

Tuesday - February 28, 1995 - 2:00 p.m.

WORKSESSION

Present: Mayor Russell Martin, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Chris Peterson; Councilwoman Barbara Field, Councilman Gary McClure (arrived 2:15, left at 3:00, returned at 4:15), Councilwoman Leni Sitnick, and Councilman Joseph Carr Swicegood (arrived at 2:35); City Attorney William F. Slawter; City Manager James L. Westbrook Jr.; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Absent: Councilman Herbert J. Watts (in hospital regarding knee problem)

CAROLINA POWER AND LIGHT'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM

Mr. Gary Ashburn, CP&L's District Manager, and Murray Gould, Treasury Department/Manager-Tax, presented Council with a program which stimulates affordable housing within communities in their service area.

It was the consensus of Council for the City Development Office to work closely with CP&L to explore ways to match various types of resources with CP&L's interest and to stimulate redevelopment in target neighborhoods.

TRANSFER OF REDEVELOPMENT AND REHAB FUNCTIONS TO CITY OF ASHEVILLE FROM THE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Ms. Julia Cogburn, Planning Director, updated the Council as to the progress of the transfer of the redevelopment and housing rehabilitation functions of the City from the Housing Authority to the City of Asheville and to the Community Development Division of the Planning Department. Staff is currently targeting that these functions, historically carried out by the Housing Authority of the City of Asheville, be transferred with an effective date of July 1, 1995.

Ms. Cogburn pointed out that a budget amendment in the amount of \$43,000 would be required to cover some one-time expenditures which will result from the transfer.

It was the consensus of Council that the Council should be very involved in this process because the whole point of bringing back the Redevelopment Commission back to the City is to be able to be more involved and more accountable.

The Council agreed to have the Housing and Community Development Committee consist of Vice-Mayor Peterson, Councilwoman Field, Councilman Watts, and City staff Julia Cogburn and Marvin Vierra.

Councilwoman Sitnick expressed concern over the workload of the present staff and wanted to be kept abreast of any concerns the staff had.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with all appropriate actions at the next formal meeting.

PETITION TO CLOSE PORTION OF RESERVOIR ROAD

Mr. Larry Ward, Acting Public Works Director, stated that a petition has been received from Jan Howard and the Kenilworth Residents Association Board requesting that a portion of Reservoir Road be permanently closed.

The petition submitted included 131 signatures; 16 live in the general area of the portion of Reservoir Road being petitioned to be closed; one owns property adjoining the portion to be closed; and four live in the direct vicinity of the closing. Three properties in the direct vicinity of the closing have not signed the petition. It is alleged that a representative of St. Joseph's Hospital signed the petition but on the petition form submitted no indication of this is made. St. Joseph's Hospital property joins the portion of the road requested to be closed.

After discussion of which areas the road serves, the pros and cons of closing that portion, etc., the Public Works staff recommended denial of the petition to close that portion of Reservoir Road. The reasons for denial are that Reservoir Road is a through street that is necessary to conveniently accomplish certain trips for residents in the area; and the road provides alternate access to a number of properties in case of emergencies, such as fire or other catastrophes. The Public Works staff, however, does recommend that the speed limit along the narrow and curving sections of Reservoir Road be reduced to 15 miles per hour and that strict enforcement of the speed limit be conducted, especially during peak hours.

It was the consensus of Council to place this matter on Council's next formal meeting agenda for consideration.

SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM

Ms. Roxie Wynn, Assistant Personnel Director, briefed the Council on the last three years of the Summer Youth Program, stating that in 1992 the total direct program costs were \$63,121, in 1993 total costs were \$87,943 and in 1994 total costs were \$83,480. City staff recommend Council fund the program at \$50,000 which includes the hiring of a Program Administrator (hired to work May-August), a youth counselor and approximately 20 youth. Clerical support will continue to be provided by existing personnel staff.

Councilwoman Field suggested some type of survey be sent to the graduates who were in the program to see if the summer job helped them in the job market.

Councilwoman Sitnick expressed concern over the declining number of youth that have participated in the program over the last three years - 76 in 1992, 61 in 1993 and 59 in 1994. She felt that a problem might be from the standpoint of the commitment of the program for targeting youth people, not Council's commitment to help the youth.

Vice-Mayor Peterson volunteered his time to be the Council liaison to the summer youth program, which would entail, among other things, seeing first-hand the youth at work. He would then report back to the Council his findings.

Councilman Swicegood felt that the program should not only benefit the youth, but the City should benefit too.

Councilwoman Sitnick expressed concern that the first year we had 500 at-risk youth applying to work and the City didn't have the ability to provide the jobs. She suggested staff work with the community and other agencies to try to obtain some employment for these youth who are willing to work. She also suggested staff work with the N.C. Center for Creative Retirement to see if they have members who might be able to supervise the youth and possibly provide clerical assistance to the City as it relates to the program. -3-

It was the consensus of Council to have the Personnel Department proceed with the Summer Youth Program at \$100,000 funding and explore other areas in the community regarding providing jobs to the youth. The City Manager was

instructed to bring specific information back to the Council at the next worksession.

