City of High Point

Municipal Office Building
211 South Hamilton Street
High Point, NC 27261

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 9, 2011

9:00:00 AM

Council Chambers, City Hall

Rebecca R. Smothers, Mayor
Latimer B. Alexander, IV, Mayor Pro Tem
James Corey, Foster Douglas, A.B. Henley, III,
Britt W. Moore, Michael D. Pugh,
Bernita Sims, M. Christopher Whitley

ROLL CALL, PRAYER, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Present: Mayor Smothers, Council Member Alexander, Council Member Moore, Council Member Sims, Council Member Henley, Council Member Whitley and Council Member Corey
Absent: Council Member Douglas and Council Member Pugh

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the following meetings were unanimously approved as submitted upon motion by Council Member Whitley and second by Council Member Sims.

Finance Committee; Monday, May 16th @ 3:30 p.m.
Committee of the Whole; Monday, May 16th @ 4:45/5:30 p.m.
Planning, Economic Dev. & Information Technology Committee; Tuesday, May 17th @ 9:00 a.m.
Regular Meeting; Thursday, May 19th @ 9:00 a.m.
Budget Review Session #2; Monday, May 23rd @ 3:00 p.m.
Budget Review Session #3; Wednesday, May 25th @ 8:30 a.m.
Budget Review Session #3; Tuesday, May 31st @ 3:00 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING ITEMS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Proposed City of High Point FY 2011-2012 Annual Budget Public Hearings

110111 Monday, June 6, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. and Thursday, June 9, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. are the dates and times established by the High Point City Council to receive public comments on the proposed City of High Point Annual Budget for FY 2011-2012.

Chairman Alexander opened the second and final public hearing on the Proposed FY 2011-2012 budget and invited anyone present who would like to speak on the budget to come forward.

There being no citizens present to offer any comments, he declared the public hearing closed.

Chairman Alexander felt it would be important for Council to give direction to staff so they could prepare budget documents for consideration by the City Council on June 20th.

Mayor Smothers agreed and asked if there were any Council Members who would like to make comments regarding the budget. She explained the major issues that people had have probably been explored, but there might be a few things left that are undetermined but could be included later in terms of establishing additional priorities--particularly in terms of transportation in regard to the issues related to PART if Council chooses to assist in that.

Chairman Alexander stated he was comfortable with the manager's Proposed budget in the General Fund as well as in the Electric/Water & Sewer Funds.

In reference to the tax rate increase, Mayor Smothers commented that the fact is there does come a time when absent a willingness by the public to accept changes in level of service, that Council has to look at revenue. She commended staff for the steps taken over the past several years and the degree to which staff has tried to minimize dollars through efficiencies and reductions. She felt it was Council's responsibility to try to maintain a healthy environment that satisfies both a responsibility for urban living as well as meet the basic needs for a healthy city. She noted that while the increases are not enthusiastically received, the Council doesn't have much of a choice. in the matter.

Council Member Corey felt the city has done an admirable job in trying to cut out unnecessary expenses and agreed that Council is now dealing with a budget that's flesh and bone. He noted that inflation also plays a factor in any increase in the city's property taxes. He remarked that it has been several years since a tax rate increase, but now a small increase was needed to provide the same amount of services currently being provided.

Mayor Smothers pointed out that Council has limited range in what they could affect to begin with particularly when it comes to revenue and noted 55% of the General Fund comes from the property tax.

Council Member Henley remarked that there is a revenue problem and asked that Council put energy into looking into ways they could, over the next twelve months, try to have an impact on the revenue issue. He felt Council, as leaders of the community, should do everything possible to promote economic development and felt the Retail Incentives Policy was one piece of a much bigger puzzle to promote and be advocates for economic development.

Council Member Sims hoped with the efforts the city puts forth in terms of energy conservation and helping individuals identify in their respective homes ways that they can conserve--that these efforts could be pushed out in the forefront to help offset some of the increases.

Mayor Pro Tem Alexander moved to direct staff to prepare the necessary ordinances and documents for the adoption of the budget that has been put before the public. Council Member Corey made a second to the motion which carried unanimously. [7-0 vote] [Council Members Douglas and Pugh were absent]

Mayor Smothers felt a real challenge the senior leaders in this administration would have would be to keep both the morale of the employees at a level to continue a service that has put more responsibility on everybody because they were doing with less both in terms of assistance from other people in their work situation as well as with what they take home.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council at this time, the meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Rebecca R. Smothers, Mayor

Attest:

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Lisa B. Vierling, MMC
City Clerk