

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
CITY HALL, THIRD FLOOR
TUESDAY, AUGUST 28, 2018
8:30 A.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Willis presiding. Committee members Gibbons, Perkins, Perdue, Rohr, Stevens and Thomas.

City Manager Hildebran, City Clerk Cannon, Public Information Officer Harris, Police Chief Phelps, Fire Chief Hair, Economic Development Director Horn, Finance Director Bean, Recreation Director Story, Planning Director Wheelock, Public Utilities Director Thomas, Public Works Director Wright.

ABSENT: Councilmember Jonathan Beal.

OTHERS: Virginia Annable, *News-Topic*, Jay Clapp, Ramey Kemp Associates, and Mike Ways, Freese and Nichols, Inc.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Mayor Pro-Tem Willis welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

II. CITIZEN COMMENT PERIOD

III. COMMITTEE ITEMS

A. Public Utilities/Public Works

1. Public Utilities Director Radford Thomas updated City Council on the following items:
 - a) One of the two ongoing Water Treatment Plant Improvements Projects may be finished within sixty days.
 - b) A new Public Utilities Branding Logo will be painted on all visible City water tanks for identification purposes and where some tanks are not visible; the logo may be placed on the gate at the tank location.
 - c) MeterSys Project is in the procurement stage. Bids for the project will be received on December 9 and eight vendors toured the site. A recommendation will be presented to Council for consideration of approval. The first phase of the project will be the purchase of new hardware and billing software. It was noted Staff will have access to meters from their computers in order to make any necessary changes.
 - d) The City will begin work regarding the EPA Assessment grant for the Brownfields project after October 1 as all of the submitted documents have been approved. The City may also begin to request some reimbursements at that time. It was noted that community outreach will be a large part of the project.

2. Public Works Director Jared Wright reported on the following items:
 - a) Reported 20% of Hospital Avenue residents attended the public meeting held on July 25 regarding the Hospital Avenue Sidewalk project. The project requires some tree removal and rights-of-way will have to be obtained before construction begins in 2020.
 - b) Reported Duke Energy is working on the cost estimate for the retro fit of City street lighting with LED lighting. An additional meeting is scheduled in the near future.
3. Update: Two-Way Traffic Study: Mr. Jay Clapp, Ramey and Kemp, presented an update regarding changing the traffic pattern on Harper Avenue from one-way to two-way traffic.

Mr. Clapp reviewed a variety of phases and cost estimates for the project as follows:

Phase I Closure of Steel Street \$200,000

Phase II – Harper Avenue \$970,000, \$770,000 without Resurfacing

Phase III – West Avenue \$760,000, \$500,000 without resurfacing

Mr. Clapp presented a map which illustrated the realignment of the revised changes. (A copy of the map is attached to these minutes as information.) He stated Phase I of the project would consist of the realignment of West Avenue where it joins with Harper Avenue and explained this design results in West Avenue being perpendicular to Harper Avenue. Mr. Clapp pointed out a cul-de-sac would be placed at the intersection of Steel Street and stated the right and left turning lanes would remain.

Mr. Clapp reviewed Phase II, Conversion of West Avenue from Ridge Street to Harper Avenue to two-way traffic and also reported several traffic signals would be eliminated as you travel east on West Avenue. Due to sight line issues, a crosswalk and sidebar will be moved farther up the street to improve the sight distance at Church Street and to allow motorists to see past the corner of the building located there. It was noted that two traffic signals on West Avenue can be eliminated by these improvements and also some poles may be reused for potential cost savings. Mr. Clapp clarified that new signal hardware would be installed.

A new traffic signal will be placed at the Lenoir Fire Station No. 1. The goal is for fire apparatus to be able to get in and out of the fire station in a quick and safe manner.

City Manager Hildebran stated the City will check on the availability of grant funding or may consider borrowing funds for the project. He remarked these changes will allow the City to see how the traffic flows plus achieve the goals of the downtown merchants before continuing with the second phase of the project.

