

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING HELD MAY 18, 2006

A meeting of the City Council of the City of Clinton, North Carolina continued from May 9, 2006 was reconvened at 7:00 p.m. on May 18, 2006 at City Hall Auditorium. Mayor Starling presided. Councilmembers Becton, Stefanovich, Strickland, and Turlington were present. Councilmember Harris was absent. The city clerk, city manager, finance director, fire chief, public works director and recreation director were present.

Councilmember Becton gave the invocation.

BUDGET

City Manager Connet informed the council that the estimated fund balance on June 30, 2006 in general fund will be \$2,969,582, water & sewer will be \$1,482,497 and the cemetery fund balance will be \$472,382.12. He added the overall proposed budgets for F. Y. 2006-07 total \$11,470,634 with a \$.41 proposed tax rate. Several operational changes are proposed in order to keep expenditures in line with revenues. They are: Merge the city tax department with Sampson County tax department, outsource utility billings, and eliminate curbside recycling collections.

Mr. Connet reviewed each department's proposed budget.

Councilmember Stefanovich questioned the size of a rescue truck budgeted for the fire department. He asked if the city is proposing more truck than what is needed. He suggested looking at alternatives that will serve the purpose and cost less money, such as a step van with a body to carry rescue equipment. Councilmember Strickland said he would not want a lot of money in a truck that can not be used to put out a fire. City Manager Connet said the city has control over the design of the truck. Mayor Starling asked if the city needs a fire truck worse than it does a rescue truck. Fire Chief Miller replied although the city is in good shape with fire trucks, the city may want to delay the purchase of a rescue truck and add the funding to the cost of a aerial truck proposed for the 2008-09 budget.

Councilmember Stefanovich and Mayor Starling questioned whether or not the city is proposing enough funds for street resurfacing.

City Manager Connet told of combining the current three sanitation departments into one department in 2006-07.

Councilmember Turlington stated she feels the city should charge outside residents user fees for participation in recreation programs. Mayor Starling voiced concern over user fees. He said requiring proof of residency could be a problem. He added the city will get into a war with the county and goodwill will be lost. Councilmember Turlington suggested charging outside residents a small fee since they do not pay city tax. Mayor Starling questioned charging non residents who are city tax payers. Councilmember Becton said there could be a problem with people giving a wrong address in order to avoid paying fees. Recreation director Nicholson said the department can easily determine whether a user is a non resident and the department will not question the place of residency given on registration forms.

Councilmember Becton voiced concern over the proposed increase in cemetery lots. He said the fees for Sandhills Cemetery were just increased in February, 2006.

The city manager was instructed to place on the May 25 agenda the use of recreation user fees. He was also instructed to look at reducing the proposed residential garbage fee to \$11.00, to reduce the commercial garbage fees and to reduce the proposed cemetery fees. Mr. Connet said a two cents tax increase will save annually residents more than the proposed garbage fees increase.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Turlington, seconded by Councilmember Stefanovich, and unanimously passed, the July 2006 regular city council meeting was changed to July 11, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Becton, seconded by Councilmember Strickland, and unanimously passed, a public hearing on a Rural Development loan for Phase II of the downtown revitalization project was called for June 6, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Upon a motion made by Councilmember Turlington, seconded by Councilmember Becton, and unanimously passed, the meeting was continued until May 25, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Clerk

Mayor