



**SPECIAL MEETING/WORKSHOP OF CITY COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 27, 2014 – 4:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
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

Council Member Brendon M. Barber, Sr.
Council Member Rudolph A. Bradley
Council Member Carol Jayroe
Council Member Edward S. Kimbrough, Jr.
Council Member Clarence C. Smalls
Mayor Pro Tempore Peggy P. Wayne

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mayor Jack M. Scoville, Jr.

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. Chris Carter, City Administrator
Mrs. Elise Crosby, City Attorney
Ms. Ann U. Mercer, City Clerk
Mrs. Debra Bivens, Finance Director
Captain Keith Small, Georgetown Police Department
Mr. Jonathan Heald, Public Services Director
Mr. Alan Loveless, Electric Utility Manager
Mr. Rick Martin, Building Official/Zoning Administrator
Mr. Tee Miller, Economic Development Director

MEDIA

Georgetown Times - Mr. Scott Harper

Mayor Pro Tempore Wayne called the Special Meeting/Workshop of City Council to order at 4:04 PM.

2. BILL TAYLOR, MASC - DISCUSS PARTISAN/NONPARTISAN ELECTION METHOD

Mayor Pro Tempore Wayne recognized Mr. Bill Taylor from the Municipal Association who provided information to Council concerning partisan versus non-partisan elections. Of the 270 municipalities in South Carolina, Georgetown is one of eight that currently operate partisan elections. The current process requires candidates to file application to run in a race with their respective political party. Primary elections are held in June to elect their candidates for the November

election during election years. A change to non-partisan elections would allow candidates to file a statement of candidacy to run for office 75 days prior to the election. The election date would remain the same and the winner would be determined either by plurality or majority vote. Changing from partisan to non-partisan elections would reduce the time period between filing and the election. It may allow those who might not be endorsed by a political party and who are forced to file a petition, to seek office. Typically it would allow for greater voter turnout. It would not prohibit or limit the ability of candidates to declare an affiliation as a member of a particular political party. It would not prohibit or limit the capacity of the parties to endorse a candidate or a slate of candidates. Neither the voting districts nor the polling places where people vote would change. The date of the general election would not change. Mr. Taylor said on local government issues there tends not to be a division in ideologies on how municipal services are provided. To enact a change from partisan to non-partisan requires a public referendum. This can be initiated by a positive vote of Council requesting such a referendum or a petition signed by 15% of the registered voters requesting a referendum. A referendum may be held within 30 days not later than 90 days. If a change is voted in, it would become effective with the next general election. A copy of the State Statue 5-15-30 was provided. If a special election was held under the partisan election method, the filing would open the 3rd Friday after the vacancy and close 10 days later. The primary would be held on the 11th Tuesday after the vacancy and the run-off, if necessary, would be held on the 13th Tuesday. The general election would be held on the 18th Tuesday following the vacancy and the run-off, if necessary, would be held on the 20th Tuesday. If a special election was held under the non-partisan election method, the filing would open the 3rd Friday after the vacancy and close 10 days later. The general election would be held on the 13th Tuesday following the vacancy and the run-off, if necessary, would be held on the 15th Tuesday. This allows the vacancy to be filled in a more timely manner. Mr. Taylor stated Florence and Greenville are considering the possibility of changing to a non-partisan method of election. He said there has been as change in dealing with the Justice Department. In the past, any change in election method or annexation of property required a preclearance letter be sent to the US Justice Department. The Supreme Court has ruled this unconstitutional and is no longer required. The Municipal Association has always been non-partisan and they will not tell any municipality that one is better than the other. Discussions followed. Council Members Bradley, Barber and Smalls expressed their opposition to the change. Council Members Kimbrough and Jayroe support non-partisan elections.

Council Member Jayroe suggested this topic be added to the March council meeting. Mayor Pro Tempore Wayne asked Council for their consensus to include on the agenda. There was no objection. Mr. Bradley stated a Council Member has the right to request an agenda item and the City Administrator has to abide by that. Mrs. Wayne asked Ms. Donna Mahn, Director of the Georgetown County Elections and Registration, if she had any comments. Ms. Mahn said she mentioned this to Council because of the cost involved. It would save the tax payers money by only having to be concerned with a general election. Candidates would also save money not having to

campaign for a primary. She has been working with the City Attorney. An Attorney General's opinion has been requested to make sure the referendum is required. Council Member Bradley asked if the opinion would be available before the next meeting. He said if there is a legal question, we need to have the opinion before voting. Mrs. Crosby agreed that Council needs to have the opinion before considering the ordinance. Mrs. Wayne asked Mrs. Jayroe if it would be okay to move the item to the following meeting if the opinion has not been received before the March meeting. Mrs. Crosby and Ms. Mahn said they would both call the Attorney General's office. Mrs. Jayroe thanked both for working on this matter.

