

City of High Point

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



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 19, 2009

9:00:00 AM

Council Chambers, City Hall

*Rebecca R. Smothers, Mayor
William S. Bencini, Mayor Pro Tem
Latimer B. Alexander, IV, Mary Lou Blakeney,
Foster Douglas, John Faircloth, Michael D. Pugh,
Bernita Sims, M. Christopher Whitley*

ROLL CALL, PRAYER, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Present: Mayor Smothers, Council Member Bencini, Council Member Alexander, Council Member Blakeney, Council Member Douglas, Council Member Faircloth, Council Member Sims and Council Member Whitley

Absent: Council Member Pugh

The following minutes were unanimously approved as submitted upon motion by Council Member Alexander and second by Council Member Whitley.

Planning & Development Committee; Tuesday, March 3rd @ 2:30 p.m.

Manager's Briefing Session; Tuesday, March 3rd @ 4:00 p.m.

Public Safety Committee; Wednesday, March 4th @ 9:00 a.m.

City Council Meeting; Thursday, March 5th @ 9:00 a.m.

PRESENTATION OF ITEMS**FINANCE COMMITTEE- Council Member Whitley, Chair****090054**

Consideration of adoption of an ordinance amending the 2008-2009 Budget Ordinance to appropriate funds in the amount of \$4,000 from EITC Carolinas Initiative for the City's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance.

Council Member Whitley advised that once again the City of High Point and Community Development have been awarded a \$4,000.00 grant for the volunteer income tax assistance.

The Council had no questions regarding this item.

Adopted ordinance amending the 2008-2009 Budget Ordinance to appropriate funds in the amount of \$4,000.00 from EITC Carolinas Initiative for the City's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance.

Ordinance No. 6610/09-10

Introduced: 03/19/09

Adopted: 03/19/09

Ordinance Book Volume XVI Page 95

A motion was made by Council Member Whitley, seconded by Council Member Sims, that this matter be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

090060

Adoption of an ordinance amending the 2008-2009 Budget Ordinance to appropriate funds in the amount of \$15,000 from the Hayden-Harman Foundation for the Core City Project.

There were no questions from Council regarding this item.

Adopted ordinance amending the 2008-2009 Budget Ordinance to appropriate funds in the amount of \$15,000 from the Hayden-Harman Foundation for the Core City Project.

Ordinance No. 6611/09-11

Introduced: 03/19/09

Adopted: 03/19/09

Ordinance Book Volume XVI, Page 96

A motion was made by Council Member Whitley, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bencini, that this matter be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

090055

Council is requested to authorize the City Attorney's office to proceed with the purchase of property located at 506 Vail Avenue for the Grimes-Russell-Taylor Street Stormwater Project. Contract amount for this property is \$42,500.00.

Richard McMillan was present and advised that this is part of the stormwater project and is needed to enhance the neighborhood as well as improve flooding problems in the neighborhood.

Authorized City Attorney to proceed with the purchase of property located at 506 Vail Avenue for the purchase price of \$42,500.00 for the Grimees-Russell-Taylor Street Stormwater Project.

A motion was made by Council Member Whitley, seconded by Council Member Sims, that this matter be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

090056

Council is requested to adopt a resolution to establish and offer a high efficiency heat pump rebate program in the amount of \$400 per eligible heat pump unit as per the program guidelines developed by NCMPA1.

Strib Boynton advised that this is the adoption of a resolution to participate in the Power Agency and ElectriCity's program to comply with North Carolina's renewable and energy efficiency standards.

Warren Larson outlined how the community would be informed of this project. Mr. Larson advised that a press release has been prepared. A brochure has been prepared that will be going out in the April utility bill. A separate website has been designed which will be called Hometown Green, which will something citizens can access off the City's website, and as these programs expand the Power Agency will continue to add them to the separate website, and it will be on the first page. There is a representative who belongs to the High Point Heating & Air Conditioning Association as well as a representative that belongs to the Home Builders Association in High Point.

