

REGULAR MEETING

March 13th, 2017

The Bessemer City Council met in regular session on Monday, March 13th, 2017 at 7:00 PM in the Council Chamber of City Hall.

Members Present

Mayor Becky Smith, Council Members: Dan Boiling, Joe Will, Kay McCathen, Howard Jones, Alfred Carpenter, and Donnie Griffin were all present. Attorney, David Smith, and City Manager, James Inman were also present.

Call to Order, Prayer, Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order. Council member Kay McCathen led in prayer. Mayor Smith led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the March Agenda

By motion of Alfred Carpenter and unanimous vote, the March agenda was approved.

Special Presentations

Honored Guest- Mayor Becky S. Smith recognized the Honorable Sheriff Cloniger of Gaston County and Lieutenant Tim Elmore of Bessemer City Police Department. Lieutenant Elmore is back on light duty, as he was injured in the line of duty late October 2016.

Bessemer City Police Department Recognition –Chief’s Award- Tom Ellis, Bessemer City Police Department Chief recognized JoD Franklin, Parks & Recreation Director, for his courage and valor on February 20th, 2017. JoD Franklin immediately placed the Allan Farris Community Center on emergency lock down on a late Monday evening to protect seniors and youth in the center from an act of violence on the basketball court.

Employee Recognition-City Manager- City Manager, James Inman recognized Police Chief, Tom Ellis and Administrative Assistant, Nancy Robinson for their hard work and dedication to the Bessemer City Police Department. Mrs. Robinson will be retiring March 2017 and Police Chief Ellis is celebrating his 4th year with the Police Department.

Teachers & Teaching Assistants of the Year- Teachers and Teaching Assistants from Bessemer City High School, Bessemer City Middle School, Bessemer City Central Elementary School, and Bessemer City Primary School were recognized by their principals and City Council as part of the Teacher Appreciation Program.

Dr. Judy Moore, Principal of Bessemer City High School, and Mayor Smith, recognized Rebecca Wray as the 2017 Teacher of the Year.

Mrs. Fran Decanal, Principal of Bessemer City Middle School, and Mayor Smith, recognized Amber Robertson as the 2017 Teacher of the Year.

Mrs. Kristi Gornto, Principal of Bessemer City Primary School, and Mayor Smith, recognized Stacey Messer as 2017 Teacher of the Year, and Julie Grooms as 2017 Teaching Assistant of the Year.

Student Appreciation- Students from Bessemer City High School, Bessemer City Middle School, Bessemer City Central Elementary School, and Bessemer City Primary Schools were recognized by their principals and City Council as part of the Student Appreciation Program.

Dr. Judy Moore, Principal of Bessemer City High School, and Mayor Smith, presented certificates to all High School representatives: Natalie Peregory and Logan Gamby.

Mrs. Fran Decanal, Principal of Bessemer City Middle School, and Mayor Smith, presented certificates to all Middle School representatives: Sinayan Jefferies, Alexandra Gillian, and Jake Allen.

Mrs. Kristi Gornto, Principal of Bessemer City Primary School, and Mayor Smith, presented certificates to all Central & Primary School representatives: Kyla Ballard, Collin Sealy, Carter Owensby, Leah Owens, Meredith Cunningham, and Nizarius Quinterio.

Request to Speak/Opportunity for Public Comment

Mayor Smith opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Consent Agenda

The following items for the Consent Agenda were unanimously approved by motion of Kay McCathen:

- a. Approval of Minutes - Regular Meeting Minutes of February 13th, 2017, Special Planning Retreat Minutes of February 16th-17th, Emergency Session Meeting Minutes of February 21st, and Work Session Meeting Minutes of February 28th, 2017.
- b. Street Closure-Sounds of Summer Ordinance- City administration is requesting certain streets to be closed for the City's Sounds of Summer Concert Series. The streets requesting to be closed are as follows:
 - i. 100 Block of East Virginia Avenue and 100 Block of West Virginia Avenue on April 22, May 27, June 10, June 24, July 8, July 23, August 12, August 26, September 9, September 23, October 7, and October 14 from the hours of 5pm and 10pm. NCDOT paperwork has been submitted.
- c. Street Closure- Down Home Day Ordinance- City administration is requesting certain streets to be closed for the 29th Annual Down Home Day Festival. The streets requesting to be closed are as follows:

- i. 100 Block of West Pennsylvania Avenue on Friday, May 12 from the hours of 8am-11pm; and the 100 Block of West Virginia Avenue, 100 Block of East Virginia Avenue, and the 100 Block of North 12th Street on Saturday, May 13 from the hours of 8am-11pm.

Resolution – Supporting the HWY 161 Sidewalk Phase II CMAQ Project

City Planner, Jeffrey Kirchner presented Council with a resolution to complete phase II of the Hwy 161 side walk project. By motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, the resolution was approved. A copy is available at City Hall.

Establish Public Hearing-Ordinance Prohibiting Animals in Festivals, Parades, and Fairs

City Manager, James Inman requested that Council establish a public hearing at the next regular meeting for an ordinance prohibiting animals from City events. By motion of Howard Jones and unanimous vote, the public hearing was established. There will be a public hearing regarding the prohibition of Animals in Festivals, Parades, and Fairs on Monday, April 10th at 7:00PM in Bessemer City Council Chambers.

