

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
MANNING CITY COUNCIL**

Monday November 17, 2008
6:30 p.m.

Breedin Assembly Room
City Hall

Members Present:

Mayor Johnson
Councilmember Davis
Mayor Pro-tem Gordon
Councilmember Georgia
Councilmember Pack
Councilmember Welle
Councilmember Witherspoon

- I. Welcome/Introductory Remarks:** Mayor Johnson welcomed all present and stated that the media was notified. In addition, Mayor Johnson stated that Councilmember Georgia had a work related meeting and may not be able to attend tonight's Council meeting. Next, Mayor Johnson acknowledged the following:

News Media: Annabelle Robertson, The Item
Cathy Gilbert, Manning Times

Others: Larry Williamson, Manning Zoning Board of Appeals
James Zimmerman, Manning Zoning Board of Appeals
Barry Ham, President, Bank of Clarendon
Louis Griffith, CFO/Executive V.P., Bank of Clarendon
Dawn Griffith, Director, Clarendon County Chamber of
Commerce

- II. Invocation:** Councilmember Ervin Davis.

- III. Pledge:** Councilmember Mayor Pro-tem Johnny Gordon.

- IV. Approval of Agenda:**

A **motion** was made by Councilmember Welle and was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Gordon to approve the agenda as presented. There was no discussion. All favored the motion.

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V. Minutes:

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of City Council, October 20, 2008.

Mayor Johnson stated that Councilmember Georgia had indicated that there was a correction to be made to the minutes under Item XIV, Councilmember Comments concerning her comments. Mayor Johnson asked Council for a motion to approve the minutes with the corrections to be made at a later date to Item XIV, Councilmember Comments by Councilmember Georgia. A **motion was** made Councilmember Davis and was seconded by Councilmember Welle to approve the minutes as presented with corrections to be made under Item XIV, Councilmember Comments, Councilmember Georgia, at a later date. There was no discussion. All favored the motion.

VI. Citizen's Comments:

Mayor Johnson asked Mr. Graham to come forward.

Tad Graham, Owner- Geddings Hardware, 110 N. Brook Street

Mr. Graham stated that he wanted to speak to Council concerning the agreement that the Manning City Council has entered into with Lowe's Home Improvement, Inc. Mr. Graham stated that he appreciated the Mayor returning his phone call and other Councilmembers as well. In addition, Mr. Graham stated that Council should not offer a big-box retail store \$900,000.00 to locate in Manning because this agreement will affect 32 businesses in Manning and surrounding communities and towns equaling to 230 jobs. Next, Mr. Graham stated that although Lowe's would bring 70 jobs to Manning, it would not be creating jobs, but just moving jobs around. Mr. Graham stated that those 32 businesses equals 32 little-league or soccer sponsors, 32 door prizes a month to local charities, local advertisement and school advertisements. Mr. Graham stated that these businesses have kept Manning growing for many years.

Then, Mr. Graham stated that the City signed an agreement with Main Street South Carolina this past summer to concentrate on helping main street businesses. However, City Council has given a contract to Lowe's to give them, a multi-billion dollar company, \$900,000.00 worth of incentives to come to Manning. Mr. Graham stated that local businesses have paid taxes and supported Manning with no incentives and he felt that City Council has turned their back on small businesses already located here. In addition, Mr. Graham stated that nearly 100% of the monies generated by these small businesses stays right in the community. With Council giving Lowe's \$900,000 to demolish the old Wal-Mart building, giving them a water tank and fixing their parking lot, that is money that Lowe's would have to spend if they really wanted to come to Manning. With the economic difficulties that local businesses are facing at this time, the money could be made available to local business people who were born and raised in Manning and made Manning what it is today. If Lowe's was a manufacturing job, he could understand giving

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them incentives to come to Manning to create jobs, but they are a big box retail store that would take market share away from local businesses and some businesses may not survive. Mr. Graham stated that he felt that there was not enough business in Clarendon County to support a Lowe's now or in the near future. Next, Mr. Graham stated that he had spoken to other business owners and they did not understand why Lowe's would want to come to Manning. Mr. Graham stated that there are three hardware stores that are located in downtown that would be greatly affected and asked Council to re-consider its offer to Lowe's because it gives an unfair advantage to a multi-billion dollar business over small businesses already located in Manning.