Following much discussion, City Council was supportive of phasing in the traffic conversion project with Phase I, Closure of Steel Street at a cost of \$200,000. City Council also asked Jared Wright, Public Works Director, to continue working with Mr. Clapp regarding the implementation of this project.

4. Update: Stormwater Study: City Manager Hildebran reminded Council the City has discussed a stormwater study for a long time along with how to budget for the cost. He reported Staff has met with a variety of firms and chose Freese and Nichols, Inc., based on their qualifications, to conduct the stormwater study. Mr. Hildebran further shared that Charles Archer, Account Director, with Freese and Nichols, was previously affiliated with the North Carolina League of Municipalities. He also mentioned the cities of Durham, Hickory, Morganton and Salisbury have contracted with Freese and Nichols for engineering services.

Mr. Mike Wayts, Vice-President, Freese & Nichols, Inc., reported their firm was 124 years old with a total of 800 employees. He pointed out their focus is local government and they have offices in 35 states. Their headquarters are located in Raleigh and they also maintain offices in Charlotte, Greensboro and Winston Salem. He noted the Charlotte office would assist the City of Lenoir upon approval. Mr. Wayts presented a power point presentation regarding a Stormwater Program Planning Process for the City of Lenoir.

Mr. Wayts reviewed the following process for gathering information:

- a) Compile Stormwater System Inventory
- b) Hot Spot evaluations
- c) Develop Customized Data Base
- d) CIP Ranking System Development
- e) Staffing and Funding Analysis for New Program

With this data, Mr. Wayts stated the City could map its outfalls, build a backlog of issues, expand its database, conduct budget planning and develop a stormwater plan. He explained that, within the data base, the City could document issues, obstructions, appurtenances plus learn how to prioritize stormwater projects.

Mr. Wayts explained if projects exceeded available funding, the City could establish a ranking system by establishing criteria, a scoring process, and weighting factors for a project priority system. In addition, Mr. Wayts reviewed stormwater utility and stated establishing a tier structure would assist the City with determining whether a project was less equitable or more equitable. He presented the following examples:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| *Flat Rate | *Tiered Residential Rates |
| *Capped Rate | *Site-by-site Commercial Rates |
| Example: Water meter type | *Example: Impervious area |
| *Site-by-site evaluation | |
| Example: Effective impervious area | |

- Volume, Rate, Velocity
- *Property impact to system
Quality, Location
- *Offset credits

Mr. Ways reported the timeline of the project is five months. It was noted a stormwater inventory system would be extremely helpful for Staff. Following a brief discussion, City Council was in consensus to move forward with this project and place the Consulting Agreement on the September 4 Agenda for their consideration of approval.

IV. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- A. Lenoir Tourism Development Authority: The Lenoir Tourism Development Authority (LTDA) met on Thursday, August 9. Kaylynn Horn, Economic Development Director, reported the Board continues to support downtown events and encouraged everyone to visit the explore Caldwell website at www.explorecaledwell.com for a complete list of upcoming events.
- B. Lenoir Business Advisory Board: The Lenoir Business Advisory Board (LBAB) met on Thursday, August 16. Kaylynn Horn, Economic Development Director, reported the Move Lenoir to Second Floor project is ongoing and noted the Carolina Arts and Tattoo Festival will be held in the historic Shaw Building. She stated an architect will conduct a walk-through of the building for ideas for future use of the facility. In addition, Director Horn mentioned the building has structural issues and the bathrooms need improvements, but the Board is in the process of determining long-term goals for multi-use of the building.
- C. Planning Board: The Planning Board cancelled its meeting of Monday, August 27. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 24 at 5:30 p.m. Planning Director Jenny Wheelock presented a report of current projects.
 - 1. Update: Strategic Foreclosures: Director Wheelock stated the Department has three properties they wish to proceed with tax foreclosure. The locations are 426 Arlington Circle, Tax Value \$38,800, Taxes Owed, \$6,748.66; 402 Spruce Street, Tax Value \$37,500, Taxes Owed \$4,466.55; and 526 Wheeler Street, Tax Value \$31,800, Taxes Owed \$5,801.76. (Copies of maps of the properties are attached to these minutes as information).

