

**MINUTES
EMPORIA CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF EMPORIA MUNICIPAL BUILDING
March 6, 2012**

Note to Reader: Although the printed agenda document for this City Council meeting is not part of these minutes, the agenda document provides background information on the items discussed by City Council during the meeting. A copy of the agenda document for this meeting may be obtained by contacting the Office of the City Clerk.

Emporia City Council held a regular meeting on Tuesday, March 6, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, located at 201 South Main Street, Emporia, Virginia. Mayor Samuel W. Adams, III presided over the meeting with Bishop Vincent Lowery offering the invocation.

Councilman Saunders stated that he wanted to formally introduce to Council, Angela C. Beachy, Director of the Greensville/Emporia Department of Social Service. He also stated that Ms. Beachy has over 20 years of experience. He further stated that she has served the Virginia Department of Social Services as Eligibility Worker, Quality Assurance Reviewer, a SNAP Management Evaluation Review, a SNAP Program Manager and a Fraud Unit Supervisor.

ROLL CALL

The following City Council members were present:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris
Councilman James C. Saunders
Councilwoman Doris T. White
Councilwoman Deborah D. Dixon
Councilwoman Beverly White
Councilwoman L. Dale Temple
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey

Others present:

Samuel W. Adams, III, Mayor
C. Butler Barrett, City Attorney
Brian S. Thrower, City Manager
Steve B. Hall, Assistant City Manager
Tessie S. Wilkins, City Clerk
Joyce E. Prince, Commissioner of the Revenue
Don Wyatt, Chief of Police
Sheila Cutrell, Financial Director
Royal Jones, Public Works Director

MINUTES APPROVAL

Councilwoman Temple moved to approve the minutes from the Tuesday, February 21, 2012, City Council meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Councilwoman Dixon, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James C. Saunders	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Dixon	aye
Councilwoman Beverly White	aye
Councilwoman Dale Temple	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

AGENDA APPROVAL

Councilman Saunders moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Councilwoman Temple, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James C. Saunders	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Dixon	aye
Councilwoman Beverly White	aye
Councilwoman Dale Temple	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

12-11. Citizens Advisory Board – 2 Term Expirations

Mayor Adams stated that this item was continued from the February 7, 2012 City Council meeting. He also stated that the following individuals are currently serving 2-year terms on the City's Citizens Advisory Board that will expire on February 28, 2012: Bill Howell, Vicelle Daniels, Reverend Alex Bailey, Jessie O'Nery, Barry Mayfield, Nathaniel Dupree, and Meade Horne. He also stated that those seven individual have served the maximum length of time and are not eligible to be reappointed.

Councilwoman Carey moved to nominate James Williams for consideration to serve a two year term on the Citizens Advisory Board.

Councilman Saunders moved to nominate Lloyd Ligon Jr. for consideration to serve a two year term on the Citizens Advisory Board.

Councilman Harris moved to nominate John Kinsey for consideration to serve a two year term on the Citizens Advisory Board.

Councilwoman B. White moved to appoint James Williams, Lloyd Ligon Jr., and John Kinsey to serve a two years term on the Citizens Advisory Board, seconded by Councilman Saunders, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James C. Saunders	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Dixon	aye
Councilwoman Beverly White	aye
Councilwoman Dale Temple	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

12-18. Board of Equalization Nominations

Mr. Thrower stated that Judge W. Allan Sharrett has requested Council to reconsider its nominations to the Board of Equalization.

Mayor Adams stated that this item is to be held until the March 20, 2012 Regular Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

12-21. Request for FY13 Funding Commitment – Belfield CDBG Planning Grant

Mr. Hall stated the Emporia Comprehensive Plan and City Staff have been focusing efforts on the revitalization and redevelopment of South Main Street and Halifax Street Downtown corridors. He also stated that in October 2010, Mr. Chris Thompson with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) expressed his interest in potentially partnering with the City on a downtown revitalization project.

Mr. Hall advised that in spring 2011, the City prepared information and submitted a ‘downtown prospectus’ to DHCD’s Director, Mr. Bill Shelton, on May 5 seeking funding for a downtown Planning Grant. He also advised that both South Main and Halifax were included in this request. He further advised that a response was received from DHCD on July 1 requesting additional information and clarification. He stated that the City provided this in August and shifted the focus solely to the Halifax Street corridor.

Mr. Hall stated that DHCD responded to this correspondence in September with a total of seven action items including completed business surveys, a structural inventory, business inventory, a public meeting, and two management team meetings. He also stated that the City completed these items and submitted this information to DHCD on November 15.

Mr. Hall stated that on February 7, 2012 the City received a Planning Grant approval letter from DHCD for the “Belfield Business District Revitalization,” indicating its satisfaction with the City’s response and completion of action items on time. He also stated that DHCD had determined the interest and need were present to further study this area. He further stated that a sum of up to \$35,000 was made available to the City upon completion of a final Planning Grant proposal; however additional items must be completed before receiving the funding.

Mr. Hall stated that a required Facilitated Planning Strategy meeting was held on February 23 with Ms. Beverley Coleman, DHCD Community Development Specialist. He also stated that after this meeting, the City had a period of seven business days to complete and submit the final Planning Grant proposal to be awarded up to \$35,000.