Mayor Johnson stated that he had a very fruitful conversation with Mr. Graham and that the conversation ended with them agreeing to disagree and that it was not personal. Mayor Johnson stated for the record that the City did not offer any incentives to Lowe's. Mayor Johnson stated that Lowe's approached the City. Next, Mayor Johnson stated that although Lowe's approached the City many years ago, many people in Manning and Clarendon County showed interest in getting a Lowe's and Home Depot in Manning. In addition, Mayor Johnson stated that in attracting businesses or industries to an area, most companies are looking for incentives. Then, Mayor Johnson stated that Council is not directly giving Lowe's \$900,000, but that Lowe's would be paying a substantial business license fee and property taxes. Mayor Johnson indicated in that the contract the City signed with Lowe's, the City would be reimbursing Lowe's for \$900,000 over the first eight years and that the city would net more money than what would be given to Lowe's as an incentive.

Mayor Johnson stated that the economic news has not been good and the unemployment rate in Manning is among the highest in the state of South Carolina. However, Mayor Johnson stated that the citizens realize that Clarendon County is growing and is expected to double over the next ten years with development throughout the county and homes being built. Lowe's is not looking at the current market share, but looking at the anticipated growth that Manning will experience. Mayor Johnson stated that Council felt that this was an opportunity to have a Lowe's in Manning, create about 70- 75 full-time jobs with good benefits, and about 20-25 part-time jobs. Mayor Johnson stated that the City is not giving Lowe's a water tank and that Lowe's will pay for it. In addition, Lowe's will tear down the old Wal-Mart building at a cost of over \$500,000 and put a brand new store at that location. Lowe's will also be attracting business from surrounding areas. Mayor Johnson stated that if Lowe's comes to Manning, he hopes that the all businesses will survive in Manning and that it is not the intent of Council to harm any businesses that exist.

Next, Mayor Johnson stated that he realizes that these businesses have been in Manning, providing services and goods to the citizens, but sees that there are positive things that will come out of this agreement. Mayor Johnson stated that Council is working with Mr. Graham and other businesses through Main Street South Carolina to try to come up with plans and strategies to help the businesses survive. In addition, Mayor Johnson stated that it is his hope and desire that none of the existing businesses suffer. Mayor Johnson asked Council if there were any other questions.

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Councilmember Welle stated that she had spoken with Mr. Graham and stated that the decision made by Council was not an easy one but that Council's job is to make tough decisions and to do what is right. Mayor Johnson stated that Council will continue to work with the Municipal Association of South Carolina, Main Street South Carolina, Mrs. Adger, and Mrs. Rhodes to continue to enhance Main Street Manning and all of the downtown areas. Council will continue to take advantage of economic development opportunities that arise that will be of benefit to Manning.

VII. Committee Reports: None.

VIII. Mayor's Report: Included in Council's packet as information.

IX. Public Hearing:

A proposed amendment to the zoning ordinance to zone property located along West Boyce Street/South Carolina Highway 261, Tax Map Nos. 169-07-00-002-00 and 169-07-00-001-00 to Office Commercial (OC).

A proposed amendment to the zoning ordinance to zone property located along Raccoon Road, Tax Map Nos. 169-00-02-008-00 to Office Commercial (OC).

Mayor Johnson asked those in favor or against the amendments to come forward and to complete the sign in sheet. No one came forward. Next, Mayor Johnson brought the public hearing to a close.

X. Finance Director's Report: Mayor Johnson stated that the Finance Director had an excused absence due to an illness and stated that the Finance Report was included in Council's packet. In addition, Mayor Johnson noted that this is the time of year when the revenue are slow coming in and that revenues will increase once that property taxes begin to come in.

