

City of High Point

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



Minutes

Thursday, March 20, 2014

9:00 AM

Adjourned Session

Council Chambers

City Council

*James C. Davis, Mayor Pro Tem
Foster L. Douglas, Jason P. Ewing,
Jeffrey J. Golden, Judith P. Mendenhall,
Britt W. Moore, Rebecca R. Smothers,
Jay W. Wagner*

ROLL CALL, PRAYER, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**Pending Items****Report to Council by the Theatre Study Committee**

Beth Koonce, Chairwoman of the Theatre Study Committee, distributed copies of the Report to the City Council by the Theatre Study Committee dated February 28, 2014. [a copy of the Report will be attached and incorporated as a permanent part of these proceedings]. Ms. Koonce explained from the beginning, the Committee never considered or felt it was a viable alternative to shut the Theatre down, head in a different direction, or get an outside company to come in and manage it. Above and beyond everything else, the Committee felt marketing the Theatre was needed so it would be more utilized by citizens and on the front burner for High Point and the region. She pointed out the renovations and upfits recommendations in the Report were all considered from the standpoint of increasing the Theatre usage and making it a better venue for the type of entertainment that High Point would support. She shared that the Committee felt the Theatre could be a real catalyst for a revitalization in High Point to make citizens proud of the facility, while also drawing folks in from the surrounding region. She noted the Theatre budget makes up a very minimal amount of the city's overall budget and encouraged Council to spend funds to improve it because the Theatre is such a great asset. She reported the Committee, as a whole, felt David Briggs, the Director for the Theatre, is someone with a wide range of expertise and pointed out that he is a facility manager, which enables the Theatre to serve much like a civic center and could be rented out for other events. The Committee also discusses in the Report, making some renovations to the Gallery space and felt this space could be rented out for meetings, weddings, events that are not necessarily Theatre oriented with the Mendenhall Transportation Terminal being a big part of this.

She mentioned TAG (Theatre Art Galleries) and extended compliments to Jeff Horney for the great job he has done in expanding TAG. She asked Council to keep in mind that the Theatre also houses TAG available for the visual arts.

Council Member Mendenhall pointed out the bottom line is critical in terms of budgeting and asked if the Committee talked about synergy or arrangements with GTCC and what they are doing at the High Point campus in terms of theatre technical training that could possibly allow the city to up the money the city invests in marketing and take in internships to help with some of the technical aspects so there might be a trade-off dollar wise. Ms. Koonce explained GTCC was mentioned as another artistic resource in High Point and they did not get into any specifics of how they can be used. Jim Armstrong, a member of the Theatre Study Committee, confirmed they did discuss GTCC as well as HPU, but did not get into any of the details regarding internships. He agreed that it was a good idea to take advantage of opportunities that GTCC offers. Holly Davis, a member of the Theatre Study Committee, shared that during the recent production of Cinderella, a couple of interns were utilized and it worked out great.

David Willett, a member of the Theatre Study Committee, pointed out the Committee visited three other theatres and all three worked with the local community colleges. Council Member Mendenhall stated it seems to be a really good idea and a way to divert dollars currently being spent on full-time staff into marketing and promotional ideas.

Mayor Sims asked if there was any prioritization of improvements when looking at facilities and questioned if the Theatre is ADA compliant. Ms. Koonce explained the list contained in the Report is ranked, but the things on the list are things they consider to be items that should be done with those items at the top of the list needing to be done sooner, rather than later. She noted that the entrance to the Theatre is not handicap accessible and pointed out the outside doors are extremely heavy and are not automatic doors. She shared the steps that go down into the lobby and the poor location of the elevator also cause problems. The Committee is recommending changes be made in these areas. David Briggs, Director of the Theatre, further explained that the building itself is currently compliant, but noted as soon as renovations start, they will lose the grandfather clause for the building. He agreed that it is not a convenient location for someone in a wheelchair to get into the Theatre.

Mayor Sims asked if they looked at the seating as far as configuration. Ms. Koonce noted this was discussed and at first they thought the current seats could possibly be refurbished, but it turns out this is not cost effective. She noted, more than likely, the seats would have to be replaced. Mr. Briggs shared that a company is coming in next Thursday to look at the seats to determine whether they can be repaired and refinished on site or be replaced. He pointed out it is possible that they could actually lose some seating capacity if the seats have to be replaced. Council Member Moore asked about the number of handicapped patrons that attend Theatre events. Mr. Briggs noted he did not have this information readily available, but could get it.

Council Member Mendenhall asked how the improvements would be funded. Eric Olmedo, Budget & Evaluation Officer, explained it would take a bond referendum to do most of it. Mr. McCaslin pointed out the funding for the improvements to the rigging and curtain system is in this year's budget, but Council had requested this money not be spent until the study was completed. City Manager Strib Boynton noted that one of the things that struck him as being important was the Committee's recommendation that it would increase getting more programs in here. He complimented the Committee for doing such an outstanding job in pulling this together with an objective look at it.

