

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
WINNSBORO TOWN COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 20, 2024**

Present: Mayor John McMeekin; Mayor Pro-Tem Demetrius Chatman; Danny Miller, Jae Burroughs, Council Members; Jason Taylor, Town Manager; Chris Clauson and Kathy Belton, Assistant Town Managers; Scott Elliott, Town Attorney; Patti Davis, Town Clerk.

Absent: Janice Bartell-Prather

The Winnsboro Town Council met in regular session on February 20, 2024, at the Winnsboro Town Hall. 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 Voice of Blythewood and Fairfield, The Country Chronicle and other individuals associated with the distribution list of the Town of Winnsboro.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor McMeekin called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

2. INVOCATION

Council Member Burroughs led the invocation.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman made a motion, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve the agenda. ***The motion carried 4-0.***

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman made a motion, seconded by Council Member Miller and Council Member Burroughs, to approve the Regular Meeting minutes from February 8, 2024. ***The motion carried 4-0.***

5. SPECIAL REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS

A. Proclamation Honoring the 100th Birthday of Cleo Bagley Jenkins. Mayor McMeekin read the Proclamation into the record and photos were taken with family in attendance.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES): THE TOTAL TIME ALLOCATED TO THIS PUBLIC COMMENT SEGMENT IS 30 MINUTES.

Mayor McMeekin requested for everyone to remain quiet so all the public comments can be heard. Per the Town's ordinances, everyone who wishes to speak will be able to do so for three minutes and must direct comments to the

Council at-large. Council will listen and be respectful because they want to hear what the citizens have to say. There will also be comments under the Manager's Report portion of the Agenda that may be helpful. Mayor McMeekin brought his ordinance book tonight for many reasons, and he also reminded everyone to be sure their phones are silenced.

- Vivian Powe – Utility Bills
- Ashlyn Whiteman – Utility Bills
- Teresa Youngblood – Utility Bills
- Tony Armstrong – Utility Bills

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

8. ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

- A.** First Reading Ordinance No. 100: An Ordinance Annexing into the Town of Winnsboro a 0.39 Acre Tract of Land, Located at 175 6th Street, Winnsboro, SC, Owned by Jackie B. Glisson, in Fairfield County, Not Already Within the Winnsboro Town Limits, and Including All Adjacent and Abutting Rights-of-Way. Tax Map No.: 145-02-01-002-000. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman made a motion, seconded by Council Member Burroughs, to approve First Reading Ordinance No. 100. ***The motion carried 4-0.***
- B.** First Reading Ordinance No. 101: An Ordinance Annexing into the Town of Winnsboro a 0.15 Acre Tract of Land, Located at 235 Elm Street, Winnsboro, SC, Owned by Betty Glisson, in Fairfield County, Not Already Within the Winnsboro Town Limits, and Including All Adjacent and Abutting Rights-of-Way. Tax Map No.: 145-01-11-001-000. Council Member Burroughs made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman, to approve First Reading Ordinance No. 101. ***The motion carried 4-0.***
- C.** First Reading Ordinance No. 102: An Ordinance Annexing into the Town of Winnsboro a 0.30 Acre Tract of Land, Located at 165 4th Street, Winnsboro, SC, Owned by Robert J. Ford, in Fairfield County, Not Already Within the Winnsboro Town Limits, and Including All Adjacent and Abutting Rights-of-Way. Tax Map No.: 145-02-01-003-000. Council Member Burroughs made a motion, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve First Reading Ordinance No. 102. ***The motion carried 4-0.***

