

Regular Council Meeting
December 2nd, 2024
Council Chamber – Clemson City Hall

5:30 PM Public Hearing: Proposed TIF Ordinance

Call to Order: Mayor Robert Halfacre at 6:06 p.m.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Halfacre

Members present: Mayor Halfacre presiding, Council Members Boatwright, Brookover, Ducworth, Fulmer, Smith.

Absent: Council Member Watt

Notification emailed: November 29th, 2024 to the Greenville News, the Journal, the Independent Mail, the Post and Courier, the Pickens Sentinel, the Easley Progress; WSNW Radio, WYFF, WSPA, and Fox Carolina.

Public Session: Mayor Pro Tem Alesia Smith presiding – No comments.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from November 19th, 2024 were approved as presented.

Reports/Discussion

Receive a presentation on the schematic design and funding plan for the Arts Center Facility. – Parks and Recreation Director Jay Bennett showed the site plan and floor plan of the project. The proposed project would be located at Nettles Park. Lisa Lanni with Mcmillan, Pazdan, and Smith reviewed the floorplan that would consist of 15,250 square feet for the first phase of the project as well as an amphitheater area. The second phase will be an event center that connects to the Arts Center. Also included is additional parking that could be used for sporting events as well. The budget for the first phase is \$7,139,420. Council Member Fulmer praised Arts Center Director Joan Rossini for her work that created the need for additional space. This project allows The Arts Center to move out of the current shared space and allows the Clemson Area African American Museum to expand. Council Member Smith asked about the timeline, which would be two years from the budget vote approval to the ribbon cutting.

Discuss an Ethics and Code of Conduct Statement for elected and appointed officials. – Council Members Boatwright and Ducworth co-sponsored this item. Council Member Ducworth brought up the history of this issue both nationally and locally. This would consolidate different areas of city code on this topic into one easy to find area. Council Member Boatwright highlighted that it would also apply to boards and commissions, and all public bodies will review and reaffirm their commitment once per year. Council Member Brookover brought up issues with item number seven and requested it be reworded and clarified. Council Member Smith was also in favor of this and wanted clarification with item number nine to reflect current policy.

Staff Reports: City Administrator Andy Blondeau: December 5th Christmas Parade at 6pm. The Arts Center Holiday Market is this Saturday from 10am to 4pm and Sunday from 11am to 3pm. The Ashley Estates traffic calming meeting will be held tomorrow at 5:30 pm at Clemson Elementary. We held a new Council Member orientation today. The December 16th Council Meeting was rescheduled to December 10th at 6:30 due to quorum issues.

Policy Action

Consider First Reading of an infrastructure reimbursement agreement between the City of Clemson and One Clemson Development, LLC. - Deputy City Administrator Allison Gantte stated there were no changes since it was last discussed. The rate of 50% of the total property tax revenue would have a reimbursement schedule of 6 years. Also included is the requested stipulation that all work must be completed before any reimbursement is made. Council Member Smith made a motion, seconded by Council Member Boatwright, to approve first reading of an infrastructure reimbursement agreement between the City of Clemson and One Clemson Development, LLC. Vote on this motion was unanimous.

Other Policy Action:

Consider a resolution to censure Council Member Catherine Watt. - Council Member Brookover submitted this item. City Attorney Michael Kozlarek spoke in general terms defining a censure as reprimanding a member of an elected body. He gave examples from the Supreme Court that government bodies have long exercised the power to censure and gave several examples from congress. Council Member Brookover gave several examples of Council Member Watt's actions including forwarding and email covered by attorney client privilege and a highly inappropriate interaction with the Mayor and a member of the public during the October 7th Council Meeting. Council Member Brookover gave two reasons for why this is important to do now even though Council Member Watt is almost finished with her term. The first reason is the integrity of this body, its members, and City staff has been impugned without evidence. The second reason is that taking official action sends a message to the residents and future councils that this inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. Council Member Smith was in favor of using this time to heal and was not in favor of a censure at this time. Ken Marsh, 509 Anna Maria Boulevard, read a statement on behalf of an anonymous friend he said was from Council Member Watt. He asked that it be entered into the official record. Eleanor Hare, 202 Crest Circle, yielded her time to Mr. Marsh so he could finish reading the statement. Fran Mcguire, 103 Rippleview Drive, spoke in opposition. Rupert Mcgintity, 206 North Clemson Avenue, spoke in opposition. Robert Lee, 113 Pressley Drive, spoke in favor. Tal Slann, 100 Devonshire Drive, spoke in favor. Benjie Cumbie, 412 Shorecrest Drive, spoke in favor. Stephanie Platt, 103 Mountain View Lane, spoke in opposition. Council Member Brookover made the point that publishing the resolution in the paper to ensure residents are aware. He also echoed a statement made by Benjie Cumbie that highlighted the distinction between asking questions and making false accusations. Council Member Ducworth suggested reducing the publications from 3 weeks to 1 single publication as is normally done with other notices. Council Member Boatwright stated it was false that she was not informed. Council Member Brookover made a motion, seconded by Council Member Fulmer, to approve a resolution to censure Council Member Catherine Watt. Council Members Boatwright, Brookover, Ducworth, Fulmer, and Mayor Halfacre in support. Council Member Smith in opposition. Motion passed 5 to 1 in favor.

Consider a request from the Clemson Area Chamber of Commerce to waive metered parking regulations in downtown Clemson from December 13th, 2024 to January 8th, 2025 – Clemson Area Chamber of Commerce President Bryan Lee spoke in favor of the resolution. This would suspend metered parking in the parking garages only. Council Member Boatwright made a motion, seconded by Council Member Ducworth to approve a request from the Clemson Area Chamber of Commerce to waive metered parking regulations in downtown Clemson from December 13th, 2024 to January 8th, 2025. Vote on this motion was unanimous.

Consider approving the 2025 employee benefits renewal. - Human Resources Director Tracy Taylor proposed keeping the medical plan the same except changing the reinsurance carrier to ATS/US Fire. She also proposed adding a plan option for a high deductible health plan with a health savings account. Dental coverage would increase on the employer side only from \$35.00 to \$38.00 per employee. She emphasized that this is the 4th straight year of no increase to the employee contribution towards the insurance coverage. Council Member Fulmer made a motion, seconded by Council Member Brookover, to approve the 2025 employee benefits renewal. Vote on this motion was unanimous. Council Member Smith stepped out of the room for this item to use the restroom.

Consider awarding a contract for debris management and monitoring. – Procurement Coordinator Brandon Burton presented that the city issued an RFP, and four firms responded. The recommended vendor was Metric Consulting and they have experience working with FEMA. Robert Lee, 113 Pressley Drive, questioned the relevance of the business being minority owned. Council Member Brookover made a motion, seconded by Council Member Ducworth, to approve awarding a contract for debris management and monitoring. Vote on this motion was unanimous.

Consider for approval the 2025 Council Meeting Schedule. – City Clerk Jeremiah Jackson presented the proposed schedule. Council Member Boatwright made a motion, seconded by Council Member Fulmer to approve the 2025 Council Meeting Schedule. Vote on this motion was unanimous.

Mayor-Council reports/comments/new business

Mayor Halfacre: Informed everyone about The Nook, which is an employee focused food pantry on Clemson University's campus.

Council Member Boatwright: Congratulated various recreation teams for their state championships.

Council Member Fulmer: The Shaw Center recently completed two big repair jobs.

There being no further business, a motion was made, duly seconded, and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved

Jeremiah Jackson, MBL

By: _____

G. Robert Halfacre, Mayor