

## **FEBRUARY 3, 2009, CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

The City Council of the City of Clinton, North Carolina, met in regular session at 7:00 PM on February 3, 2009, in the City Hall Auditorium. Mayor Starling presided. Councilmembers Becton, Harris, Stefanovich, Strickland, Turlington, and City Attorney Dale Johnson were present. Also City Clerk Elaine F. Hunt; City Manager John Connet; Assistant City Manager Shawn Purvis; Finance Director Betty Brewer; Deputy Fire Chief Todd Solice; Planning and Community Development Director Jeff Vreugdenhil; Planner Mary Rose; Human Resource Manager Lisa Carter; Police Chief Mike Brim; Recreation Director Judi Nicholson; and Public Works Director Chris Doherty were present.

City Clerk Elaine F. Hunt gave the invocation.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Harris, seconded by Councilmember Stefanovich, the minutes of the January 6, 2009, regular meeting were unanimously approved.

### **RECOGNITIONS**

Police Chief Mike Brim recognized Salah Ali O'Neill as "Police Officer of the Year." Chief Brim stated Officer O'Neill has been with the city since December 2006, and is doing an excellent job. He further stated that Officer O'Neill on his own personal time took it upon himself to paint over graffiti on the Sampson Alumni Building located at the corner of Sampson and Barden Streets.

Mayor Starling commended the Police Department, as well as, the other departments for the great jobs performed.

### **PUBLIC HEARING – DOWNTOWN SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT**

Mayor Starling opened a public hearing on a request regarding the Clinton Downtown Special Tax District Expansion. He stated that this public hearing was continued from previous meetings (December 2, 2008, and January 6, 2009, city council meetings).

City Manager Connet stated that at the October 2008 city council meeting, staff recommended that the City expand the Downtown Special Tax District to include areas directly adjacent to the downtown. He stated that property owners have been notified and a notice has been published in the Sampson Independent. City Manager Connet stated that the original money from this Special Tax District was used for the purchase of parking lots and has also been used for special events, the purchase of garbage cans, the Downtown Revitalization Project, and various other areas. He further stated that if City Council approves this request, July 1, 2009, will be the effective date.

Mayor Starling asked that he, Councilmembers Turlington and Harris be recused from taking action upon this request because they own property in the downtown area. No one else wished to be heard.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Stefanovich, seconded by Councilmember Strickland, the following resolution passed unanimously:

**RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE BOUNDARIES OF THE CLINTON DOWNTOWN SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT**

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina General Statute 160A-536 allows for the creation of a Municipal Service District for the purpose of financing, providing, or maintaining for the district one or more of the following services, facilities, or functions:

- 1) Beach erosion and flood control works;
- 2) Downtown revitalization projects;
- 3) Urban area revitalization projects;
- 4) Drainage projects;
- 5) Off-street parking facilities;
- 6) Watershed improvement projects; and

**WHEREAS**, the Clinton City Council established a Municipal Service District (a.k.a. Downtown Special Tax District) for a portion of downtown Clinton on June 7, 1977, to finance off-street parking facilities and downtown revitalization projects; and

**WHEREAS**, the funds from the original special tax district have been used for Phase I of the Downtown Revitalization Project and the purchase and/or rental of five off-street parking lots; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council desires to expand services to areas adjacent to the original Special Tax District.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Clinton, Sampson County, North Carolina hereby expands the boundaries of the Clinton Downtown Special Tax District to incorporate the areas as shown on the attached map; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**, that the new boundaries will become effective on June 30, 2009.

**RESOLUTION -- NC HWY 24 TRANSPORTATION PROJECT**

City Manager Connet stated that this item was continued from the January 6, 2009 city council meeting. He stated that over the last thirty days, the City has heard from residents on both sides of this issue regarding the upgrade of NC Hwy 24. City Manager Connet stated that he and others have met with NC Department of Transportation and they are working to revise the plan. He recommended continuing this item until the revised NC Hwy 24 upgrade plan can be received from NCDOT.

Consideration of a resolution in support of the NC Hwy 24 Transportation Project was continued until revised plans from NCDOT could be received.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Harris, seconded by Councilmember Becton, Maggie Williams was unanimously reappointed to the Planning and Zoning Board for a five-year term ending January 2014.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Harris, seconded by Councilmember Strickland, Barbara Ann Faison was unanimously reappointed to the Board of Adjustment for a three-year term ending January 2012.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Becton, seconded by Councilmember Turlington, Homer Faison was unanimously reappointed to the Board of Adjustment for a three-year term ending January 2012.

## **GRANT – EASTPOINT SERVICES -- POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Police Chief Brim stated that the Clinton Police Department had been approached by Eastpoint Services to house a \$100,000 grant for Sampson County for the next two years with a third year possible. He stated that the intent of the grant is to provide education and information to citizens to prevent drunken driving related crashes involving persons between the ages of 21 and 34 and targets the male population. He further stated that personnel would be hired to manage the education and prevention efforts.

Police Brim stated that Mount Olive College had performed a study which indicates that this prevention effort is very much needed.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Stefanovich, seconded by Councilmember Becton, the request by Eastpoint Services for the Police Department to house a grant for Sampson County passed unanimously.