One of the programs is a promotional and industrial program for businesses that 250 kw or more. There are about 150 of these customers in the City of High Point. The City has a Major Accounts Representative who is going to be visiting as many of these customers as he can to see if they have any interest in participating in this program because there is detailed paperwork that needs to be filled out.

Strib Boynton advised Council that this is one of several steps that will be coming from ElectriCities on energy efficiency and renewables. They are also anticipating block grants that are part of the stimulous package from the Department of Energy in the range of \$450,000 to \$900,000 a year that will be used for energy efficiency and other improvements. There is also separate money coming for weatherization projects that will also be available.

Mr. Larson also mentioned that Higher Regency has helped prepare an ad which has been personalized for the City of High Point, which will be appearing in the Enterprise which will be announcing the program also.

Council Member Faircloth suggested that they also consider using the News & Record for placing the ad since a lot of High Point residents subscribe to the News & Record as well.

Adopted Resolution to establish and offer a high efficiency heat pump rebate program in the amount of \$400 per eligible heat pump unit as per the program guidelines developed by NCPA1.

Resolution No. 1494/09-22

Introduced: 03/19/2009

Adopted: 03/19/2009

Resolution Book Volume XVI, Page 136

A motion was made by Council Member Whitley, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bencini, that this matter be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

090057

Council is requested to adopt a resolution establishing a rebate incentive for the purpose of enabling its commercial and industrial customers to undertake energy efficiency projects through a Request for Proposal for Energy Efficiency Program as developed by NCMPA1.

This item was discussed with item 090056 - Resolution, establishing and Offer High Efficiency Heat Pump Rebate Program. See that items for comments.

Adopted resolution establishing a rebate incentive for the purpose of enabling its commercial and industrial customers to undertake energy efficiency projects through a Request for Proposal for Energy Efficiency Program as developed by NCMPA1.

Resolution No. 1495/09-23

Introduced: 03/19/2009

Adopted: 03/19/2009

Resolution Book Volume XVI, Page 137

A motion was made by Council Member Whitley, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bencini, that this matter be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

090058

Council is requested to adopt a resolution to participate in the undertaking of energy efficiency projects at its municipally-owned facilities through the incentive program as developed by NCMPA1.

This item was discussed with item 090056 - Resolution, establishing and Offer High Efficiency Heat Pump Rebate Program. See that items for comments.

Adopted resolution to participate in the undertaking of energy efficiency projects at its municipally-owned facilities through the incentive program as developed by NCMPA1.

Resolution No. 1496/09-24

Introduced: 03/19/2009

Adopted: 03/19/2009

Resolution Book Volume XVI, Page 138

A motion was made by Council Member Whitley, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bencini, that this matter be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

090059

Adoption of four (4) resolutions authorizing the City of High Point to file applications with the State of North Carolina to request financial assistance for Stimulus Projects. Projects submitted for stimulus funding are:

- 1) Water transmission main and elevated tank, booster pump station and chloramines conversion to interconnect High Point and PTRWA.
- 2) Water transmission mains to serve planned growth area northwest of High Point and south of Interstate 40 and Business 40.
- 3) Rehabilitations to various sewer mains throughout High Point and to allow abandonment of an obsolete pump station to reduce sewer system infiltration and inflow and to reduce sewer system overflows.
- 4) Renovations in 6 areas of Town to improve water quality while also increasing area water pressures and fire protection capabilities.

Strib Boynton advised that a lot of things are changing in relationships between Washington and local communities such as High Point. High Point has picked up about \$5.6 million for lead based paint, abatement, neighborhood stabilization. Additional money has been picked up for the Greenway. The items in these resolutions today are projects that they feel they will be eligible for stimulus money that we have identified over \$35 million in projects that are ready to go and seem to meet the requirements of the stimulus program.

