

DECEMBER 13, 2011, CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
6:00 PM
SPECIAL MEETING
PLANNING WORKSHOP

The City Council of the City of Clinton, North Carolina, met in a special planning workshop at 6:00 PM on December 13, 2011 in the City Hall Training Room. Mayor Starling presided. Councilmembers Strickland, Turlington, Stefanovich, Becton, and Mayor Pro Tem Harris were present.

Also present were City Manager Connet; Assistant City Manager – Finance Director Shawn Purvis; Police Chief Mike Brim; Fire Chief Todd Solice; Human Resource Manager Lisa Carter; Public Works Director Jeff Vreugdenhil; Planning and Zoning Director Mary Rose; Parks and Recreation Director Judi Nicholson; Captain Jay Tilley; and City Clerk Elaine F. Hunt.

City Manager blessed the meal and hereafter, the session began.

City Manager Connet welcomed everyone to the planning session. He stated that tonight's session is scheduled to review the City's accomplishments, challenges, and to receive input from City Council. He asked Council, "Where do we want to be in 2030?" He asked Assistant City Manager-Finance Director Shawn Purvis to update Council concerning the social media accounts within the City.

Mr. Purvis stated that presently, the City of Clinton has social media accounts with Twitter, FaceBook, YouTube, and Flickr. He stated that guidelines are posted for the usage of these sites. He also stated that city council meetings are now on YouTube. Mr. Purvis further stated that we are trying to get information to the citizens in as many ways as we can. He informed Council that a survey is out to solicit feedback on how well the City is doing. It was stated that Interstar will be redesigning our website in the near future.

City Manager Connet began by reading the City of Clinton's first goal: "Develop a systematic code enforcement program that strives to eliminate nuisance properties and structures." City Manager reviewed each of the following goals:

Create public education and outreach programs to inform citizens of property owner responsibilities and to educate and encourage clean streets and neighborhoods.

Maintain City owned properties at an adequate level to ensure efficient use and clean and neat appearance.

Create citywide beautification program that enhances the overall appearance of the City.

Provide opportunities for high-risk youth to maximize their skills and abilities and help them realize their potential.

Explore community outreach and partnerships to ensure safe neighborhoods.

Utilize Police and Fire staff and resources in the most efficient manner to serve the needs of the community.

Continue to work with regional, state, and federal agencies to maximize our efforts to fight crime.

Create multi-modal network to reduce traffic and pollution by promoting alternate forms of transportation.

Provide high quality water and wastewater services while protecting natural resources through a comprehensive water and wastewater plan.

Create master roadway and street plan to maintain safe roads and streets, improve connectivity, and reduce traffic.

After the discussion of the abovementioned goals, it was decided to broaden Goal #1 to read: "Develop a systematic code enforcement program that strives to eliminate nuisance properties and structures **and improve the appearance of the city**. Councilmember Turlington commended City Manager for implementing the Connect-City into the outreach program to inform citizens.

Goal #3 was amended to include the maintaining of City owned properties **and all infrastructures** at an adequate level to ensure efficient use and clean and neat appearance. It was the consensus of City Council to do a dual approach as it relates to this Goal #3 and Goal #4: "Create citywide beautification program that enhances the overall appearance of the City." It was stated that these goals encompass accomplishments such as: City Hall Renovation; Hamilton Beach Demolition; Royal Lane bathrooms; General Facility Maintenance; Pending CIP Programs; Community Theatre Repairs; Downtown Revitalization Projects; All America City Park; and Sidewalk Projects. Everyone agreed that growth is important!

City Manager Connet informed City Council that it has been proposed to install video cameras downtown to provide enforcement. Also, he stated that the Fire Department is being reviewed to see what kinds of situation they should handle. He stated that some tasks the Fire Department are handling, perhaps, should not be handled by them.

Chief Brim stated that he and the Sheriff Department are working on a shared database. He stated that the 911 System will have to be included in this shared endeavor.

Councilmember Strickland stated that all cities are "fighting for economic development and clean cities." Councilmember Becton questioned nuisance lots. Ms. Rose stated that the cost to cover nuisance lots is \$100 administrative fee plus \$50.00 per hour. She stated that this fee has not been increased in years. She stated that it is the same people annually violating this code.

Public Works Director Vreugdenhil stated that his belief is to become more aggressive on these liens and go through the foreclosure process... then things will change. Ms. Rose stated that because of a shortage of revenues, demolitions within the City will be decreasing.

Mayor Pro Tem Harris voiced her concern regarding her district and nuisance lots. It was determined that "ownership is the key" when it comes to the properties in District 5.

Chief Brim mentioned a program for first time offenders taking place in High Point that he hopes to bring to Clinton soon. He further stated that Officer Bowden is working on a mentoring program

Councilmember Stefanovich questioned City Council regarding its desires: "Do we want Clinton to grow and add population or do we want to make what we have as well as we can obtain?" Mayor Starling stated that the city will have to grow to give the citizens continued good service.

Councilmember Strickland brought up annexation. City Manager Connet stated that legislature makes annexation harder to obtain. City Manager Connet summarized what needs to be done. He stated that we need to tell the story about Clinton. It was agreed upon that when the story is told and jobs come, people will come and people will stay.

City Council was informed regarding WildFire DVR monitoring. City Manager Connet stated that downtown merchants can buy into this endeavor and help with the expense and their businesses. The Police Department is working on this implementation. City Council liked this idea; therefore, City Manager Connet stated they will proceed with the development of WIFI. He briefed City Council regarding the proposed Police Department project before adjourning.

He stated that the study of the Police Department project is complete. Three options were discussed and they recommend the approval of Option 2. Option 2 involves building the new station where the present front parking lot is for the Police Department. He stated that the department staff will stay in the existing building while renovations are taking place. He further stated that after the new building is constructed, the existing building will be demolished. He stated that the estimated total project cost is \$3,381,472 plus no relocation cost.

Being no further discussion, the planning workshop adjourned at 8:24 PM.

Elaine F. Hunt, MMC, City Clerk

Lew Starling, Mayor