Mr. Hall stated he had procured a Management Consultant, Community Planning Partners, Inc. and is in the process of negotiating an agreement to assist City staff with the Planning Grant activities and Community Improvement Grant (CIG) preparation. He also stated that the City will need to allocate additional funds for a required Preliminary Engineering Report and façade renderings in the Belfield project area. He further stated that these items will become elements of a future CIG application. He stated that it is important to note that CDBG Planning Grant funds may not be used towards a CIG application. He also stated that the CIG applications are submitted in March of each year. He further stated that the City Administration hopes to be able to submit a CIG application in March 2012 requesting funding of up to \$1M.

Mr. Hall stated that he have requested \$10,000 in the FY13 budget to accommodate the additional Planning Grant expenses. He also stated that the City cannot submit the final Planning Grant proposal (originally due Monday, March 5) or enter into a formal contract with DHCD until confirmation of the total cost for activities is determined. He further stated that the DHCD has granted an extension to receive the City's final proposal allowing time for Council's direction on this item.

He recommended that Council authorize the City Manager to execute any future contracts for this project with DHCD and Community Planning Partners, Inc., as well as formally commit \$10,000 in the FY13 budget for this project.

Councilman Saunders made a motion to authorize the City Manager to execute any future contracts for this project with DHCD and Community Planning Partners, Inc. and to commit \$10,000 in the FY13 budget for this project, seconded by Councilwoman Temple, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James C. Saunders	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Dixon	aye
Councilwoman Beverly White	aye
Councilwoman Dale Temple	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

12-22. Audit Presentation – Creedle, Jones & Alga, PC

Mr. Scott Thompson of Creedle, Jones & Alga provided City Council member with a presentation of the City of Emporia's audited financial statements. He reported that the City complied with generally accepted accounting principles with no evidence of noncompliance with provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants found during the audit. He further reported that the overall cash position of the City of Emporia was \$7,024,324 consisting of \$5,715,176 in Governmental Activities (General Fund and \$1,309,148 in Business-Type Activities (Water & Sewer Fund). He reported that this represents a \$1,589,785 increase versus last year due to better performance in both funds in addition to increases in accounts payable and deferred revenue in governmental activities.

Mr. Thompson reported that the Governmental Activities cash increased by \$1,289,858. He also reported that the increase in the fund was caused by an increase in revenue of \$447,387 while expenditures decreased by \$345,292. He further reported that the Business-Type Activities cash increased by \$299,927. He reported that the cash provided by operations of \$1,043,897 and interest income of \$3,809 was offset by cash used in capital and related financing of 4,747,779.

Mr. Thompson reported that the City of Emporia's position reflected total assets of \$34,272,222 exceeding total liabilities of \$15,826,745 leaving total net assets of \$18,445,477. He also reported that of the amount, \$12,550,749 is invested in capital assets net of related debt. He further reported that those figures also represented an increase in Net Assets over the last year of \$1,138,958 while eliminating \$656,988 in debt.

Mr. Thompson reported that the City of Emporia's overall debt leverage ratio only decreased from 6.01 years to 5.11 years.

He advised City Council Members that the city continues with its philosophy of retiring debt while continuing to meet its obligations to taxpayers, investors, and creditors. He also advised that most of the items of change were expected as evidenced by the budgets. He stated that a legacy of favorable financing through bonds to take care of projects as they arise at very favorable interest rates continues, which results in future savings to taxpayers. He also stated that the further task for the council is to address the challenges related to continue tightening in short term liquidity while continuing to reduce debt burden over the long term with declining revenue sources from both the local and state level.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Adams asked if anyone wished to bring a matter before City Council members adhering to the three minute time limitation.

With there being no further comments to come before City Council, Mayor Adams closed the public comment portion of the meeting.

*****Closed Session*****

Councilwoman Temple moved that Closed Session be entered for the purpose of discussing Virginia Code § 2.2 3711 (A) (7) **Legal matters requiring the advice of counsel regarding the Citizens National Bank Building and DMV Building.** Councilman Saunders seconded the motion, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James C. Saunders	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Dixon	aye
Councilwoman Beverly White	aye
Councilwoman Dale Temple	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

*****Regular Session*****

Councilwoman Dixon moved that the meeting be returned to Regular Session. Councilwoman Temple seconded the motion, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James C. Saunders	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Dixon	aye
Councilwoman Beverly White	aye
Councilwoman Dale Temple	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

CERTIFICATION

Councilwoman Dixon moved to certify the following:

1. only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were discussed in the Closed Session to which this certification applies, and
2. only such public business matter as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Session was convened were heard, discussed, or considered by City Council.

Councilman Saunders made the motion to rescind the previous Council action of deeding the Citizens National Bank building over the Emporia Industrial Development Authority. Furthermore, he also made the motion to deed the Citizens National Bank building to the Emporia Redevelopment and Housing Authority, pending the Emporia Redevelopment and Housing Authority's acceptance of deed to the property and compliance with all necessary redevelopment guidelines moving forward.

Councilwoman Temple seconded the motion, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	abstained
Councilman James C. Saunders	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye
Councilwoman Deborah D. Dixon	aye
Councilwoman Beverly White	aye
Councilwoman Dale Temple	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

Councilman Harris made the motion to deed the Department of Motor Vehicles building to the Emporia Industrial Development Authority, pending the Emporia Industrial Development Authority's acceptance of deed to the property.

Councilwoman Temple seconded the motion, which passed as follows:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris	aye
Councilman James C. Saunders	aye
Councilwoman Doris T. White	aye

Councilwoman Deborah D. Dixon	aye
Councilwoman Beverly White	aye
Councilwoman Dale Temple	aye
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey	aye

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before City Council, Mayor Adams adjourned the meeting.

Samuel W. Adams, III, Mayor

Tessie S. Wilkins, City Clerk