SPECIAL MEETING/WORKSHOP OF CITY COUNCIL
APRIL 27, 2017 – 4:00 PM
MUNICIPAL COURTROOM
GEORGETOWN, SOUTH CAROLINA

1. CALL TO ORDER

Notice of this meeting has been made in accordance with the 1976 Code of Laws of South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

MEMBERS PRESENT
Mayor Jack M. Scoville, Jr.
Mayor Pro Tempore Brendon M. Barber, Sr.
Council Member Sheldon A. Butts
Council Member Carol R. Jayroe
Council Member Al Joseph
Council Member Edward S. Kimbrough, Jr.
Council Member Clarence C. Smalls

ALSO PRESENT
Mr. Paul A. Gardner, City Administrator
Ms. Ann U. Mercer, City Clerk
Miss Suzanne Abed-El-Latif, HR Manager
Mr. Orlando Arteaga, Engineer
Mrs. Debra Bivens, Director of Finance
Mr. Tim Chatman, Streets and Sanitation Manager
Mr. Will Cook, Water Utilities Director
Chief Charlie Cribb, Georgetown Fire Department
Mr. Glen Dixon, Fleet Superintendent
Mr. Alan Loveless, Director of Electric Utilities
Mr. Rick Martin, Building Official/Zoning Administrator
Chief Kelvin Waites, Georgetown Police Department

ABSENT
Mrs. Elise Crosby, City Attorney
Mrs. Gloria Bromell-Tinubu, Economic Development Director

MEDIA
Georgetown Times - Anita Crone

2. ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Mayor Jack M. Scoville, Jr. called the Special Meeting/Workshop of City Council to order at 4:00 PM and requested all cell phones or electronic devices be turned off or placed on mute so as to not interrupt the meeting.

3. REVIEW OF ANTICIPATED REVENUES AND PROPOSED EXPENDITURES FOR FY 2017/2018 BUDGET.

Mr. Paul Gardner informed Council since they last met, the Governor approved a 2% increase in retirement contributions. This, along with Council's input, staff has continued to work on the budget. Mrs. Debra Bivens stated the budget as presented is balanced, $33,883,421. The initial budget presented included .5% increase in pension liability, since then the Governor passed a 2% increase this year and 1% for the next 5 years. After this ruling another 1.5% was added to the budget; equating to approximately $100,000 over all funds. The department heads were asked to tweak any expenditures they could reduce. Most of the money from expenditures was recouped from the departments to cover the $100,000.

Mr. Gardner said from discussions at the Retreat and budget workshop there was an interest in pursuing a Public Information Officer position. He said this could relate to disseminating information concerning utilities, upcoming construction, and push out positive information about the City on a regular basis communicating with our citizens. This position would report to the City Administrator. Sharing in the benefits of the position, this cost was applied over all funds and is included in the proposed budget. The Janitorial/Custodian Worker position is included in the budget and would be a substantial cost savings (over $30,000). This individual would clean City Hall, Public Works, Electric Department, Water & Wastewater Departments, public restrooms and would report to Tim Chatman. The consensus was to keep the two proposed positions in the budget.

Mrs. Bivens presented proposed rate adjustments as follows: (1) water rate adjustment of 5%, impact to customer of $1.32 per month for 6,000 gallons, increased revenue of $114,130, (2) wastewater rate adjustment of 5%, impact to customer of $2.29 per month for 6,000 gallons, increased revenue of $129,250, (3) proposed $2 increase in stormwater charges, increased revenue of approximately $200,000. Mrs. Bivens noted at the Retreat, Council discussed reviewing the rates every year in order to keep up with the increased cost of chemicals and manpower.

She stated the (Electric) temporary peak generation shavings has been passed along to our customers…last year almost $800,000. Staff is proposing to pass 1/3 of this savings to the customers and retain 2/3 in the Fund. The savings is passed along through the Purchase Power Cost Adjustment and reflected in the electric portion of the utility bill. Mr. Gardner said the Peak Shaving Program was cutting edge and aggressive. With all projects, as time passes the cost continues to rise. We do not want to deplete the reserves in the Electric Fund to the point of the danger zone. Staff is reviewing the process of financing construction of the peak shaving building and will be speaking with the City's bond attorney and municipal advisor on May 11. Council Member Smalls asked Mrs. Bivens for an update on bonds at a later date. Council Member Kimbrough asked about the increase in a customer's electric bill since the credit will be reduced. Mrs. Bivens said she could calculate an average savings for a customer who has a normal usage of 2000 kilowatts. Discussions continued.

Council was asked to consider once a week garbage pick-up as a pilot program, leaving the rates the same. During that period when there was a holiday, garbage would be picked up twice a week. Mr. Gardner said this Fund is operating in a deficit. If we went to once a week pick-up, manpower hours could be directed to other projects in the City.

Mrs. Bivens said each year the City is limited in the amount of increase we can propose for property tax. This year the increase is 1.98 mils which equates to approximately $65,142. This revenue is included in the budget. For a $100,000 home the impact would be $7.92; for a $150,000 home the impact would be $11.88.

Miss Suzanne Abed-El-Latif presented the merit increase and longevity pay plan for employees. All employees were evaluated in 2016 to determine the merit scores. As presented, the raises ranged from 1% to 3%. Longevity pay recognizes the long term employees to thank them and value their institutional knowledge. It is also a way to inspire new or potential employees to see that the City values experience and loyalty. This year the salary range was increased 5% to stay current in the market. Mr. Gardner said if an employee has years of service and is 40% into their range, their longevity pay will be cut ½; this affects 25 employees. When asked by the Mayor, Ms. Abed-El-Latif said this pay plan has reduced turnover by 3% over the past year, 16 to 13.

Mr. Gardner presented an adjustment in the City's current per diem rates to reflect the State's allowance. This will reflect cost in the area visited.

Council Member Smalls questioned if any vehicles have been removed from the budget. Mr. Gardner said none have been eliminated. He said only one police vehicle is being recommended, down from four per year previously. The second dump truck is needed in the water division. It will replace a 1992 dump truck. Currently three crews are out working daily with one dump truck, one of the crews requires the truck five days a week. Mr. Gardner noted Will Cook had a $75,000 capital improvement project he has delayed a year because he felt the dump truck is needed more. Mr. Smalls asked about the bulkhead. Mr. Gardner said the project will rebuild the bulkhead in Constitution Park and allow us to replace the pipe. Council Member Butts expressed concern with the City subsidizing the Winyah Auditorium and Kaminski House annually. Discussions followed.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Scoville adjourned the Special Meeting/Workshop at 5:09 PM.

Ann U. Mercer
City Clerk

Date Approved: 06/15/17