In addition, in Washington earlier this week these were discussed with our consultant and Congressional members, but they have also identified \$60.2 million in other projects that we are requesting 2010 dollars for from either the Department of Transportation, HUD, or other appropriations, which include Washington Street, Greenway, Piedmont Environmental Center. They have also requested \$47 million in the next transportation act for Sandy Ridge Widening Project, the 68/311 Interchange, and have also requested \$7.5 million for flood mitigation improvements around the hospital and West Ray area and Jacobs Place and West Green.

Our Congressional members in both the House and the Senate are going to be our advocates and try to secure this money for us.

Council Member Wilkins commended the City Manager, the City Staff and the Lobbyist Group, saying the return on the City's investment of \$5.6 million shows that it is well worth the effort the City is spending in Washington these days.

Adopted four (4) resolutions authorizing the City of High Point to file applications with the State of North Carolina to request financial assistance for Stimulus Projects.

Projects submitted for stimulus funding are:

- 1) Water transmission main and elevated tank, booster pump station and chloramines conversion to interconnect High Point and PTRWA.***
- 2) Water transmission mains to serve planned growth area northwest of High Point and south of Interstate 40 and Business 40.***
- 3) Rehabilitations to various sewer mains throughout High Point and to allow abandonment of an obsolete pump station to reduce sewer system infiltration and inflow and to reduce sewer system overflows.***
- 4) Renovations in 6 areas of Town to improve water quality while also increasing area water pressures and fire protection capabilities.***

Resolutions: 1497/09-25 p.139 Introduced: 03/19/2009
1498/09-26 p.140
1499/09-27 p. 141
1500/09-28 p. 142

Adopted: 03/19/2009

Resolution Book Volume XVI, Pages 139-142

A motion was made by Council Member Whitley, seconded by Council Member Sims, that this matter be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

090062

Council is requested to adopt a Resolution in support of a new I-85 bridge over the Yadkin River in Davidson County.

A motion was made by Council Member Whitley, seconded by Council Member Sims to suspend the rules in order to take action on this item. The motion passed on a vote of 8-0.

Mayor Smothers advised that Council has already adopted one resolution in support of seeking funding outside of the equity formula. What this resolution does is support the Governor's application for the \$300 million in stimulus money that pretty much will take everything out of the state.

Adopted Resolution in support of the new I-85 bridge over the Yadkin River in Davidson County.

Resolution No. 1501/09-29

Introduced: 03/19/2009

Adopted: 03/19/2009

Resolution Book Volume XVI, Page 143

A motion was made by Council Member Whitley, seconded by Council Member Blakeney, that this matter be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

090050

Council is requested to adopt a revised economic incentive policy redirecting incentive dollars to the Core City and south High Point.

Mayor Smothers asked Council if they would be supportive of asking EDC to put together a group of business people to take a look at this policy and the effectiveness of the policies over time that the City has had, and bring forth some suggestions to Council regarding the policy.

Council Member Bencini stated they need to make sure that they do not get a group of folks who have a particular interest in the Core City or in the 68 Corridor, which he felt would be difficult to do and wasn't sure that they wouldn't get folks who were trying to defend their turf.

Council Member Bencini stated that he was ready to go ahead and make a decision on the proposal as it is.

Mayor Smothers stated that it has been brought out that some of Council feel that this information is incomplete. Council Member Alexander stated he felt the information was incomplete and they need to decide what they want to incentivize and believed they need to be very specific and very targeted. Council Member Alexander felt that if Council's desire to increase personal and retail services in the core community and specified areas then those need to be outlined. If it is the desire to incentivize large corporate industrial office parks then they need to be specific about that. Council Member Alexander felt that to set up an EDC Committee without Council having some input other than just numbers on a page would result in the Committee coming to Council and asking what they would like to see.