XI. Administrator's Report

Mrs. Rhodes reported the following:

- 1) Clarendon County Annual Chamber Dinner-** This event will be held Thursday, November 20th at the Cypress Center at 6:30 p.m. The deadline for registering is November 18th.
- 2) Manning City Council Retreat-** The retreat will be held Saturday, November 22nd, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Bank of Clarendon Board Room. Speakers for the retreat will be Beppie LeGrand, Main Street SC Manager, Doug Clary, Jr., P.E, President, Hybrid Engineering, Inc., and Ed Thomas, Leadership, LLC. Lunch will be served. Mayor Johnson stated that Councilmember Welle may be late arriving, but that it is important that all Councilmembers attend the retreat. Councilmember

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Welle stated that she takes her office as Councilmember seriously, but will not be able to attend due to a previous engagement.

- 3) **Christmas Tree Lighting-** December 1st at 5:30 p.m.
- 4) **City of Manning Employees' Christmas Appreciation Dinner-** December 4th from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at F.E. DuBose Auditorium. Mayor Johnson asked all Councilmembers to attend to show the employees appreciation for the fine job that they do.
- 5) **Regional Wastewater Oversight Committee-** The meeting has been rescheduled. A date and time will be announced at a later time.
- 6) **Proposed sale of City Vehicle-** Mrs. Rhodes stated that Chief Garrett, who will be taking office as Clarendon County Sheriff on January 6, 2008, is asking Council's permission to sell the 2007 Dodge Charger he currently drives to Clarendon County for his use as Sheriff. The County would have to purchase the vehicle at fair market value and pay for the equipment already installed in the vehicle. Mrs. Rhodes stated that the city would in turn have to replace the vehicle for the incoming City Chief of Police, Major Blair Shaffer, whose current vehicle will be used by Cpl. Daniels. Next, Mrs. Rhodes stated that a resolution would need to be signed to sell the vehicle. Mrs. Rhodes stated that the value of the vehicle was obtained by the local Dodge Dealer and that Stokes Craven Dodge has given the city a letter valuing the vehicle at \$11,500.00. In addition, Mrs. Rhodes stated the vehicle has 67,000 miles on it and that she would recommend that the City sell the vehicle with the equipment in it, with the exception of the radio and camera, for a price of \$14,065.00 (the value of the vehicle, plus the value of the equipment already installed). Mrs. Rhodes asked Council to sell the 2007 Dodge Charger to Clarendon County on January 6, 2009 and to approve the purchase of a new Dodge Charger at the State Contract price of \$24,065.00. Mrs. Rhodes stated that Council did not budget for a new vehicle, and the fund for the purchase of a new vehicle would come from the Fund Balance and transferred to the Police vehicle line item.

A **motion** was made by Councilmember Davis and was seconded by Councilmember Pack to approve the Resolution to sell the 2007 Dodge Charger to Clarendon County for \$14,065.00, to take the proceeds and \$10,000 from the Fund Balance to purchase a 2008 Dodge Charger for \$24,065.00.

At this time, Mayor Johnson noted that Councilmember Georgia had arrived for the meeting.

- A) Departmental Reports. Included in Council's packet as information.

XII. Old Business:

- A. **Zoning Ordinance No. 2008-06M- (Second Reading). An Ordinance to zone property owned by Clarendon County School District 2, located along West Boyce Street/South Carolina Highway 261, Tax Map No. 169-07-00-002-00 to Office Commercial (OC).**

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A **motion** was made by Mayor Pro-tem Gordon and was seconded by Councilmember Welle to approve the ordinance for second reading. There was no discussion. All favored the motion.

- B. Zoning Ordinance No. 2008-07M- (Second Reading). An Ordinance to zone property owned by Clarendon County School District 2, located along West Boyce Street/South Carolina Highway 261, Tax Map No. 169-07-00-001-00 to Office Commercial (OC).**

A **motion** was made by Councilmember Welle and was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Gordon to approve the ordinance for second reading. There was no discussion. All favored the motion.