## **BROWNFIELDS AGREEMENT – HAMILTON BEACH PROPERTY – DUNKLEE & DUNHAM P. C.**

City Manager Connet stated the City has been trying to move forward with the development of a brownfields agreement for the old Hamilton Beach property which the City owns. He stated that our environmental attorney, Amos Dawson, has recommended the hiring of Dunklee & Dunham P. C. who specializes in this type of work. He recommended that City Council approve an agreement with Dunklee & Dunham so that they might guide the City through this process of obtaining a brownfields agreement.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Turlington, seconded by Councilmember Becton, approval of an agreement with Dunklee & Dunham P. C. regarding obtaining a brownfields agreement for the former Hamilton Beach-Proctor Silex Facility passed unanimously.

## **PUBLIC ART PROGRAM – SAMPSON COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL**

Assistant City Manager Purvis stated that Sampson County Arts Council is asking the City of Clinton to assist in developing a public art program. He stated that a planning grant is available through the NC Arts Council. He stated that the

grant application requires endorsement by City Council, a commitment of a \$5,000 match, and a representative of City Council to serve on the committee.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Strickland, seconded by Councilmember Harris, the request by the Sampson County Arts Council to develop a public art program in conjunction with the City of Clinton passed unanimously.

### **CLINTON SOCCER ASSOCIATION**

Assistant City Manager Purvis stated that the Sampson County Soccer Club, formerly named, Clinton Soccer Association is applying to become part of the NC Youth Soccer Association and is seeking support from the City of Clinton. He stated that the Association is requesting to use the City's facilities and is offering to administer the City's recreational soccer programs.

Randy Barefoot, of 502 Fox Lake Drive, spoke. He stood as the spokesperson for the Sampson County Soccer Club asking the City to utilize the facilities, fields, and monetary support.

City Manager Connet stated that the City will gladly work with the Soccer Club because they relieve the City of tremendous burden. He further stated that he recommend approving this request.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Stefanovich, seconded by Councilmember Becton, the request by the Sampson County Soccer Club to use the City's facilities, administer the City's recreational soccer programs, and for City Council's support passed unanimously.

### **DRAFT DESIGN – DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROJECT -- PHASE 3**

Planning and Zoning Director Jeff Vreugdenhil presented a slide presentation of plans for the development of Phase 3 of the Downtown Revitalization Project. He stated that the design addresses the need for parking and open green space in the downtown area with the main focus along Vance Street. Planning and Zoning Director Vreugdenhil stated that the project has been extended to Beaman Street to coincide with the proposed Downtown Tax District expansion. He stated that the draft design includes proposed landscaping, proposed light poles, removal of existing light poles, and demolishing existing concrete island, Vreugdenhil stated that by the middle of April, this project will be put out for bid.

Brian Johnson of the Wooten Company spoke regarding the cost of this project. He stated that \$8,100 was being proposed for the preliminary design and \$21,200 for the final design totaling altogether, \$29,300.

City Manager Connet asked City Council to approve amending Wooten Company's contract to extend the project to Beaman Street.

Mayor Starling asked that he, Councilmember Harris, and Councilmember Turlington be recused from taking action because they own property in the downtown area.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Strickland, seconded by Councilmember Becton, it passed unanimously to amend Wooten Company's contract to allow the extension of the Phase 3 Downtown Revitalization Project for Vance Street from Cat-tail Branch to Beaman Street.

## **REPORTS**

The finance, police, personnel, fire, public works, and code reports were acknowledged.

City Manager presented to City Council a memorandum regarding legislative updates. He stated that regarding the economic stimulus package that the federal government is creating to help boost the economy, the City is working on getting as many "shovel-ready" projects as possible. Shovel-ready projects are projects in which the contracts can be signed and work initiated within 120 days. According to the memorandum, the funds will most likely go to "shovel-ready" projects.

City Manager further stated that the resolution that City Council adopted at last month's city council meeting regarding the City of Clinton being allowed to send annual notices to chronic violators of the overgrown vegetation ordinance pursuant to G.S. 160A-200 was introduced into the House and is now recognized as HB32.

City Manager stated that he and staff are watching the budget. He stated that he is a little concerned about sales tax; however, reserves are good. He concluded by stating that he will keep City Council updated on the City's revenues and expenditures.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Gary McLamb, of 505 West Elizabeth Street, appeared before City Council to encourage all to develop resources toward energy self-sufficiency. He stated that the recent "Dancing with the Stars" fundraiser was an excellent project. He stated, however, that the City of Clinton and the United States need to find ways to tap into other resources; such as, increasing recycling, decreasing trash, and focusing on conservation.

## **RESOLUTION—CLOSED SESSION**

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Stefanovich, seconded by Councilmember Becton, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

### RESOLUTION TO ENTER CLOSED SESSION

Be It Resolved that the regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Clinton, North Carolina, held at 7:00 PM on February 3, 2009, entered closed session as allowed by G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss personnel.

Council re-entered regular session at 8:12 PM. Mayor Starling reported that City Council was briefed on personnel matters; however, no action was taken.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Becton, seconded by Councilmember Stefanovich, and unanimously passed, the meeting adjourned at 8:14 PM.

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City Clerk

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Mayor