Establish Public Hearing-Establish Osage Mill Redevelopment Project Incentive

Economic Development Officer, Joshua Ross spoke to City Council about establishing a public hearing for the Osage Mill Redevelopment Project. A public hearing is required pursuant to NCGS 158-7.1 for local development incentives. Mr. Ross explained that the Osage Mill Redevelopment Project team is requesting use of the City and County's Local Investment Grant Program. Industrial and large-scale commercial projects qualify for this grant; however, the development team is requesting use of the grant for one time only because of the secondary economic impact associated with the Osage Mill Redevelopment Project.

Mr. Ross further explained that the Gaston County Commissioners are considering allowing the development team the same use of the grant. The County Commissioners will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, March 28th, 2017 at 6:00PM and also consider adopting a resolution approving the use of the grant for one time only.

City Manager, James Inman, and Mr. Ross explained that due to a scheduling conflict with advertising the public hearing, the City's public hearing would follow the County's meeting.

By motion of Joe Will and unanimous vote, City Council established the public hearing for the Osage Mill Redevelopment Project Local Investment Grant Incentive for the next regular City Council meeting on Monday, April 10th, 2017 at 7:00PM. The public hearing will be advertised in accordance to North Carolina General Statute.

Demolition Ordinance-605 E. Boston Avenue

By motion of Kay McCathen and unanimous vote the demolition ordinance for 605 E. Boston Avenue was tabled to the Monday, April 10th Regular City Council meeting.

Public Hearing- Annexation of North Park Property

By motion of Dan Boiling and unanimous vote the North Park Property public hearing opened at 7:40 PM. City Planner, Jeffrey Kirchner stated that proper notice was given about the hearing and the annexation of the land. Mayor Smith asked if there was anyone present to speak in favor of the annexation. There was none. Mayor Smith asked if there was anyone present to speak in opposition of the annexation. There was none. Being no further business by motion of Alfred Carpenter and unanimous vote the North Park Property public hearing was closed at 7:42PM.

Annexation of North Park Property

City Planner, Jeffrey Kirchner addressed Council about the annexation of the North Park property. Mr. Kirchner recommended that the parcel (#217759) be brought into the city limits. Furthermore, Kirchner assured Council that all required steps: a resolution initiating the annexation and setting the public hearing, and notification of the public hearing had been completed. By motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, the North Park Property Ordinance was approved. A copy of this ordinance is available at City Hall.

City Manager's Report

City Manager, James Inman addressed Council with the following updates:

Capital Project Ordinance-Water System Evaluation

City Manager, James Inman stated that this ordinance authorizes staff to submit an application for zero interest loans from the State of North Carolina Division of Health & Natural Resources. Loans from Division of Health & Natural Resources will allow the City to complete necessary Water Plant improvements. By motion of Dan Boiling and unanimous vote the Capital Project Ordinance was approved.

Budget Amendments

City Manager Inman presented Council with two sets of budget amendments. The first made changes to the general fund to appropriate money for the repurposing of the basketball courts and general items. The second was to repair the budget on paper for the Capital Project Streetscape Paving. During a recent audit it was found that the budget paperwork needed to be amended to close out the project.

By motion of Dan Boiling and unanimous vote the budget amendments regarding the general fund were approved.

By motion of Joe Will and unanimous vote the budget amendments regarding the capital improvement streetscape project were approved.

Property Purchase Offer from Bob King

Per Council's request a formal appraisal of the Highway 161 parcel (#22057) was conducted. The property was valued at \$1,675.00 and Bob King has agreed to purchase the property for the full appraisal. City Manager and Attorney Smith advised City Council that the property would have to be advertised for ten (10) days in accordance to North Carolina General Statute 160A-269. Provided that no one placed a bid during said ten (10) days, the City will be able to negotiate the sale of property to Mr. King.

Downtown Seating/Flag pole Rendering

City Manager, James Inman proposed that the vegetation directly in front of City Hall be removed and replaced with more seating as well as two new flag poles. Mr. Inman stated that residents and visitors mentioned that it is hard to locate City Hall behind all the vegetation. By motion of Donnie Griffin and unanimous vote, the improvements in front of City Hall were approved.

Repurposing of Basketball Courts

City Manager, James Inman proposed that the basketball courts by the City swimming pool be repurposed as pickle ball courts. Council member Joe Will asked if signs should be placed on the repurposed court as well as Indian Springs Park, which states the hours of operation and prohibited activities on City property. By motion of Joe Will and unanimous vote, the repurposing of the basketball courts was approved.

General

City Manager, James Inman also reminded Council that the March 28th Work Session Meeting would begin at 1:00PM. Furthermore, Mr. Inman provided all Council members with a copy of the preliminary 2017-2018 budget for their review.

City Council General Discussion

Mayor Smith opened the floor for Council general discussion. Council member Dan Boling commended the Bessemer City Police Department on their hard work. A recent Bessemer City citizen with dementia was found by a Police Officer at 3:00AM and returned home. Council member Kay McCathen agreed with Council member Dan and thanked the Police Department for being a phenomenal source of protection. Council member Donnie Griffin thanked the crowd for coming and being engaged. Council member Griffin also had questions on the status of the hotel in town, the ball fields of the proposed North Park, foreclosed properties in the City, and if the records regarding WastePro had been handled. City Manager, James Inman and City Planner, Jeffrey Kirchner addressed Council member Griffin's concerns by stating that all WastePro accounts had been reconciled and the City is still progressing on the other items.

Adjourn

Being no further business to come before the board, by motion of Alfred Carpenter and a 5:1 vote, with Dan Boiling in opposition, the meeting adjourned at 8:12 PM.

Becky S. Smith, Mayor

Hydeia Hayes, Deputy City Clerk