. Mayor Campbell asked Mayor Pro Tem Mabry to work with the Auditors to assist with compiling the additional information needed.

Motion: Mayor Pro Tem Mabry made a motion to add an Executive Session to the agenda pursuant the South Carolina State Cod Section 30-4-70(a)(1) for the discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body; if an adversary hearing involving the employee or client is held, the employee or client has the right to demand the hearing be conducted publicly. Second: Councilmember Jackson

Roll Call Vote –

Councilman Drennan	Yes
Councilman Jackson	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Mabry	Yes
Councilwoman Spires	Yes
Mayor Campbell	Yes

6. ARPA fund distribution

Councilwoman Spires requested this item be added to the agenda for discussion only. She requested that council look at individually the options to use the ARPA funds. The town's cost for sewer based on the study, if approved, and the use for major up fits for town hall. She stated our current finances would not allow us to have funds for the sewer costs but with ARPA we have good funds to do so. Points of information to use these funds and long-range planning.

Councilmember Drennan stated we have a good down payment for these projects. He asked if Council would be willing to carve out a payment structure for this purpose. Mayor Campbell suggested we have a separate meeting to discuss. Councilmember Spires recommended waiting until the feasibility study has been completed. Mayor Pro Tem Mabry asked if the former Councilmember Bob Porter, could present information at the next Town Council meeting on the sewer study: Council agreed that this presentation would be beneficial. Councilmember Jackson informed Town Clerk Benjamin that Bobby Porter is the town's Joint Water and Sewer Representative

7. ARPA fund distribution

Councilman Drennan requested this be added to agenda to for discussion. He requested that Council work on forecasting and goal-setting techniques to be implemented for future growth potential. He would like to see the town hall be placed on SC-302. Council agreed to add this to the special meeting. It was suggested by Municipal Clerk Benjamin, that a survey be constructed and placed on the City's website, as to what the citizens deem to be priority items. Council agreed and it will be considered later.

8. Adoption of the State Holidays

Municipal Clerk Benjamin requested that Council discuss an ordinance to adopt the State Holidays. She stated that this would serve as an incentive to retain current and attract new employees.

Councilmember Jackson asked for the holiday list that Council voted previously. Councilmember Spires recommended that we have an ordinance to adopt the state holidays as the town holidays. Mayor Pro-Tem Mabry recommended updating the Employee Handbook instead of an Ordinance. Mayor Campbell stated this will be added to a future agenda.

9. Employee Handbook

Councilmember Spires asked for consideration as to removing the dates in the Annual Leave section. In her opinion, some of the verbiage in this section is confusing. The Town has two (2) employees that have been with the Town over 5 + years. Mayor Pro Tem Mabry responded that having the dates inform future council that these two employees gain leave differently. Councilmember Spires recommended writing a contract on these two (2) employees and put in personnel file. Councilmember Jackson and Councilmember Drennan agreed with how the handbook is written. Mayor Pro Tem Mabry made a motion to approve the updated Employee Handbook; Second by Councilmember Jackson.

Roll Call Vote –

Councilman Drennan	Yes
Councilman Jackson	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Mabry	Yes
Councilwoman Spires	Yes
Mayor Campbell	Yes

The motion passed with a unanimous vote of council.

10. Change/amend the Work session Schedule

Council has met on the Thursday prior to the regular scheduled council meeting held on the third Tuesday of each month. As per town ordinance, § 31.01 TIME, DATE OF REGULAR MEETING.

The ordinance does not specify when Council shall hold work session meetings. Mayor Campbell opened the floor for discussion to change the workshop meeting day.

Discussion: Mayor Pro Tem Mabry, Councilmember Drennan and Jackson felt that changing the dates at this time is something that will not work with their schedules. Councilmember Spires felt that the current timing prevents Council and the Municipal Clerk from having the capability to study and research items. Mayor Campbell stated that having a little more time between meetings would allow additional time to review Council packets and reduce the number of monthly meetings. Councilmember Drennan posed the question are Work sessions necessary? Can information be sent electronically? It was explained that they are necessary for decision making purposes. Mayor Pro-Tem Mabry stated that in the past the Town Clerk would provide information to council all during the week, not just waiting until the workshop meeting to provide information for discussion. This allows council the opportunity to be ready to discuss at the workshop meeting then just a voting at the Regular Scheduled meeting. Mayor Campbell stated that the July 14 Work session will be canceled as well as the December 15, 2022, Work session. Mayor Pro Tem Mabry stated that it is not required by law to have Work sessions, and that the December's meeting was previously voted to cancel.

At 8:30 p.m. before the Executive Session, the Town Clerk Benjamin asked to be excused. Permission granted.

Two-minute intermission

Council entered Executive Session at 8:35 p.m.

Council voted to add an Executive Session pursuant to South Carolina State Code Section 30-4-70(a)(1) for the discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body.

The former Bookkeeper submitted a letter of resignation. Council elected to include an Executive Session to discuss the details of the next steps that will need to be taken.

A motion to accept the former Bookkeeper's letter of resignation: Mayor Pro Tem Mabry;
Second: Councilmember Jackson

Roll Call Vote -


Councilman Drennan	Yes
Councilman Jackson	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Mabry	Yes
Councilwoman Spires	Yes
Mayor Campbell	Yes

The motion passed with a unanimous vote of council.

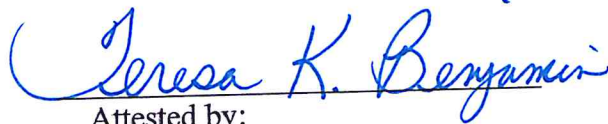
Adjournment

Having heard all matters, Mayor Campbell moved that Council adjourn at 9 p.m.
Second Councilmember Spires

The motion passed with a unanimous vote of council.



Approved by:
Cindy Campbell,
Mayor


Attested by: