

Council Work Session Minutes  
January 14, 2019

Mayor Bagwell called the meeting to order at 5:00 and introduced Brian James as the City's new attorney.

Hospitality Bond – This will be the second reading on this and the closing will be Friday, BB&T won the bid at 3.82% interest. This will fund the Operations and Maintenance facility and other park projects. Blake Sanders, City Planner is in the process of obtaining pricing. The bond is for \$9.2 million, \$6.9 million will be available for projects. \$2,416,469 for the Operations Facility, \$300,000 for the Nalley Brown Nature Park, \$500,000 for the Brushy Creek Greenway, and \$3,683,51 remaining for improvements and park projects, these are all rough estimates. Depending on what is left we could do another large project or two medium size projects. The tennis court project has been sent out to bid.

Annexation of 53 acres off Rolling Hills, this is the Easley Combined Utility Property. Mr. Holcombe explained that we requested that they bring this into the City. The Planning Commission zoned it commercial. It passed unanimously with no opposition. We are being proactive for future development in that area. At this time there is no planned use for the area. Councilman Robinson recused himself from the discussion because Easley Combined Utility is a client of his law firm.

Rezoning for property off Burns Ave. from R10 to R2, Tommy explained the owner has been trying to market and has someone interested in building townhomes there. One neighbor came to the Planning Commission meeting asking some questions about what was going to be developed. The Planning Commission voted 100% in favor of the rezoning. Councilman Robinson stated that Burns Road is a narrow street, would it be able to handle the traffic. Councilman Moore asked if that is apartments behind the lot. Mayor Bagwell asked how the lot would be accessed. Mr. Holcombe said they would add a road off Burns. It could be a private road. Councilman Robinson asked if the road issue would be addressed at the site plan meeting. Mr. Holcombe stated that we are not in the road building business but it would be discussed. Councilman Moore asked what the price range would be for the townhomes. Mr. Holcombe stated that we can't dictate the size or price of homes.

Termination of Town Center TIF district. Mr. Steese explained State Code of Laws 31-6-70 (b) states: "If ten years have passed from the time a redevelopment project area is designated and the municipality has not issued the initial obligations under this chapter to finance the redevelopment project, upon the expiration of the ten-year term, the municipality shall adopt an ordinance terminating the designation of the redevelopment project area." We issued GO Debt to complete the Town Center Project and never issued any TIF Bonds for this project. As 10 years have now passed, we are required to terminate the project area. All funds from the redevelopment area will go directly to the General Fund Tax Revenues starting in FY 19-20. We have been recording in the TIF Fund and then transferring them to the General Fund since the project was started.

Purchase of the Silos – Last year we agreed to an option to purchase the Silos for \$80,000. The original option expired on Nov. 25<sup>th</sup> and we had two– 30-day extensions. The option and

Council Work Session Minutes

January 14, 2019

Page 2

extensions total \$7,000 and count towards the purchase price. We would owe \$73,000 to complete the purchase.

Mr. Steese and Mr. Sanders have met with different people but they want to know what is going to happen with the mill. As of right now we are limbo. Councilman Robinson asked when they would know. Mr. Steese said HUD was suppose to notify them by the end of the year but the with government shut down we don't know. We have tried to contact the developer to find out what they are going to do. The possible purchasers they have met with like the different options they could use the property for, brewery, restaurant, coffee shop. The original reason we entertained the idea to buy was because someone had an interest in buying for a used car lot and we didn't think that would be the best use for that area. If we complete the purchase and have 2<sup>nd</sup> reading tonight we would control the property. We could begin work to clean up the area and we would control one of the main corridors through the downtown. One of the agreements with the mill developer was that we would connect the Doodle Trail to the mill. Councilman Moore stated he thought we had a contract with a developer when we started this purchaser. Mr. Sanders stated the original developer wanted an out if the mill was not developed. Councilman Moore stated that it seemed like we are getting into the real estate business. Councilman Mann stated that if we are going to spur development over there the opportunity is there for us to make a difference in that area. The property has a lot of potential and later on we will make our money back. Councilman Dykes stated that the option is to go ahead with the purchase or let it expire. Councilman Robinson stated that he doesn't think the City should be involved in speculative real estate but in this case, he thinks it would be in our best interest to buy. Mayor Bagwell stated that we just sold a piece of property for \$55,000 and we can take that money and make a decision to own that property. If we decide to sell, we could get all of our money back. Mr. Steese stated we are not in it to make money but to get back what we have in it.

Project updates:

Blake Sanders gave an update – 30% drawing by the end of the end of the month, 30% money in the next few weeks, construction set to start May 1<sup>st</sup> for the Operations center and the fire station.

TIF Bond Updates: Old Market Square is finished except for the landscaping. JDavis will be doing the City Green, it should be finished by April 4<sup>th</sup>. There will be TIF meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Councilman Robinson asked if there has been any feedback on the one-way street. Mr. Steese stated overall there has not been negative feedback.

Flexible zoning district – Mr. Sanders - The intent of the FRD district is to provide a way for inventive design to be accomplished and to permit development that cannot be achieved through conventional zoning districts due to the parameters required therein. The standards set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, may serve as a guide for the FRD district. However, variations are permitted. Applicants shall discuss variations with the City of Easley Staff prior to submitting

Council Work Session Minutes

January 14, 2019

Page 3

their rezoning application. Planning Staff will ascertain that the characteristics of building height, location, etc. shall be appropriate as related to standards within the district. Councilman Dykes asked why would we not have any legal issues with this? Mr. Sanders stated it is written to have multiple density purposes. It would be an additional zoning classification. It would be FRD designation. After discussion with the Planning Commission it will be brought to council for further discussion and vote.

Mobile Home Parks – Mr. Holcombe said some of the changes are 2 acres to 5 acres, square footage change, and age of mobile home. The big issue is knowing what your goals are where mobile homes are concerned. Cap them where they are now, do away with them, make them better, etc. Councilman Mann asked how transit the residents of mobile homes are. Mr. Holcombe said they inspect at least 5 or 6 a week. They are in and out pretty often. Mr. Holcombe stated that we have torn down a lot of low-income homes but there is a need for mobile homes and they stay full. Councilman Dykes stated he liked the third option to keep the guidelines tight. Mayor Bagwell stated that we have a lot on our code books that are not being enforced. We need to make sure if we have a code it needs to be enforced. Councilman Dykes stated that some of them are an eye sore with broken windows, etc. Mr. Steese stated that it is the City's responsibility to provide safe and sanitary housing. So, when power changes hands that is when we can make changes. Councilman Mann stated that if the homes are not up to code, we need to give them a time frame for the owner to get it up to code.

Middle Creek update – Eric Greenwood, Stormwater Manager gave an update. The biggest issue we have is the sediment in the pond. One problem is an engineering issue from the original plans. Councilman Dykes said that one issue they have is the color of the pond water and whose responsibility it is.

Mayor Bagwell adjourned the meeting.

---

Mayor

ATTEST:

---

City Clerk