- D.** First Reading Ordinance No. 103: An Ordinance Annexing into the Town of Winnsboro a 104.74 Acre Tract of Land, Located at 635 Pumphouse Road, Winnsboro, SC, Owned by CBC Real Estate Holdings, LLC/Creighton Coleman, in Fairfield County, Not Already Within the Winnsboro Town Limits, and Including All Adjacent and Abutting Rights-of-Way. Tax Map No.: 144-02-02-001-000. Council Member Burroughs made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman and Council Member Miller, to approve First Reading Ordinance No. 103. ***The motion carried 4-0.***
- E.** First Reading Ordinance No. 104: An Ordinance Annexing into the Town of Winnsboro a 3.71 Acre Portion of a Larger Tract of Land, Spanning a 50 Foot Strip Along the Eastern Portion of Tax Map No. 145-03-01-012-000, Winnsboro, SC, Owned by Martha Haslett Ladd as Trustee, in Fairfield County, Not Already Within the Winnsboro Town Limits, and Including All Adjacent and Abutting Rights-of-Way. Council Member Burroughs made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman, to approve First Reading Ordinance No. 104. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman inquired concerning the page not being signed, and Mr. Clauson stated the signed applications were received after the packets were delivered to Council. ***The motion carried 4-0.***
- F.** First Reading Ordinance No. 105: An Ordinance Annexing into the Town of Winnsboro a 12.75 Acre Tract of Land, Located at US Hwy 321S, Winnsboro, SC, Owned by Barry D. Evans, et al, in Fairfield County, Not Already Within the Winnsboro Town Limits, and Including All Adjacent and Abutting Rights-of-Way. Tax Map No.: 145-03-01-028-000. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman made a motion, seconded by Council Member Burroughs, to approve First Reading Ordinance No. 105. ***The motion carried 4-0.***
- G.** First Reading Ordinance No. 106: An Ordinance Annexing into the Town of Winnsboro a 1.38 Acre Portion of a Larger Tract of Land, Spanning a 50 Foot Strip Along the Northeastern Portion of Tax Map No. 163-00-00-009-000 and a 1.34 Acre Portion of a Larger Tract of Land, Spanning a 50 Foot Strip Along the Northern Portion of Tax Map No. 164-03-02-001-000, Owned by McNair Greenbrier Farm, LLC, in Fairfield County, Not Already Within the Winnsboro Town Limits, and Including All Adjacent and Abutting Rights-of-Way. Council Member Burroughs made a motion, seconded by Council Member Miller, to approve First Reading Ordinance No. 106. ***The motion carried 4-0.***

9. MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Ongoing Projects:

Code Enforcement: Nothing new to report at this time.

Utilities: Mr. Taylor stated this item is of concern to most in the audience today. Although it is hard to make a blanket statement about the billing with utilities, he pledged to make himself, Mr. Clauson, Mrs. Belton, Mr. Peak and Mr. Medlin available to anyone who wants to come in and speak individually concerning their bill. There could be some fault on the Town at times concerning errors with the reading of the meters or more than the 30-day cycle, and sometimes there can be other circumstances. Mayor McMeekin stated the Town has ordinances to operate under the S.C. Code of Laws. These ordinances represent the laws of the Town and how we are to operate. There were some supply chain problems in getting things in, and this slowed everything down. The Town has a utilities ordinance which has prescribed the way of handling bills for the citizens. The Clerk has printed out a copy for each Council Member and management, and many of the answers to the questions posed tonight are included in these ordinances. Each year, the Town's ordinances are codified to be sure they are in compliance with the S.C. Code of Laws. Council has the responsibility to the citizens to do everything possible to get the bills delivered on a monthly basis. Mayor McMeekin's bill was 36 days, and another Council Member's bill was 38 days. The water meters take the most time to read, so the implementation of the new meters should cut out a lot of reading time. The Town is trying to get back to where it was pre-Covid with all bills being read in a timely manner. There are 271 municipalities in the State of South Carolina, 20 of those municipalities are involved with utilities and only six are like the Town of Winnsboro with electricity, gas, sewer, water, streets and sanitation and Public Safety. We have a full plate, but this is not an excuse, and we must get it right. We serve the citizens of Winnsboro, and this is who the Town belongs to. This is a Council-Manager form of government, and Mayor McMeekin stated he has no more power than any other Council Member. We all want it done correctly. Mayor McMeekin stated he believes the Town's electric rates are a tiny bit cheaper than Dominion, but the bill contains everything at one time. All the rules should be applied fairly and equitably. The ordinances address numerous repayment systems, lateness, nonpayment, etc. Everything is spelled out in the ordinances, and he is requesting staff to follow these rules. Mr. Taylor again stated he will be glad, along with other staff, to meet with anyone on their bills. The Town does have a book of ordinances that it must go by, and he will be glad to also go through this with explanations for anyone. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman requested for Mr. Taylor to address