ADOPTION OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

Mr. Marvin Vierra, Community Development Director, said that HUD requires the City to adopt a Citizen Participation Plan that describes citizen participation in the consolidated planning process for CDBG and HOME funding grants.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate action at the next formal meeting.

IMPROVEMENTS AT MIDDLEBROOK ROAD AND OLD HAW CREEK ROAD

Ms. Elizabeth Graham, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission, stated that on February 15, 1995, the Commission voted to request that the City Council give a high priority to the completion of improvements to the intersection of Middlebrook Road and Old Haw Creek Road. This request is in response to comments at the public hearing for the preliminary plat of Royal Palms Subdivision.

According to earlier records, a plan for a new alignment at this intersection, prepared by the City Engineering Division in 1981, proposed to relocate the intersection approximately 20 feet south of its present location to provide for adequate sight distance. This was undertaken at the request of concerns from nearby residents. Right-of-way for the project was purchased, however, the intersection was not completed.

In 1988, the 200 unit Carolebrook Apartments were approved for the identical site that the Royal Palms Subdivision is now going to use. A condition of the approval of the apartments in 1988 was that the developer was to fund 50% of the cost to the improvement at the intersection. The developer did not proceed with the project and the intersection was not completed by the City. City funds for the project have been reprogrammed and are no longer listed in the Capital Improvement Plan. The approval of the preliminary plat for the Royal Palms Subdivision again raised the concern of the public, the Public Works Department and the Commission for a resolution of the project.

The Commission recommends that the intersection improvements be completed as soon as possible. The latest cost for the improvements is estimated by the Public Works Department to be \$40,000.

It was the consensus of Council to look at the intersection improvements at Middlebrook Road and Old Haw Creek Road in the budget process and prioritize it accordingly.

Motorola Console Upgrade

Mr. Bob Wurst, Audit/Budget Director, said that the 1993/94 Capital Improvements Program ("CIP") Police budget had an appropriation of \$58,000 for an upgrade to one of the Police communication consoles. This upgrade allows the telecommunicators to be more responsive and able to monitor their communication more effectively. A change order to our Motorola radio contract was approved in January of 1994. We expected

the equipment to be installed and paid for in May of 1994. However, the equipment installation was delayed until July of 1994 and the funds were -4-

not encumbered. This delay means that the payment for this equipment occurred in the 1994/95 fiscal year.

Since the payment for the equipment was made against the 1994/95 CIP budget, this purchase will make the Support Division of the Police capital budget go over if we proceed with all planned purchases for this year.

However, since the money originally budgeted for this purchase was not spent in 1993/94, it reverted to fund balance. Therefore, Council can reappropriate the \$53,000 needed to pay for this equipment in the 1994/95 fiscal year.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate action at the next formal meeting.

MID-MARCH WORKSESSION

City Manager Westbrook explained that the next scheduled worksession was Tuesday, March 14, 1995, however, the majority of Council would be out of town on that date. Due to the new procedure of items coming before the Council on a worksession prior to the formal meeting, staff has requested that the next worksession be held on Thursday, March 16, 1995.

Councilwoman Sitnick expressed regret that she had made prior plans to be out of town March 10-19, 1995, based on the Council calendar that showed there would be no meeting of the Council that week. City Manager Westbrook apologized stating that this new procedure would streamline the Council's formal meetings and regretted that a worksession needed to be scheduled during the time she was away. He said that he would be happy to fill her in on the details of the worksession and City Clerk Burleson said she would make the tapes available to Councilwoman Sitnick if she wished to listen to the worksession dialog.

CHANGE CITY COUNCIL MEETING DAY AND TIME

Vice-Mayor Peterson said that he intended, at the next formal meeting, to move that City Council change their meeting day and time so as not to conflict with the Buncombe County Commissioners meeting day and time. Councilwoman Sitnick said that she would second the motion and has been advocating this change for several years.

Mayor Martin stated that Councilman McClure (who had to leave the meeting for a previous appointment) asked him to relay to the Council that he preferred to keep the meeting day Tuesday.

City Clerk Burleson stated that Councilman Watts asked that she also relay to the Council that he preferred to keep the meeting day on Tuesday, for various reasons, some being that this Council has been meeting on Tuesday for 1-1/2 years and has had some of the highest attendance at meetings, Thursday evenings school activities are scheduled, Wednesday nights are prayer meetings, and Mondays and Fridays are generally holidays.

Councilman Swicegood also supported keeping the City Council meeting day on Tuesday. He stated that major Council items are scheduled later in the evening.

