



**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, April 16, 2024; 6:30 P.M.
Bennettsville Public Safety Complex**

Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER Mayor Fowler
2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Tyrone Davis
3. ROLL CALL
District 1- Wanda Weaver
District 2-Tyrone Davis
District 3- Allen Taylor
Mayor Fowler
District 4-Bill Jennings
District 5- Greg Scott
District 6- Tyron Abraham
4. APPROVAL/CORRECTION OF MINUTES
 - A. **Regular Council Meeting; Tuesday, March 19, 2024-** Moved by Mr. Abraham that the Regular Council Meeting minutes for Tuesday, March 19, 2024, be approved. Seconded by Mr. Davis. Motion passed unanimously.
5. PUBLIC REQUESTS/ PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS
 - A. Employees Anniversaries- Mr. Simon recognized all employees anniversaries and thanked them for their services: Elaine German, Police, 14 years; Kevin Miller, Police, 7 years; Michael Coit, Public Works, 2 years; Walter Baker, Police, 1 year; Jeremy Jones, Public Works, 1 year; Denise Miller, Planning & Zoning, 1 year; Charles Watson, Public Works, 1 year
 - B. New Hires & Promotions – None
 - C. Pee Dee Coalition- Sexual Assault Awareness and Child Abuse Prevention Month- Ms. Wendy Woods with the PeeDee Coalition Marlboro site stated it was Sexual Assault Awareness and Child Abuse Prevention Month. Marlboro County and The

City of Bennettsville have stood strong with the PeeDee Coalition on those two issues. Bennettsville has turned teal with the teal bows that were placed on the light poles downtown for Sexual Assault Awareness and Child Abuse Prevention Month. Ms. Woods also thanked everyone for their participation in supporting Nyia's Lemonade Stand.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Larry Pelham stated that there were some questions about zoning and one being an issue of a councilman in District 3. Mr. Pelham said, "I was on council for 8 1/1 years and I lived in District 3. I lived on North Kinney Circle. My house did not have to be annexed in. It was already annexed in. Mr. Jackson across the street bought that lot. The water and sewer ran up to the front of my house. Allen Taylor and RJ Grooms bought land down there they were zoned in through council. We voted for them to be zoned in, but they were not allowed to have water or sewer. They still do not but they're allowed to have garbage pick-up. Seem some lady been coming up here about this issue and it's not been taken care of. I wanted to come and ensure these people, the public, and this council that Allen is living in the district and understand that when y'all voted to have this map to go in was that if there's any discrepancies that y'all vote and take care of it. Well Kinney Circle, North Kinney Circle runs all the way down to Allen, turns left and comes out to Oakwood Street. Everything when you turn left going back to Jefferson, everything on the left is in District 3 all the way up to Crestview where Wanda takes over. On that right side is her zone. I don't know why y'all haven't voted to take care of this yet, but I just want you to know that I had a lot of people call me and ask me, "Is he in the right zone?" I said, yes. I mean, I was there 8 1/2 years. So, my thing is, I hope that y'all vote and take care of this. So, my phone can quit ringing and he move on with his duties."

Pamela Best started by passing out a handout to Mayor and Council about what Marion County is doing for their animals. She went on to say that citizens are complaining about stray cats, and something needs to be done about it.

7. REPORTS AND INFORMATION PRESENTATION

A. Finance Committee Update- Mr. Jennings stated, "The idea of this committee is to stay on top of our city revenues and expenses. I'm very concerned that we weren't looking at this monthly. We weren't making changes accordingly. I think it's very important. I do feel like we are a good committee. This is a small town. Whether we act like it or not. We have a lot of needs and citizens. Things they want to see and there's no more than what this council wants. We have to understand these finances before we can do anything. You can't take the road without knowing where you're going and I'm trying to make it and we're trying to make it. It's been a very productive meeting, but we'll continue to meet at least between every Council Meeting after the finances are presented to us in the previous meeting. When we need, we'll meet as much as we need. It's just an overview committee. It's not a troublemaker. It's hopefully a very positive committee. We have small funds. Our funds has not grown and they're not looking like they're going to be growing too much, but that doesn't mean we can't do more different things with what we got." The committee is very functional, he added. Then he thanked Mr. Scott for his time and thanked everyone for their support. Mr. Simon thanked the

committee for their guidance with the budget process.