the rate increases and the reasons for rate increases. Per Mr. Taylor, there have not been increases, and the Town buys in a contractual arrangement from Dominion. The Town operates on a cost plus with gas, which means there is a cost to purchase the gas and then the operating cost is added. The prices do fluctuate, and the Town has no control over that. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman also requested Mr. Taylor to discuss the \$50 deposit. Mr. Taylor stated this is something he and Mrs. Belton have discussed, and this is something they would like for Council to potentially consider changing. If there are things in the Town's book of ordinances that are cumbersome or not working, staff can bring these to Council and request it to be changed. Possibly a sub-committee could be formed to discuss these ordinances to see if there is something that may need to be changed. When there is a disconnect, a fee is charged along with a \$50 re-deposit fee, which can get onerous. Mayor McMeekin stated the budget process is about to begin, and these items that may need to be changed can be tinkered with. Mayor McMeekin will place Mayor Pro-Tem, along with himself, on the sub-committee to review the ordinances. He has spent this past weekend going through the ordinances, and the sub-committee will review the ordinances and try to make them as fair as possible. Some companies, such as Duke Power, have shareholders, but in Winnsboro, the citizens are the shareholders. There is no property tax within the Town, and we will look at everything Council can do to be fair and function better. Staff is also awaiting more equipment, such as gas meters, which will also help. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman stated Ferguson has told Council many different projected end dates, and we are just playing a waiting game with them. Mr. Taylor agreed and believes they over-promised and then were hit with the supply chain issues. The Town over-promised based on what Ferguson had committed. At this point, all the meters are not installed. Almost all of the water meters are in but not the gas or the electric. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman inquired if the water meters are being read automatically, and Mr. Taylor stated the majority of them are being read automatically; however, the larger industrial meters still have to be manually read. The larger industrial meters would have needed more funding to purchase, so this was put on hold for now. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman wanted this to be explained to the citizens, because he knew that the Town does not control the gas prices. Mr. Taylor agreed that the gas prices fluctuate because it is a commodity. Council Member Miller stated it is important for Council to understand that it has to be accountable. The manager and the staff must be accountable. Council's job is to hold the manager accountable for meters being read on time, the rates, etc., because the Town operates under a Council-Manager form of government. It is important for Council to hold the manager accountable, and the manager must hold his staff accountable. Mayor McMeekin stated Council Member Miller is correct, and this is the way the ordinance is set up for the Council-Manager form of

government. Council makes ordinances, and the manager and his team/department carry them out. We are all in this together, but this is the division of government.

Redevelopment Efforts: Per Mr. Taylor, some of these will be touched on with Request of Actions and then after executive session. The request is being made to hire a company to assist in moving forward with some of the downtown projects. Today, the additional \$500,000 was received that the Town had been awarded previously, so the Town now has \$1M for redevelopment. Also, at the request of Representative McDaniel and the lobbyist, a request is being put in for an additional \$1M. The Town has had a very positive response, even from the Speaker of the House, on the projects it is pursuing. There is also a considerable amount of residential interest right now, both in Town and surrounding Town for utilities. This is mentioned because for downtown to be successful, we need people to shop in the stores. Hopefully, with new residents/new rooftops, this will generate the revenue needed to support businesses in the downtown area. Just today, there was interest in 150 to 200 acres.

Fairfield Joint Water & Sewer Service: This service was established for the Town and the County to work together, along with Ridgeway, to build a new sewer plant to help support growth. The next meeting will be next Tuesday, February 27, to move that effort forward.

Grants Update: As previously reported, another \$1.8M was received for Fortune Springs Park. A pre-construction conference was held on the generator grant for the wastewater plant that is required by DHEC. The accounts have been set up for the SCIIP grant in connection with the upgrades to the water plant. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman inquired concerning the made in America only parts. Mr. Taylor stated this is one of the stipulations passed by the S.C. Legislature. This is problematic and can cause delays in getting the equipment needed to finish the project, and the deadlines are still in place.