Director Wheelock further shared that additional work would be done in the West End area regarding the vacant homes. Councilmember Perkins commented he was confident that Director Wheelock would develop this area and make the entrance to the neighborhood more presentable.

Motion

Following a brief discussion and upon a motion by Councilmember Perkins,

Council voted 7 to 0 to begin foreclosure proceedings on the above described three properties as recommended by City Staff.

2. Upcoming Meetings/Events: Director Wheelock reported the unveiling ceremony for the sculpture at Fire Station No.1 downtown is scheduled for Friday, September 7 at 10:00 a.m. In addition, she mentioned a meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 10 at 5:30 p.m. at Hogwaller, 3rd Floor, to discuss tax credits and National Register listings for commercial properties. Annie McDonald and Jennifer Cathey will be conducting the meeting. On Monday, September 17, a meeting is scheduled from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Side Street Pour House to discuss the “Neighborhood Mapping” process.

In addition, Director Wheelock shared she will be doing a presentation at the upcoming North Carolina American Planning Association Conference regarding how the City of Lenoir is addressing the issue of vacant housing and foreclosures. This information was compiled as a result of Planning Staff’s work with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments Vacant Housing Task Force.

Next, Director Wheelock informed Council that Staff would begin working on neighborhood zoning in the fall or spring.

- D. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board: The Parks & Recreation Advisory Board met on Monday, August 20 at Optimist Park Clubhouse. Minutes of the meeting were submitted as information. Kenny Story, Recreation Director, presented the following report.

- 1) Update; J. E. Broyhill Park Improvements Projects – restrooms are complete, basketball court is paved with fencing installed and backboards & goals will be added in a few weeks. The parking lot is currently being redone with new curbing and sidewalks and slated to be completed by the end of September or earlier. He reported a \$240,000 Stormwater Management Grant was awarded for the park.
- 2) Annual Sculpture Festival will be held on Saturday, September 10 at the T. H. Broyhill Walking Park.
- 3) A water fountain was placed on the greenway in July in memory of Rosemary Marlowe by her husband, Richard Marlowe.
- 4) Fall soccer registrations are ongoing as well as baseball & softball registrations.
- 5) Meleah Mikeal Half-Marathon will be held on Saturday, November 3 at the Aquatic & Fitness Center.

Director Story reported some vandalism has occurred at the Aquatic & Fitness Center but the suspect was caught on camera. In addition, he mentioned the Department is having some issues with homeless individuals sleeping at Optimist Park. He stated additional cameras will be installed plus signs will be placed the areas are under surveillance.

- E. Financial Summary: Finance Director Bean reviewed the Financial Summary as of July 31, 2018. The over/under balance in the General Fund is \$2,872,576.52,

Downtown District (\$10,108.45), and Water & Sewer Fund \$235,436.98. Director Bean reported the City is in the process of closing out the fiscal year and mentioned the City is on track with tax collections. She stated that sales tax collections increased by 4.24% at the end of the fiscal year and trending well.

A copy of the July financial summary and Tax Collection Report are attached to these minutes as information.

- F. Update; Public Communications: Joshua Harris, Public Information Officer, reviewed the highlights of the Communications Reports for June. Activity included 255 social posts, 242 photos, 2 news releases and 5 videos. In addition, he stated there are 988 new followers and the website has experienced 37,536 views. Mr. Harris also reviewed the Employee Intranet site and links to information that will be available for all employees.

G. Informational Items:

VI. PUBLIC SAFETY

- A. Police Department: Police Chief Brent Phelps reported the County received a grant for an additional School Resource Officer and noted the officer will work with Staff at different elementary schools. Chief Phelps stated he visited all the schools and met with the principals. He further shared that Staff is monitoring the traffic congestion at Hibriten High School and William Lenoir Middle School and will meet with school representatives should any issues occur.

