

Minutes

Special City Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 22, 2013 – 6:00 p.m.

The special meeting of the Mullins City Council was held Tuesday, October 22, 2013 at 6:00 P.M. in the Miles Community Center. The following were notified of the time, date, and place of the meeting: Mayor William L. "Bo" McMillan and Members of City Council, the City Staff, and the press. Present at the meeting were the following: Mayor William L. "Bo" McMillan, Mayor Pro-Tem Patricia Phillips, Council Members: Jo Sanders, George Hardwick Linda Schiavo and Carolyn Wilson, City Attorney Robert Corley, City Administrator David Hudspeth, Bill Taylor – MASC, Street Supervisor Tarus Gilchrist, Police Chief Mike Bethea, Ravell Rogers, Eddie Page (6:10), Drew Foil, Jessie Catlett, John Turner, Tom & Sally Crowell, Joe Graham, Ronnette Genwright, Naem McFadden (6:08), Economic Director Julie Norman, Tarus Phillips (6:48) and many others.

1. Call Meeting to Order & Welcome: Mayor McMillan called the meeting to order and welcomed all present. McMillan asked Jessie Catlett to lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation:

Council Member Carolyn Wilson gave the invocation.

2. Disclosure that local media has been informed of meeting pursuant to South Carolina Freedom of Information Act: Mayor McMillan stated the local media had been contacted regarding the time, date, and place of the special scheduled meeting for October.

3. Approval of Agenda: Mayor Pro Tem Phillips made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Council Member Schiavo seconded the motion.

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4. Public Comments: Moderated by Bill Taylor, Municipal Association of South Carolina: Mayor McMillan noted the meeting was called to answer some questions that the public had been asking. Mayor McMillan introduced Bill Taylor from MASC. Taylor gave a brief description of his experience with municipalities. Taylor noted the meeting was called for the benefit of the citizens. Taylor also noted that not every question may be answered. Taylor also asked that each person state his/her name and address.

(a) Drew Foil – 813 Sandy Bluff Road:

1. Why 6 police officers had left the City in the past 2 months?

City Administrator David Hudspeth stated some of the officers left for jobs where they could further their career. Hudspeth noted that does not account for all of the officers. Some may have personal issues, pay and many other reasons. Hudspeth noted changes are being made to make the environment where officers want to stay. Foil also asked how many officers were replaced with local people. Police Chief Bethea stated some of them were Marion County residents.

2. Why hasn't anything been done to renovate the old City Hall building?

Mayor McMillan stated there were many issues that the City has run into and that has held up the renovation process. Hudspeth noted contractors would be in place by January 2014. Foil also asked why it took so long for the owners of the adjoining buildings to tear down there buildings? Mayor McMillan stated there were negotiations with the owners and the City and Anderson Brothers Bank.

3. Was the 2012 over or under budget?

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Hudspeth stated there was a surplus. Hudspeth noted the City had a surplus but there was also an over budget in expenses. Mayor McMillan noted copies of the Audit are available. Foil asked why the Audit was more in depth this year than the past years. Hudspeth stated the Audits have been late the past couple of years. Hudspeth also noted there was extra effort put into this Audit because as things were uncovered, things needed to be done to figure out why and how they could be corrected. Hudspeth noted the contract with the Auditor instructs him to do the same thing for every Audit.

4. What is the City's policy to give City employees raises where family members are involved?

Hudspeth stated maybe minor adjustments may have been made because of job duties. Hudspeth also noted higher pay increases should be made and approved by Council.

5. How many employees does Aqua City have?

Hudspeth noted the plant had not opened yet. Mayor McMillan stated there are a total of 8 employees and the plant should open in 3 weeks. Foil asked if the City had incurred any bills for the plant. Hudspeth noted some expenses had been paid for some repairs to the plant. Hudspeth also noted there were also some expenses that were incurred prior to Aqua City moving in. Foil also asked if the City was receiving rent for the building. Hudspeth noted the contract stipulates that in year one Aqua City will pay \$5,000.00 toward what is due in taxes. Foil stated the amount is less than what is due in taxes. Hudspeth stated that was correct but most of the building would be exempt to certain taxes.

6. Why Department reports are no longer given by the Department Heads?

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Hudspeth stated those reports are available to anyone who would like to have them.

7. Has the erosion issues that were made earlier this year been addressed?

Mayor McMillan stated those issues were not entirely the City's responsibility.

8. Why are citizens still receiving City trash services when they are not paying water bills?

Mayor McMillan noted this issue would be addressed. Street Supervisor Tarus Gilchrist noted the trash had been picked up but he was not sure they had water service. Gilchrist stated sanitation services are paid through GSWSA. Gilchrist noted normally those items would not be picked up unless it was a hazard.