10. OLD BUSINESS

A. Request of Action: Request Approval of the Allocation of Funds to Allow Payment to 1st & Main Development for Pre-Development/Development Due Diligence Period for the Reconstruction of the Thespian Hall. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman stated this was approved in the Finance Committee concerning Thespian Hall. Mr. Taylor stated just as with any grant package or bid package, someone must be hired for assistance. The Town is looking to hire 1st & Main to assist with the due diligence in order to move the project forward and identify the best way to approach the redevelopment of that site. Approval by the Finance Committee

constituted a motion, seconded by Council Member Burroughs, to approve the Request of Action. ***The motion carried 4-0.***

11. NEW BUSINESS

- A.** Reclassification of Funds for SCIIP Grant Match. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman stated this item was approved in the Finance Committee, therefore constituting a motion, seconded by Council Member Burroughs, to approve the request for reclassification of Funds for the SCIIP Grant Match. The funds will be taken from investment accounts. ***The motion carried 4-0.***
- B.** Request of Action - Gas, Water and Sewer Department: Request for Additional Allocation of Funds from Capital Funds Set Aside for Gas Expansion to Purchase a Used Pipe Trencher and Piping (\$246,571.28) to Extend the Existing Gas Service to Approximately the Nelson's Funeral Home Property in Ridgeway. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman stated this item was approved in the Finance Committee, therefore constituting a motion, seconded by Council Member Burroughs, to approve the Request of Action. This expansion will bring in additional funds in the future. Mr. Taylor further stated the Town has \$1.8M in this fund. ***The motion carried 4-0.***
- C.** Request of Action - Electric Department: Request to Enter into a Reimbursable Contract for Relocation of Electric Poles and Lines to Allow Hubrich Contracting, Inc. to Install a Driveway for Midlands STEM Institute. Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman stated this item was approved in the Finance Committee, therefore constituting a motion, seconded by Council Member Burroughs, to approve the Request of Action. ***The motion carried 4-0.***
- D.** Request of Action – Winnsboro Public Safety: Request to Repair Damaged Door to Preserve Engine 2 and Equipment on Board (\$5,654.00). Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman stated this item was approved in the Finance Committee, therefore constituting a motion, seconded by Council Member Burroughs, to approve the Request of Action. ***The motion carried 4-0.***
- E.** Request of Action – Winnsboro Public Safety: Request to Purchase Unbudgeted Equipment (\$69,860.84), Handheld Radios to Improve Communication for the Officers on Patrol. This item was deferred until after executive session.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (The following statement is provided in

**compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act:
Subsequent to Executive Session, Council may take action on
matters discussed in Executive Session.)**

- A.** Economic Development/Contractual Matter - Discussion Concerning Downtown Revitalization Pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2).
- B.** Receipt of Legal Advice – Discussion Concerning Trash Dispute Pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2).
- C.** Receipt of Legal Advice – Discussion Concerning FJWSS Territory Pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2).
- D.** Receipt of Legal Advice/Contractual Matter – Discussion Concerning Public Safety Unbudgeted Equipment Request Pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2).

At 7:07 p.m., motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman, seconded by Council Member Burroughs, to exit regular session and enter into executive session for the above listed items. ***The motion carried 4-0.***

At 7:43 p.m., motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman, seconded by Council Member Burroughs and Council Member Miller, to exit executive session and return to regular session. ***The motion carried 4-0.***

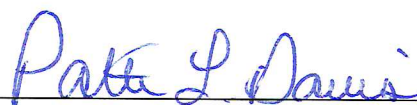
Mayor McMeekin stated there was no action taken in executive session on Items 12-A and 12-C, and all discussions for these items were for information only.

Council Member Burroughs made a motion, seconded by Council Member Miller, to authorize Counsel to proceed with litigation concerning the trash dispute (Item 12-B above). ***The motion carried 4-0.***


Mayor McMeekin made by a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Chatman, to approve the Request of Action listed on Agenda as Item 11-E and executive session Item 12-D to be paid from unappropriated general funds. ***The motion carried 4-0.***

13. ADJOURN

At 7:44 p.m., Council Member Miller made a motion, seconded by Council Member Burroughs, to adjourn. ***The motion carried 4-0.***



PATTI L. DAVIS
TOWN CLERK



JOHN MCMEEKIN
MAYOR