Chief Phelps reported the Department is considering purchasing utility type vehicles and may be able to purchase six instead of five with their FY2018-19 budget. In addition, he shared the annual Canine Academy begins on Thursday, August 30 and the Department has received a lot of good publicity and comments.

Next, Chief Phelps shared information regarding the homeless issue in the downtown area. He commented there are legal boundaries the Department can't enforce and mentioned the next step may be to provide business owners with a list of area resources to share with these individuals that gather near their businesses.

- B. Fire Department: Fire Chief Ken Hair reported on the following items:
- 1) The Department averages between 700-750 calls per quarter.
 - 2) The agreement between the City and Caldwell County to provide emergency ambulance backup service has been renewed for five years. The current contract was for one year.
 - 3) Bids will be received on Thursday, August 30 for the new fire station.
 - 4) Additional foundation cracks have been discovered at headquarters fire station downtown and may be occurring due to stormwater. Chief Hair stated monitoring devices have been placed in different areas. The same issue occurred ten years ago on the left side of the structure which cost the City \$100,000 to repair.
 - 5) Noted a two-hour FEMA Training Session will be held during the September 25 Committee of the Whole meeting. City Council, City Manager and

Department Directors along with other Staff members will attend this training that will be conducted by Vic Meisenheimer, Retired Lieutenant, State Highway Patrol.

V. OTHER

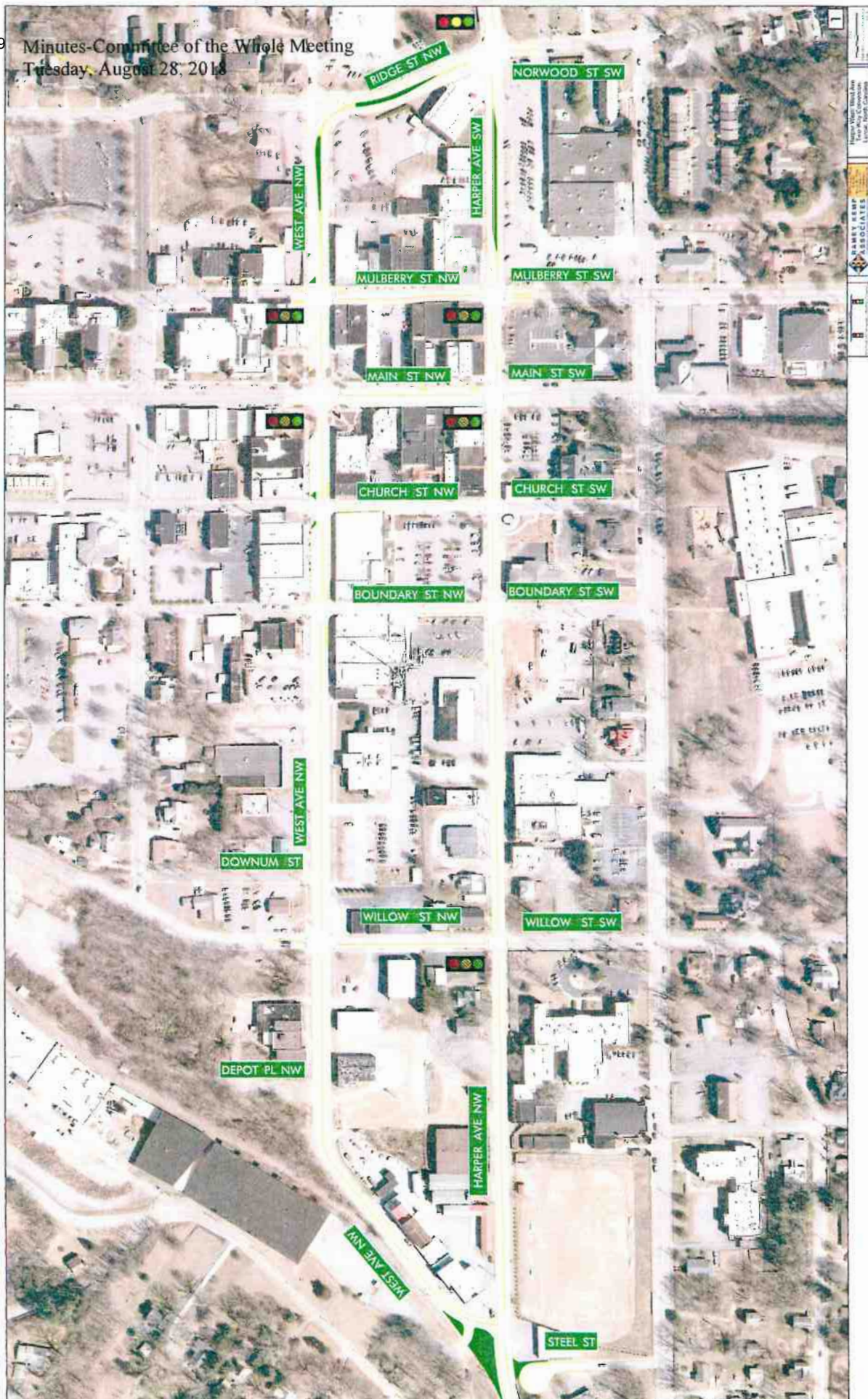
- A. September Calendar: By consensus of the Council, the calendar for the month of September was approved by Council listing various meetings and events.
- B. Tour of Water Treatment Plant: Public Utilities Director Radford Thomas along with Kevin Matheson, Water Treatment Plant Superintendent, took members of the City Council and Department Directors on a guided tour of the renovations recently completed at the Water Treatment Plant.