- C. Zoning Ordinance No. 2008-08M- (Second Reading). An Ordinance to zone property owned by Clarendon County School District 2, located along Raccoon Road, Tax Map No. 169-00-02-008-00 to Office Commercial (OC).**

A **motion** was made by Councilmember Witherspoon and was seconded by Councilmember Georgia to approve the ordinance for second reading. There was no discussion. All favored the motion.

XIII. New Business:

- A. Zoning Ordinance No. 2008-09M (First Reading) An Ordinance to re-zone a portion of property located along West Boyce Street/South Carolina Highway 261, Tax Map No. 169-09-00-021-00 from Development District (DD) to General Commercial (GC).**

A **motion** was made by Mayor Pro-tem Gordon and was seconded by Councilmember Witherspoon to approve the ordinance for first reading. In discussion, Mrs. Rhodes stated that the proposed buyer for the site where the old Wal-Mart is located will be taking approximately .675 acres from the parcel behind it and would need to have that portion of property re-zoned to General Commercial. There was no further discussion. All favored the motion.

Next, Mayor Johnson stated that Council normally meets in December as required by law. Mayor Johnson stated that the Public Hearing and final reading of the ordinance would occur at the December meeting.

Mrs. Rhodes stated that the buyer is planning on closing on the property before the next Council meeting, and asked if Council would consider moving the December Council meeting to an earlier date. Council agreed to re-schedule the meeting to December 8, 2008 at 6:30 p.m.

XIV. Councilmembers' Comments

Councilmember Georgia

Councilmember Georgia asked that the minutes of October 20, 2008, under Item XIV, Councilmembers' Comments, Councilmember Georgia, be corrected to add Mrs. Rhodes' last response in reference to a sidewalk on Alfred Henry Drive, stating that Mrs. Rhodes recommended that if Council should see Mr. Tindal, that Council should inquire about the sidewalk.

Councilmember Davis

Councilmember Davis commented about Mr. Graham's concerns expressed earlier on the Agenda. Councilmember Davis stated that he had the opportunity to stop by to speak to Mr. Graham. Councilmember Davis stated that as a small business owner, he has had a difficult time when voting on city business that directly affects his business. However, what small businesses can really sell well is their service to the community. Councilmember Davis stated that he hoped that the small businesses would all survive. Councilmember Davis stated that all of Council thought long and hard about their decision and felt confident that it was the right decision.

Mayor Johnson

Mayor Johnson reminded Council to return the Administrator's evaluation forms to his attention by December 1st and then Council would decide when to add it to the agenda for discussion.

In addition, Mayor Johnson stated that he and Councilmember Davis attended the National League of Cities and Exhibition in Orlando, Florida. Mayor Johnson stated that it was a good conference, with good speakers and found it to be very informative.

XV. Executive Session:

1) Public Works Department: Contractual Matter concerning water and sewer.

A **motion** was made by Councilmember Georgia and was seconded by Councilmember Davis to enter into Executive Session to discuss a contractual matter concerning water and sewer in the Public Works Department. There was no discussion. All favored the motion.

Following Executive Session, the following action was taken:

A **motion** was made by Councilmember Pack and was seconded by Councilmember Georgia to approve a Resolution- A Joint Agreement for a County wide plan for the establishment of a municipal county administrator review committee for the purpose of providing water and wastewater services to Clarendon County. There was no further

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discussion. All favored the motion. Mayor Johnson stated that Turbeville had already passed a Resolution and that Summerton would consider it at their meeting on November 18, 2008. Mayor Johnson stated that Manning City Council felt that this would be a way for all municipalities to provide water and wastewater in areas outside of the city's municipal limits to other parts of the county.

XVI. Adjournment:

A **motion** was made by Councilmember Welle and was seconded by Councilmember Davis to adjourn. There was no discussion. All favored the motion.

Time: 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daun Davis
Administrative Services Coordinator/Clerk