

Easley City Council
Work Session
June 4, 2018

Easley City Council met on June 4, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the courtroom of the LEC. All members were present with the exception of Councilman Garrison. The press was notified.

Mayor Bagwell called the meeting to order and called on Mr. Steese to explain the General Obligations Bond Issuance. The first reading of this bond will be at next week's meeting, with a second reading in July. The closing is anticipated by the end of August. The funds will be used for the design, construction and project management for the fire station renovations and the construction of the operations and maintenance facility. We have been working with DP3 on locations and space requirements. Mr. Steese then turned the discussion over to Blake Sanders. They went through every department with the department heads and got feedback on what they need now and for future growth. Our facilities need to be updated. Councilman Robinson asked what sites were being looked at. Mr. Steese stated that we had released the option on Walnut Hill Dr. There is another meeting scheduled this week with Danny Youngblood to see what other properties maybe available. Station one will be renovated on its current location. The city owns 39 acres at the recreation complex that could be used for a joint recreation maintenance department and public works facility. Councilman Mann stated the recreation maintenance department needs renovated, it is a shed and a port a potty, it is substandard. Councilman Robinson asked if there were any other sites. Mr. Steese commented no. Councilman Moore asked with the fire department renovations would more land be purchased. Mr. Steese said there may be some options but nothing to comment on at this time. Councilman Moore asked if traffic would be an issue at the complex if the public works facility was moved there. Mr. Steese said no because the workers get off at 3 and most of the ball fields are not used until the evening. Councilman Robinson asked the amount of the bond. Mr. Steese stated 5.5 million. Mr. Robinson asked if the public works department is moved are there any plans for that area. Mr. Steese said he has a couple of meetings coming up with interested parties, one is a hotel developer. Mayor Bagwell asked how much acreage is to be built on. Mr. Steese stated it would be approximately 7-11 acres behind the soccer fields. Mayor Bagwell commented that he is not completely sold on the idea, he understands we need to do updates and build new facilities but a lot of money has went into the complex and doesn't know how it will effect that area. Councilman Moore stated if hospitality funds are used, recreation and sanitation do not go together. Mayor Bagwell comment that he doesn't like departments sharing equipment. Councilman Mann commented that we have owned this property for ten years and now there is a plan to do something with it. Councilman Moore asked Chief Tollison how many acres were at the firing range. Chief Tollison commented there are 80 acres but some of it is not suitable for building. Mayor Bagwell asked about the property on Adger Road and Mr. Sanders stated it was not buildable because a lot of it is wetlands.

Discussion on the hospitality tax reimbursements: Mr. Steese stated the bonding schedule is for first reading in December, second reading in January 2019, and closing the end of January. The funds would be used for renovations and repairs for our existing parks, construction of a parks maintenance facility, completing the Brushy Creek Greenway, and the Nalley Brown Nature

Park. Reimbursements are being done now to cover our costs related to the design work towards these projects. Mr. Sanders stated he will be meeting with a trail designer to determine how many miles we can get out of the Nalley Brown Park. The RFQ is ready to go and a contract could be awarded at the July meeting. Construction could start as early as August, completing in December. The trail would be a natural surface along with parking, signage, kiosk, and ADA accessibility. Councilman Dykes asked if it is the original design. Mr. Sanders stated it was.

Mr. Sanders also looked into shade for the Doodle Park. A shade 75x60 would cost approximately \$62,000 installed. Councilman Dykes asked how long it would last. Mr. Sanders commented maybe ten years. Mayor Bagwell commented that he felt it would take away from the park if you put up a shade canopy. Mr. Sanders stated for \$62,000 we could plant some fairly large trees to provide shade.

Councilman Robinson asked if we know the amount of the hospitality bond. Mr. Steese stated it would depend on what the projects were. To keep the payments about the same we could get about 7.5 million. The first year would be an interest only payment because the gym payment would be coming off, then principal and interest payments would start. Councilman Moore asked when the gym would be paid off. Mr. Steese stated 2020.

Discussion on a possible amendment to the animal ordinance. Mr. Steese stated that several people have addressed council about amending the ordinance to allow for chickens inside the city limits. Mr. Steese searched ordinances for surrounding cities and sent those ordinances to council. Councilman Dykes stated one person has asked to have them. Councilman Moore stated there are people in his ward that have chickens. Councilman Mann stated that we had a very vocal couple speak out on dogs and the ordinance was changed. Mayor Bagwell stated we can't always change an ordinance. Councilman Mann asked how we are going to enforce the ordinance if we can't enforce the dog ordinance. Councilman Moore asked what we would do if a neighbor complains. Councilman Dykes stated if someone complains to him he looks into it and calls the appropriate department to handle. Councilman Robinson stated he doesn't see this as an urgent matter that needs council's immediate attention. Chief Tollison stated that we still need to be cautious because people need to be aware of their homeowners' association guidelines. Councilman Dykes stated we should bring to a vote.

Discussion on economic development. Mr. Steese explained that cities are allowed to provide additional incentives above the State tax incentives for economic development but they have to be defined in an ordinance. The incentives have to be for the public good, increase property values, increase revenue from taxes and fees, increase tourism and commercial activity, rehab of existing buildings and create jobs. A minimum and maximum threshold needs to be defined, i.e. up to 50% of building permit fees, up to 50% of business license fees for up to five years. First reading of this ordinance is in June with second in July and it would be implemented in August. Councilman Moore commented that the City of Greenwood had used the Baily Bill to do a lot of work in their downtown. He asked if the Woodside Mill would qualify for State help. Mr. Steese said it would. He then asked how we decide what is considered dilapidated and vacant. Mr. Steese stated it is up to Council to decide. The agreements will be between Council and the

businesses. Councilman Dykes asked if Council would make decisions as each person applies. Mr. Steese commented yes.

Update on projects. Mr. Sanders explained that some of the upcoming projects in the TIF District would be West End Hall and Old Market Square parking lot resurfacing. We are currently waiting on bids to come in. Mayor Bagwell commented that there is a lot of milling that needs to be done on the parking lots.

Another project is a shade for the amphitheater stage. It would be bid out as a polygon structure.

Pedestrian railroad crossings: The design for the crossings, plants, fence, has be sent to the railroad for approval and is ready to go out to bid.

Farmers Market structure: This will be on North 1st Street lot an angled building 40x40 with bathrooms, office, fans, electrical, space for 40+ vendors.

The parking lot project is ready to bid and should be awarded in July with staggered start times. The downtown refresh project should bid in August as well as the farmers' market structure.

If projects are over the allotted amount then we would step back and look at a different plan.

Councilman Moore commented that the parking lots should not just be patched. Mr. Steese said we are looking to the contractor for his opinion on what needs to be done.

Future dates for work sessions: Mr. Steese stated it had been brought up that we now have two meetings a month. Could council meet at 5:00 on our regular meeting day to go over the agenda and have discussions before the meeting? It would be open to the public. Councilman Mann stated he like the idea because it would give a time limit on discussion.

Councilman Robinson made a comment about the parked trains and blocking intersections, is there anything we can do? Mr. Steese said we can fine them but it is only \$5.00 a day.

Councilman Moore said there is nowhere else for the trains to stop because they are so busy.

Mr. Steese explained that the second reading of the budget is coming up and the school district has approved in their budget to add more resource officers so there is one at every school. We will have to do a budget amendment when we get more information.

Councilman Mann made the motion to adjourn at 8:00.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk

