

Regular Council Meeting
October 7th, 2024
Council Chamber – Clemson City Hall

Call to Order: Mayor Robert Halfacre at 6:02 p.m.

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance: Council Member Smith

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

Absent: None

Notification emailed: October 3rd, 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.

Proclamation: Breast Cancer Awareness Month, National Arts and Humanities Month

Oath of Office Police Officers Dylan Morgan and Forrest Thompson; Detention Officer Justine Hughes.

Public Session: Mayor Pro Tem Alesia Smith presiding – Rosa Grayden, 101 Cantrell Drive Apartment 1, spoke about the TIF ordinance, but because this item is on the agenda, she was asked to make her public comment during that agenda item. Tal Slann, 100 Devonshire Court, spoke in appreciation for the hard work that the lineman and public works department had done with the storm. Also the community helping pull people together during the cleanup. A MyCivic comment from Kristine Matthews, 243 Thomas Green Boulevard, regarding Council Member Watt's accusations and Council Member Smith's lack of response to it.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from September 16th, 2024 were approved as presented.

Reports/Discussion

Discuss overview of The Memory Care Artist in Residence Program, highlighting the partnership between the Clemson Arts Center and Clemson Downs. – Executive Director of The Arts Center Joan Rossini spoke along with her team: Ruthie Miller, Shae Abramo, Emily Freelin, Whitney Roach, and Alyssa Jackson. The project is an artist in residence program featuring artist Shae Abramo at the memory care facility at Clemson Downs. The team worked closely with the Museum of Modern Art, to develop the program which started in November 2023. Emily Freelin told a story from earlier in her career about a student, who had Alzheimer's, who would work on the pottery wheel with a signature style despite her medical challenges. The program has been very successful, and is popular with the residents. The first class was held Tuesday, February 6th, 2024. The team is working to create a memory care toolkit for submittal to Springboard to the Arts. The hope is that other senior living communities can replicate the program using the toolkit. They have also been working on training for artists working with those in a senior living community. Council Member Watt asked for the cost of the program which is around \$1,000 per month plus material costs, which came from the Arts Center.

Staff Reports:

Mayor Halfacre: Thanked City Administrator Andy Blondeau, and Deputy City Administrator Alli Gantte for their leadership during the storm response along with Public Works Director Cody Lingefelt.

Public Works Director Cody Lingefelt: Gave an update about the storm response. There are 194 streets that are cleared as of today. The first report of damage started Thursday afternoon before the storm. All streets were passable by Friday night except for 2 that were blocked by downed power poles. They have processed 4,160 cubic yards of mulch since the storm. The Public Works garbage crew kept up with everything not missing a beat. Outside contractors were hired, and the city had lots of volunteers. Hopefully everything will be back to normal by the end of the week so that Public Works can handle the remaining work load in house. The encouraging public comments taped to their lockers were very helpful for morale.

Deputy City Administrator Alli Gantte: We received good news from the USDA in receiving a \$4,000,000 grant award for pump stations 5 and 7 along with a trunk line. The total project will cost \$8,000,000.

Council Member Brookover: The two year total grant total for the city is \$38,000,000 which is amazing considering a town our size.

City Administrator Andy Blondeau: The state approved the full time employees for the university to add a new Quick Response Vehicle Team that will reduce response time in medical emergencies to 5 minutes or less to anywhere in the city.

Policy Action

Ordinances:

Consider 1st reading of a TIF Ordinance. – City Administrator Andy Blondeau explained that this project is the result of 14 months work and takes advantage of new state legislation. It will have 4 partners including Clemson University, the City of Clemson, the School District of Pickens County, and Pickens County.

Clemson University would allow a 99 year lease for their property at no cost, and the other three partners would allocate future tax revenue to support the affordable housing project. There is no annexation with this project as all the property is currently inside city limits. It is important to get this passed by the end of the year to capture the incremental revenue generated by the sale of the Keowee Trail property. The first increment will be used to fund a stakeholder housing needs assessment, and create a community land trust. The estimated \$20,000,000 bond would create an estimated 100 to 125 new housing units. The City of Clemson, Clemson University, and the School District would each receive 26% of the housing with Pickens County receiving the remaining 22%. Upon sale of the house, the homeowner would receive their equity along with 25% of the capital gains. The other 75 % of the capital gains would go back to the Community Land Trust. The community land trust would have first right of refusal to purchase the house. This is no way provides a tax break to Core Spaces. The name of the program and areas have been changed, but everything else is the same as the previous City Council work session. Council Member Watt asked questions about the income level requirements, but state law defines the amount. The plan would be to have a mix of housing for rent and sale to be used as a recruiting tool by the various partners. There is no obligation for current property owners in the area to participate. The City of Clemson doesn't have to use it