9. Have there been any moves towards annexation? Foil stated there were previous talks to put a Fire Department sub-station on the other side of the railroad tracks.

Mayor McMillan stated the National Guard maintenance shop was given to the City and that could possibly become a Fire Department sub-station.

Foil thanked Council for allowing him to voice his concerns.

(b) Thomas Crowell – 313 N Main Street:

1. Have bids been received on the Asbestos removal for City Hall?

Hudspeth stated 6 bids were received for the Asbestos / Mold removal.

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2. What do you have to do to meet with the different Committees of City Council?

Hudspeth noted Council usually sets the policy as to how they run those committees. Hudspeth stated you should speak to the Chair of the Committee. Taylor stated there are many problems when it comes to committees because most Cities/Towns have no set standards. Foil stated at the last Council meeting Mrs. Fannie Simmons voiced her concerns over the African American Museum and a meeting was set between her and the Administrator and the Mayor. Foil asked why Chairwoman Sanders wasn't invited to that meeting. Hudspeth noted it was not a called meeting but more of a lunch.

(c) Sally Crowell – 313 N Main Street:

1. Does the City have 2 lawsuits?

Mayor McMillan stated there was 1 ongoing lawsuit and the other one has been settled.

(d) Revell Rogers – 212 E Wine Street:

1. Can I poll the Council as to what their thinking is to their level of transparency?

McMillan stated the only way to run any Government is complete transparency.

Council Member Wilson stated Council meets every 2nd Tuesday of every month. Wilson stated that Council makes themselves available to every citizen. Wilson also stated if the people were really concerned they would be here at this meeting.

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Mayor Pro Tem Phillips stated Council has nothing to hide. Phillips noted Council has been working together to make Mullins grow.

Council Member Hardwick stated he has never known of anything that was hidden by Council. Hardwick stated Council is here to represent the citizens. Hardwick also stated some things have to be done in Executive Session because certain things can't be put out in the Public. Rogers stated he didn't mean to imply that Council was hiding anything. Rogers noted the current Council is working together. Phillips stated people perceive things to be one way when it is not that way at all. Hardwick noted Rogers had come to the meeting for the right reasons and if more people would show concern like Rogers did the Town would progress.

Mrs. Sally Crowell asked about the Brick Warehouse. Mayor McMillan stated the building is unsalvageable and it is a danger.

(5) Economic Development Director – Julie Norman:

Mayor McMillan recognized Economic Development Director Julie Norman. Ms. Norman gave a brief summary of her past experience. Ms. Norman gave the following reasons why people relocate or expand in the area:

- (a) Workforce Development / Education
- (b) Marketing
- (c) Product / Buildings & Sites
- (d) Job Creation

Ms. Norman asked for input from the audience. Foil asked if she considered Main Street USA an industry. Ms. Norman stated Main Street / Small Businesses are very important to the community. Mr. Tarus Phillips suggested creating a database to draw businesses in. Ms. Norman noted there was a grant that could provide certain resources to businesses.

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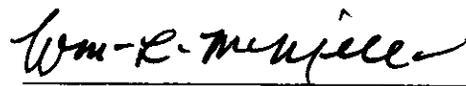
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Mayor McMillan asked Ms. Norman to share with the citizens how many businesses that are looking to relocate to Marion County. Ms. Norman stated there are 10 potential businesses looking to relocate to Marion County. Some of those businesses are very close to announcing their desire to move to the County. Ms. Norman also discussed a Megatronics program which would offer hands-on training of people for certain jobs.

Mayor McMillan noted how disappointed he was with the turnout for the meeting tonight. Mayor McMillan stated the next Town Hall meeting would be on April 22, 2014.

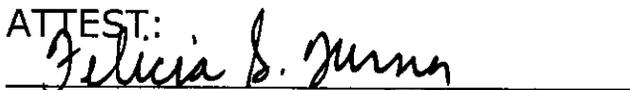
Mayor McMillan stated FDTC plans to expand in the next year with a total of 1,400 students at the Mullins site. Foil asked about In County tuition for Marion County students. Mayor McMillan stated the lease for FDTC will be discussed. Foil also asked when the City went from paying \$1.00 to \$700.00 rent for the Depot. Mayor McMillan noted the City has never paid \$1.00 for the Depot. Mayor McMillan noted a Vote of No Confidence was given to Carolina Southern by the Railroad Commission.

(5) Adjournment: Council Member Hardwick made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Phillips seconded the motion.



William L. "Bo" McMillan
Mayor

ATTEST:



Felicia S. Turner, Interim City Clerk