Council Member Sims stated that Council has been talking about this for well over a year and had requested that the Manager and staff to bring back some recommended revisions to the Economic Incentive Policy. Council Member Sims stated that they could delay this for the next year if they choose so, but felt that once Council gets some sort of semblance of where they want to go, the other items in the policy can be hammered out as a process of this. Council Member Sims did not want to see this matter delayed for another six months while at the same time trying to move forward with Core City Redevelopment which cannot be done because there is no policy in place.

Council Member Bencini felt that as far as specificity that the policy could be altered as they move forward, and if there is something in the policy that has caused a problem it can be fixed. Council Member Bencini felt that the proposed policy was reasonable and they should go ahead and move forward with it.

Mayor Smothers expressed a concern over the number of vacant buildings located along Market Center Drive and all over the City, and thought it would be helpful to have some type of business investment evaluation of what the potential of those are. Council Member Bencini agreed, but felt they could still move forward with the proposed policy and do that subsequent to adopting a better policy.

Council Member Whitley stated in conversations started before this meeting in regards to targeted Core City District, felt that Council Member Alexander brought up a good point regarding whether there is an invasion among Council as to what they

are incentivizing. Council Member Whitley stated that if they were looking to incentivize restaurants and bars he could not support it, because they had a high failure rate and not worthy of the money of the City.

Council Member Whitley further stated that as the policy stands right now he could not support the existing allocation to North High Point.

Council Member Faircloth stated that since this has come up there has been somewhat of a climate of this being an either/or situation, which is not the way Council wants to address this. Council Member Faircloth advised that each one of Council needs to be very interested in the entire city and whatever it's going to take in a program like this to stimulate the core city, the southside, and the northside.

Council Member Faircloth suggested that Council set a date certain to sit down and discuss this matter and allow input from the community. Council Member Alexander also felt that Council should have a public meeting where incentives are the subject matter and come in with ideas in different areas about the things Council would like to see supported. Council Member Alexander stated that he does have some issue with the targeted areas and was concerned about incentivizing businesses that Council may not want there unless Council specifies what they do want there.

City Manager Strib Boynton advised that one of the next Briefing Sessions is on the 7th or the next one to go over the Core City Plans.

Council Member Sims stated she is not suggesting that they do not incentivize companies that come in the door without this policy being in place in some other areas that are not currently targeted, but believes there is an absence of information to current businesses as well as others who are expanding in the Core City about the availability of incentives.

The City Manager felt there would be some benefit to having the Core City outlined before the discussion on the incentives takes place.

Mayor Smothers confirmed that they will meet on April 7th at 4:00 p.m.

Council Member Faircloth advised there are no items to be heard from Public Safety Committee.

Council Member Sims advised that there are no items to be heard from Public Services Committee.

Council Member Bencini advised there are no items to be heard on Planning & Development Committee.

Patrick Harman - Hayden Harman Foundation

Mr. Harman has generously agreed to contribute \$15,000. to the Core City Marketing Efforts. The Core City is now in the process of receiving proposals from advertising marketing firms. Mr. Harman stated that his foundation is very excited about the Core City Project, in particular the Washington Drive Area. Mr. Harman met with some of the folks in the neighborhood last week to talk about doing some things from that point of view as well. Mayor Smothers thanked Mr. Harman for the generosity of the foundation.

Larry Diggs - Representative of Guilford County NLB National Federation of the Blind.

Mr. Diggs addressed public transportation and their request for changing different routes. Mr. Diggs never received any formal response to his request from the Council, and asked if they would reconsider their request. Mr. Diggs stated that public transportation is a necessity, especially for the growing elderly population.

Mr. Diggs asked about the stimulus funds going to transit stimulus and noted that most of these funds will be used for installing new sidewalks. Mr. Diggs asked that Council consider some of the different suggestions made last year for the improvement of transportation.

Mayor Smothers stated that Mr. Diggs was correct about the transit dollars to come, and advised that Council will make that decision on how to spend those funds.

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca R. Smothers, Mayor

Attest:

Dawn J. Sparks, CMC
Deputy City Clerk