Vice-Mayor Peterson said that throughout the campaign there was positive talk from all candidates about moving the meeting day and time. -5-

Councilwoman Sitnick said that she continually receives calls from people wanting to attend both City and County meetings and agreed with Vice-Mayor Peterson about the campaign promises. She said that if the majority of Council did not want to move the day, she would be satisfied that it remain on Tuesday with a starting time of 7:30 p.m.

It was the consensus of the Council that Councilmen McClure and Watts be

present when this item is placed on the next formal meeting agenda for consideration.

CONSENT AGENDA

- ACCEPTANCE OF CERTAIN STATE SYSTEM STREETS IN THE ENKA ANNEXATION AREA AS CITY SYSTEM STREETS

Summary: Upon annexation of new areas into the City of Asheville, NC DOT requires that the City accept certain State roads in the area as City System Streets.

- CONTRACT TO AUDIT CITY ACCOUNTS

Summary: General Statutes require that local governments of NC have their accounts audited each fiscal year and submit a copy of the audit to the Local Government Commission. Staff recommends audit firm of Crisp, Hughes & Co., LLP.

- URBAN TRAIL GRANT PROPOSAL TO THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

Summary: The Urban Trail Committee is seeking approval to submit a grant proposal to the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina in the amount of \$5,000. The grant would engage an African-American artist who will prepare a sculpture which would interpret the history of "The Block" near the corner of Eagle and Market Streets. The grant will provide part of the costs of the materials, research, administration, artist fees and shipping for the sculpture.

- URBAN TRAIL GRANT PROPOSAL TO THE NORTH CAROLINA ARTS COUNCIL

Summary: The Urban Trail Committee is seeking approval to submit a grant proposal to the North Carolina Arts Council in the amount of \$8,000. The grant would engage an African-American artist who will prepare a sculpture which would interpret the history of "The Block" near the corner of Eagle and Market Streets. The grant will provide part of the costs of the materials, research, administration, artist fees and shipping for the sculpture.

- BIDS FOR PRISONER TRANSPORT VEHICLE FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Summary: Two bids were received, however, on February 23, 1995, nine days after the bid opening date, the low bidder, Matthews Ford, Asheville, N.C., made a written request to withdraw their bid. Staff recommends that award of bid be made to the second low bidder, Sirchie Finger Print Labs, Inc., Medford, N.J., for one 1995 Ford, E350 Commercial Cutaway Cab and Chassis with a 1995 Supreme/Sirchie Group Body for a total bid of \$41,437. (Sirchie's bid is \$37 higher than the low bid).

- BIDS FOR UPGRADE OF SL1-N TELEPHONE SWITCH

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Summary: Three bids were received. Staff recommends award be made to low bidder, Business Communications Inc., Greensboro, N.C., for the purchase of the specified upgrade in the amount of \$24,189.

- DEMOLITION OF 17 RIDGE STREET

Summary: 17 Ridge Street is a dilapidated structure. The owner(s) have not responded to the order of the Chief Code Enforcement Officer to repair or

demolish this structure. The Fire Department Building and Life Safety Division asks City Council to set a public hearing to direct the demolition of 17 Ridge Street.

- DEMOLITION OF 106 BURTON STREET

Summary: 106 Burton Street is a dilapidated structure. The owner(s) have not responded to the order of the Chief Code Enforcement Officer to repair or demolish this structure. The Fire Department Building and Life Safety Division asks City Council to set a public hearing to direct the demolition of 106 Burton Street.

It was the consensus of Council to proceed with appropriate actions regarding the Consent Agenda items at the next formal meeting.

SCHEDULING OF WORKSESSION ITEMS

Upon request of Councilwoman Sitnick, City Manager Westbrook explained the process of scheduling items on the City Council's worksessions. Councilwoman Sitnick expressed concern over her having to get the approval of the entire Council to get an update on the Broadway Project on their worksession agenda.

CLOSED SESSION

At 4:20 p.m., Vice-Mayor Peterson moved to go into a closed session to discuss a legal matter. This motion was seconded by Councilman Swicegood and carried unanimously.

At 4:55 p.m., Vice-Mayor Peterson moved to come out of closed session. This motion was seconded by Councilman Swicegood and carried unanimously.

SCHOOL BOARD INTERVIEWS

The City Council interviewed the following individuals for the two vacancies on the Asheville School Board: Hugh McCollum, Roy Harris, Brian Weinkle, Larry Wilson, Carol Collins and Linda Eubanks.

Mr. James Baten, who was scheduled for an interview, wrote Council a letter stating that he had aorta bi-femoral bypass surgery on Tuesday, February 14, and regretfully because of his medical problems, could not meet the required answer/interview schedule. In his letter he did assured Council that he was deeply interested in being considered for the position and welcomed an opportunity to share in an interview/answer session or any other alternative procedure the Council deemed appropriate.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Martin adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

CITY CLERK MAYOR