only for City employees; it can be opened up as City Council sees fit, as long as they meet the income requirements. Rosa Grayden, 101 Cantrell Drive Apartment 1, asked where the project was and was shown a map of the areas. The Clemson University property where the construction would take place is located on Fabrica Street. Tal Slann, 100 Devonshire Court, asked about Council Member Watt's social media post earlier in the day about the TIF project. The situation grew contentious with back and forth between Council Member Watt and Mr. Slann with Mayor Halfacre gaveling to restore order and end Mr. Slann's comment period. Alley Linder, 123 Folger Street, spoke in favor of the TIF proposal, as a member of the Pickens County Habitat for Humanity board. Laura La Pre, 312 Johnson Road, spoke about the vacant land included in the TIF area. Linda Davis, 512 Goldman Street, spoke about potential tax increases, traffic, and the mix of additions to the property. Eleanor Hare, 203 Crest Circle, asked about votes and agreements on the TIF and FOIA. City Administrator Andy Blondeau has been in conversations with all parties, but no agreements have been signed. The organizations involved have 45 days to object to the TIF. Joel Williams, 108 Vista Drive, asked about process of house sales in the TIF program on Clemson University property. Rupert McGinty, 206 N Clemson Avenue, was concerned with potential fraud. Council Member Fulmer suggested having community meetings with the consultant to help educate the public. Council Member Ducworth made a motion, seconded by Council Member Fulmer, to approve 1st reading of a TIF Ordinance. Vote on this motion was unanimous.

Other Policy Action:

Consider awarding the North Sloan Parking Improvements Project to Foothills Contracting Service LLC. for \$155,640.01 with a contingency not to exceed \$15,000.00. – City Engineer Nathan Hinkle spoke on this item. The project will add 19 spaces with a traffic calming device. There were also 2 community meetings held for this project. Council Member Ducworth asked about the contingency variance; this is due to trees in the area being a potential issue. Council Member Boatwright made a motion, seconded by Council Member Fulmer, to award the North Sloan Parking Improvements Project to Foothills Contracting Service LLC. for \$155,640.01 with a contingency not to exceed \$15,000.00. Vote on this motion was unanimous.

Consider awarding the 2024 Sanitary Sewer Replacement Project bid and bid alternate to Gar-Con Inc. for \$761,016.00 along with a contingency not to exceed \$25,000.00. – City Engineer Nathan Hinkle spoke that working on this project in two areas of town had lower mobilization costs since the city was doing two projects at the same time. This contractor is currently doing work in the same area. Council Member Fulmer asked about paving in the area. Payne Lane will be repaved in 2026 according to the paving schedule. Work on this project should begin in December. Council Member Watt made a motion, seconded by Council Member Fulmer, to award the 2024 Sanitary Sewer Replacement Project bid and bid alternate to Gar-Con Inc. for \$761,016.00 with a contingency not to exceed \$25,000.00. Vote on this motion was unanimous.

Consider a Mutual Aid Agreement with the Liberty Police Department. – Police Chief Jorge Campos was notified by Liberty that there was no current agreement. Council Member Smith made a motion, seconded by Council Member Fulmer, to approve a Mutual Aid Agreement with the Liberty Police Department. Vote on this motion was unanimous.

Mayor-Council reports/comments/new business

Mayor Halfacre: Thanked all the city employees that helped with the storm response. The Savannah Bananas event is public now and will be a family event that has a ticket lottery system.

Council Member Fulmer: Suggested donating to Clemson Community Care in this time.

Council Member Ducworth thanked the Police for their hard work preparing in the storm. He also said that he did not think Council member Watt's earlier response to Mr. Slann was appropriate.

Council Member Boatwright: We are very fortunate here to have no loss of life with a storm like this.

Council Member Watt: Has taken 2 trucks and trailers to western North Carolina for storm aid.

There being no further business, a motion was made, duly seconded, and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremiah Jackson, MBL

Approved

By: _____
G. Robert Halfacre, Mayor