- B. Boards and Commissions Update- Mrs. Miller in Planning and Zoning gave an update on Boards and Commissions. They are trying to get every seat filled. Member packets were made and given to each Council member, showing them what each member will receive. She added that they lost a few members on the boards and were working on getting everything back together. The Architectural Review Board is now filled. The Planning Commission and Board of Zoning are still seeking members. Mrs. Miller also mentioned that she was planning a training for the boards in July and in that training they will do professional development, purpose of the boards, so everyone will know what to do and how to run effective meetings and make motions. Lastly, they will teach on historic preservation and what the board oversees.

8. SECOND READING AND PASSAGE IN FULL OF ORDINANCES

No Business

9. FIRST READING AND ADVERTISEMENT OF ORDINANCES

- A. An Ordinance Adopting the FY 2024-2025 Budget-

Mr. Simon stated, "A booklet of a breakdown of accounts will be going to the committee to consider and will be out for all of you to look at soon. The numbers that are before you tonight for consideration is the information that we've been looking at in the committee meetings that we've been having."

Mayor Fowler said a lot of hard work has been done.

Mr. Taylor said he appreciate the hard work.

Ms. Weaver said, "Everybody put a lot of hard work into this, but there's some changes I need to see made before I can agree."

Mr. Jennings made a motion to approve the First Reading "with complete understanding that this is not the timeline that we're under and saying that this will be reviewed every month and changed every quarter as a council. We do have to in a matter of time, with a lot of discussion that happened between now and April 30th. I like to stay on schedule. For that reason, I made a motion to pass First Reading."

Approving Action: A motion to adopt FY 2024-2025 Budget. Moved by Mr. Jennings. Seconded by Mr. Abraham. Mr. Taylor and Ms. Weaver were opposed. Motion carried.

10. PASSAGE OF RESOLUTIONS

- A. US 15/401, W Main St., Brushy Bay Rd., Dogwood Ave., & Sunset Dr. Intersection Improvements-

No Action Taken: Mr. Abraham made a motion to postpone the US 15/401, W. Main St., Brushy Bay Rd., Dogwood Ave., & Sunset Dr. Intersection Improvements. Seconded by Ms. Weaver. Motion passed unanimously.

- B. Lyall Street Water Treatment Plant Upgrades- A Resolution authorizing

submission of an application by The City of Bennettsville to the Division of Community Grant Programs of the South Carolina Department of Commerce. Resolution to pursue the grant of \$993,300.00.

No Action Taken: Ms. Weaver made a motion to hold off until more work is done on the budget. Mr. Scott seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

11. GENERAL BUSINESS DISPENSED BY MOTION

A. Board Appointment to the Board of Architectural Review/Tree Committee (Kendricks Douglas)-

Approving Action: A motion to appoint Mr. Kendricks Douglas to the Board of Architectural Review/Tree Committee. Moved by Mr. Allen. Seconded by Ms. Weaver. Motion passed unanimously.

12. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CITY COUNCIL AND CITY ADMINISTRATOR

A. Bennettsville Citizens Academy Update-Some dates have been scheduled for this. It will be an application process. This program is designed for citizens to learn more about the operations of the city. To also learn some basic government rules and practices. The program will also engage in community service projects together. This will lead the city into recruiting ambassadors and those who wish to volunteer their time to help serve the citizens of The City of Bennettsville.

B. Salary Survey Update- Phase one, they have identified a small group of employees that they would recommend making adjustments right away. Phase 2 could be the following year and Phase 3 could be that same year or following year. Ranges were made larger, so that employees would have something to work towards. Right now, the ranges are small, and we use steps.

13. NON-AGENDA ITEMS FROM COUNCIL

Ms. Weaver had no comments.

Mr. Davis thanked employees for doing a good job. Keep working together with what you have.

Mr. Taylor had no comments.

Mr. Jennings said we still have work to do with the budget and some areas need to be cleaned up. He would like to see a little bit more action taking that need to be cleaned up in the downtown area.

Mr. Abraham thanked all employees for their hard work. He stated, "I started last week to visit some of the departments. I really enjoyed sitting down, talking to the employees, I look forward to going to visit other departments."

Mr. Scott thanked the committee he was a part of. "Just because the work was not done, don't look down on an employee because they were just doing what they were told. That's why leadership is so important."

Mayor Fowler stated, "we will have a balance this budget once and for all." He thanked the Finance Committee for their hard work.

14. ADJOURN
Mayor Fowler

Public Comment Policy:

Citizens desiring to speak at any regular meeting must provide a written request to notify the City Clerk prior to the agenda deadline. Citizens interested in commenting at a regular meeting shall sign in to speak and limit comments to no more than 3 minutes.

Mission Statement: To utilize all available resources for the development of plans, programs, and projects to improve services to the citizens of Bennettsville and establish and maintain an active role in economic and community development.