Ms. Koonce added that the other venues visited by the Committee all had foundation arms and the Committee felt this is important. Mayor Sims agreed that there is funding that cannot be accessed right now because of the lack of the foundation arm, but once this is achieved, it opens up a whole new arena of funding that could help with the programming, etc..... She shared that she had talked with people who know theatre and how great the acoustics are, great staging and lighting, etc..... Council Member Mendenhall reminded Council that the reason the Shakespeare Festival came to the High Point Theatre years ago was because of the desirable wing space. Ms. Koonce

agreed that this gives the Theatre a unique opportunity and the wing space is totally appropriate for the shows that come in.

Mayor Sims thanked the Committee for the great job they did in putting together the report and recommendations. As one of the Council liaisons to the Theatre Study Committee, Council Member Davis shared that he did attend all the meetings and felt the best group possible served on the Committee. Council Member Mendenhall agreed and asked that the Mayor send letters to the Theatre Study Committee thanking them for their service.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE - Council Member Smothers, Chair

[140043](#)

Ordinance - Text Amendment 14-01 - Vision of North Carolina, Inc.

A request by Vision of North Carolina, Inc., to amend Section 9-5-2(aaa) of the Development Ordinance, entitled Development Standards for Family Care Homes, to reduce separation of requirement between family care homes.

Attachments: [Text Amendment - 14-01 -Visions of NC](#)
[Family Care Home Requirements and maps](#)

Mayor Sims explained that the Comprehensive Planning Committee did meet yesterday and discussed Text Amendment 14-01 regarding family care homes and recommended denial. She reported that Council Member Smothers wanted Council to take action on this matter so the decision could be relayed to the applicant.

Council Member Mendenhall moved to deny Text Amendment 14-01 as requested by Vision of North Carolina, Inc. Council Member Moore made a second to the motion, which carried by a 5-0 unanimous vote of Council. [Council Members Rebecca R. Smothers, Jeff Golden, Foster Douglas and Jay Wagner were absent].

New Meeting Time for the Comprehensive Planning Committee

It was the consensus of those present that the Comprehensive Planning Committee meet at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, April 2, 2014.

Update- Storm Debris Clean-Up

Allen Oliver, Assistant City Manager, reported the crews have been working non-stop with the following departments/divisions assisting with the storm debris removal: Parks & Recreation Department, Water/Sewer Mains Division, Environmental Services Division and Materials Recovery Facility. From March 7th to March 11th, the primary focus was on getting the streets open by removing the fallen trees from the streets. For the period of March 12th through today, the focus has been to remove all storm debris

from the public right-of-ways. Raleigh, Charlotte, Chapel Hill, Asheville and Gastonia have been assisting the city in the clean-up process. Mr. Oliver shared a map of the storm debris collection areas broke down by quadrants with the heaviest hit areas outlined in red (this is where the efforts are currently being focused). He explained that as soon as the crews complete an area, staff will send out an update. Areas on the map outlined in blue have been completed as of March 15, 2014.

The crews are working 12-hour days/7 days a week, and staff will continue to update City Manager Strib Boynton so he can update Council. Robbie Stone, who is the water/sewer mains superintendent, is heading up the mutual aid efforts. Mr. Oliver noted this is a work in progress and informed Council the crews will make an initial pass through of each neighborhood before going back again. He reported folks seem to be putting more debris out as soon as their area is picked up.

As a general rule, the additional crews will be in town until March 28th to complete Phase 1 and will return after the Furniture Market. Phase 2 will take place after the Spring Furniture Market and should resume about April 11th with regular City of High Point operations continuing as resources are available and will not negatively impact transportation or events at the Furniture Market. Mayor Sims asked if a date certain has been established to have all the debris picked up. Mr. Oliver felt it would be difficult to set a date because there are too many extenuating circumstances that come into play. He reminded Council that the cost for the clean-up was capped at \$1 million and staff would continue to evaluate this as the clean-up operations continue. He noted that the city is currently not charging for residents to dump debris at Ingleside, but this would be reassessed as the clean-up efforts subside. However, a decision was made to charge NCDOT, Archdale and Jamestown.

Mr. Oliver thanked the crews for doing such a remarkable job and pointed out it definitely is noteworthy that there have not been any accidents associated with the clean-up efforts. Mr. Boynton shared that Samaritan's Purse is still in town with a list of about 180 work orders for those that are handicapped, in poor health, or just not physically able to clean up and move debris. Chip Vanderzee is the city's contact for Samaritan's Purse. Council Member Moore suggested this be communicated to the public through social media and/or customer service.

Cynthia Davis voiced concerns that there were people burning debris in her neighborhood; she was informed that open burning is not allowed in Guilford County. Council Member Moore asked about the effect of this winter's ice/snow storms on road maintenance/potholes, etc.... Mr. Oliver explained there was a plan in place before the ice storm to start pothole repairs. All this has been put on hold, but city crews will be as diligent as possible getting the work done. Council Member Ewing asked about the status on a mobile app for residents to be able to report things such as potholes, etc..... Jeron Hollis, Communications Officer, explained there are some challenges using these because the city would have to purchase the data from the companies that compile it. He also pointed out it can be a little misleading because residents can click on a picture and think a work order has been created when there is no tie in to the city's system.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bernita Sims, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa B. Vierling, MMC
City Clerk