

**MINUTES
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
WINNSBORO TOWN COUNCIL
MARCH 7, 2023**

Present: Chairman Demetrius Chatman; Mayor John McMeekin; Jason Taylor, Town Manager; Assistant Town Managers Chris Clauson and Kathy Belton; Scott Elliott, town Attorney; Patti L. Davis, Town Clerk.

The Finance Committee met on March 7, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Winnsboro Women's Club. In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (e), as amended, the following persons and/or organizations have been notified of the time, date and location of this meeting: The Independent Voice of Blythewood and Fairfield, The Country Chronicle and four hundred ninety-two other individuals.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Chatman called the Finance Committee Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Mayor McMeekin, seconded by Chairman Chatman, to approve the agenda. ***The motion carried.***

3. PRESENTATIONS

None.

4. NEW BUSINESS

A. Request of Action – Request for Allocation of Funds to Allow Payment to TruCheck to Provide Rerouting Services for the Town's Meter Reading Operations to Optimize Performance (\$13,353.60). Mr. Taylor stated everyone is aware that the billing system is going through a transition period with movement to the AMI system. The process has been delayed with supply shortages. There have also been labor difficulties which have made it very difficult to get the meters read accurately and on time. In an effort to get back on track, many different options were investigated. One option is having a contractor come in and read the meters. In talking with other utilities, such as SCE&G and the Coop, this is the route they have gone, because they also had a problem getting meters read accurately and timely. The contracting company, TruCheck, has been recommended. Several meetings have occurred with TruCheck, and the company has now provided the Town with a proposal. When they came in initially and looked

at the system, they saw that in order for them to come in to read the meters, the routes would have to be more rational. As the Town's system grew, other customers were included but not in a rational way. Before they will perform this service, they would have to first make the routes rational. This proposal represents the amount to be charged to redo the routes and how the billing is done. Council is being asked to approve this request; however, some additional investigation must be done. Mrs. Belton has more questions, and Administration wants to be able to enter into negotiations and potentially go this route if it is felt to be a good move. Motion made by Mayor McMeekin, seconded by Chairman Chatman, to approve the Request of Action to possibly pursue an agreement with TruCheck to provide rerouting services for the meter reading operations to optimize performance. Mayor McMeekin stated he has gotten calls in the past stating a meter was read at a house next to a customer, but their meter was not read. This is because the system has grown organically with skipping of houses, so the meter readers are laboring in the same area twice. This is time consuming, so the system needs to be in a logical rational way to check the meters which would be time efficient. At the same time, he understands there have been problems in the past when bringing in companies for this type of situation and sometimes a bigger mess is created. We must proceed very carefully, and he feels it is wise to check into this further to be sure we get out of this what is needed. Chairman Chatman inquired how long it has been since the system has been reviewed. Mrs. Belton stated this has not been done since she has been with the Town. Chairman Chatman surmised this would be 16-20 years. Mrs. Belton stated the primary focus at the present time with the billing is to be able to deliver to the customers a 30-day bill. There are some people in the same area with some being in cycle 1 and some being in cycle 2, but when the routes are changed, this could throw the system further behind. Right now, the primary goal is to get a correct 30-day bill delivered to the customer. Chairman Chatman stated he understands if the meter has not been read, there can be no bill. Mayor McMeekin stated we want to be sure that we proceed carefully and thoughtfully and that we do not create new problems. ***The motion carried.***

- B.** Option and Purchase Agreement – 201 N. Congress Street, Winnsboro, SC. Mr. Taylor stated, in the effort to move forward with the redevelopment of downtown, it will be necessary to be able to proceed with due diligence working toward an Option to Purchase to lock in a price and prevent the property from being sold out from under us. One property is being considered which is next door to Town Hall, but this will also lock in a document that can be done on other properties as well. Mr. Clauson stated

—

this is a piece of property that has had Code Enforcement discussions as well. There is a contract with an environmental firm to do the Phase I assessment. This option would give the Town that right to begin this process. The purchase price would be \$10,000 less the option amount. Mayor McMeekin inquired concerning the revision of the document. Mr. Elliott stated the document was revised to state if the Town, after due diligence, changes its mind, the damage is limited to \$500 as opposed to the entire purchase price. Chairman Chatman inquired of the condition of the property. Per Mr. Clauson, the building needs some work, and the property does have some contaminants. The intent of the Phase I is to ensure that the Town can get the property remediated. The intent of the different revolving loan funds is to help to actually remediate any contaminants. In speaking with DHEC, Mr. Taylor stated the property does have some limitations. This is why the average person will not buy it. The Town must step up to take some of these properties that are unproductive and do some work to make them productive. With this particular property, as time and money are spent on property, the landowner could then walk away, and the Town would have lost its time and money. Mayor McMeekin stated this is a piece of property that the Town would love to see remediation take place, but we want to be very careful. Motion made by Mayor McMeekin, seconded by Chairman Chatman, to approve the Option and Purchase Agreement. ***The motion carried.***

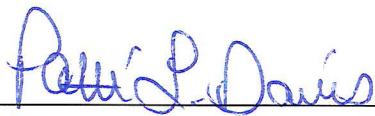
—

5. OLD BUSINESS

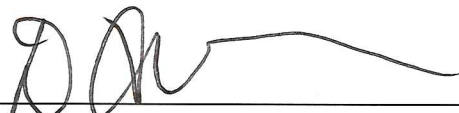
None.

6. ADJOURN

At 6:11 p.m., it was moved by Mayor McMeekin, seconded by Chairman Chatman, to adjourn. ***The motion carried.***



PATTI L. DAVIS
TOWN CLERK



DEMETRIUS CHATMAN
CHAIRMAN