VI. Adjourn:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Attachments

Map of Proposed Two-Way Traffic Conversion
Map/Description of three (3) properties for tax foreclosure
Financial Summary & Tax Collection Report



426 ARLINGTON CIR LENOIR, NC 28645

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Tuesday, August 28, 2018

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Total tax value
\$38,100

Property Taxes Owed

City of Lenoir: \$ 3,095.42

Caldwell County: \$ 3,653.24

Total Owed: \$ 6,748.66



Property located on the backside of Arlington Cir

- ♦ Built: 1940
- ♦ Vacant: 10 plus years
- ♦ City nuisance enforcement
- ♦ History of vagrants on property
- ♦ Zoned R-9 (Multi-Family Residential)
- ♦ Numerous complaints from neighbors
- ♦ Health and Safety Hazard

Property Owner. Mable Fox
NC Pin No.2840825088
Acreage: 0.50

Staff recommendation: Proceed with tax foreclosure.

402 SPRUCE STREET LENOIR, NC 28645

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Total tax value
\$37,500

Property Taxes Owed

City of Lenoir: \$ 2,289.03

Caldwell County: \$ 2,179.56

Total Owed: \$ 4,468.55



Property located at the intersection of Spruce St and East Street

- ♦ Built: 1940
- ♦ Vacant: 10 plus years
- ♦ City nuisance enforcement
- ♦ History of vagrants on property
- ♦ Zoned R-12 (Single Family Residential)
- ♦ Numerous complaints from neighbors
- ♦ Health and Safety Hazard

Property Owner: Monnie Arnold
NC Pin No. 2749743659
Acreage: 0.16

Staff recommendation: Proceed with tax foreclosure.

526 WHEELER ST
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Total tax value
\$31,800

Property Taxes Owed

City of Lenoir: \$ 2,806.04

Caldwell County: \$ 2,995.72

Total Owed: \$ 5,801.76



Property located on the backside of Arlington Cir

- ♦ Built: 1966
- ♦ Vacant: 5 years
- ♦ City nuisance enforcement
- ♦ History of vagrants on property
- ♦ Zoned R-6 (Multi-Family Residential)
- ♦ Numerous complaints from neighbors
- ♦ Health and Safety Hazard

Property Owner. CLARENCE MICHAUX HEIRS
THOMAS K. HOWELL

NC Pin No.2749574793

Acreage: 0.14

Staff recommendation: Proceed with tax foreclosure.