3. UPDATE ON MAIN STREET PROGRESS

Main Street South Carolina empowers citizens with the knowledge, skills, tools and organizational structure necessary to revitalize their downtowns, neighborhood commercial districts and cities/towns into vibrant centers of commerce and community. Main Street SC follows the National Trust Main Street's four point approach which is organization, promotion, design and economic restructuring. A lot of information has been gathered since this was introduced at the December 5th workshop. Beppie LeGrand with the Municipal Association is the coordinator for Main Street. She has been to Georgetown and met with a group of people to spark their interest. It is important to have local interest, as well as the City's interest, to ensure all the ingredients are in place to make this successful.

Mr. Tee Miller provided Council with an update on the Main Street progress. The SC Main Street Coordinator is planning for Georgetown to officially become a Main Street Program on July 1st. Our membership as a Main Street Program will begin with a team of experts (from MASC, other Main Street Programs, planners, etc.) coming to Georgetown to perform a baseline community assessment. This will revamp and build on the Bridge2Bridge Charrette, provide baseline metrics that we can use to evaluate our progress and provide recommended plans to focus our resources. In addition, the MASC Main Street team will assist us with board and committee development, recruitment and training. The baseline assessment and MASC support is part of our annual membership dues: 2015 FY \$10,000, 2016 FY \$7,500 and 2017 FY and subsequent years \$5,000. Staff is completing the formal application that includes a detailed analysis of population, businesses, property ownership, parking, etc. A legal entity must be developed including bylaws, representation and statement of purpose for IRS application for exemption (501(c)3). This entity will manage the Main Street and work with the City and other organizations. Core committees are being formed to tackle deliverables for the City's Main Street mission. Staff is participating in all SC Main Street meetings and sharing information, etc. prior to formally being accepted as a Main Street Program. The organization, The Georgetown Partnership Inc., has been incorporated as a nonprofit corporation with the South Carolina Secretary of State. The Articles include Main Street's suggested language to help with the IRS application for exemption. Bylaws have been drafted following Main Street guidelines. These include a Board of Directors with designated representation from the Mayor, or his/her designee, a City Council Member, Downtown Georgetown Revitalization

Association, Harbor Historical Association of Georgetown (Maritime Museum), Georgetown County Historical Society (County Museum), at-large seats from hospitality, real estate and property owner. The City will have direct oversight with ex-officio representation to the Georgetown Partnership and ultimate oversight through the Council's appropriations. The NGO representation comes from established organizations with a base of members and volunteers, which have a stake in the downtown, including managing the big special events. It has been recommended that the Board start as small as possible with key individuals that have shown interest, desire and commitment and can rally support. The organization can better expand itself through committees of volunteers charged with a specific mission and goals.

Main Street's approach is to start with the commercial core as the focus. However, we are not precluded from working outside of the defined focus area. Some of the SC Main Street programs operate citywide even though their defined focus area is downtown. Many, if not all, pursue projects outside of their defined area when it benefits the mission of promoting the City. Reasons for a more defined focus area are: it is easier to start small and expand operations with demonstrated experience and capacity, Main Street is a very metric driven process so it is difficult to manage a large territory, most Main Street programs are funded with accommodations and hospitality taxes which will restrict the use of funds to tourism related expenditures, and IRS requires the organization to provide a defined statement of purpose and focus to be eligible for 501(c)3 exemption. Mr. Miller said economic development, marketing and merchant associations are red flags for a 501(c)3. With an independent group, a lot more grant opportunities are available.

The Georgetown Partnership Inc. can serve a twofold purpose. **Main Street Organization** - In addition to the on-going Main Street programs (community revitalization, promotion, economic restructuring, etc.), Main Street programs regularly conduct or participate in community assessments and master plans which are invaluable tools for allocating resources, economic development and business recruitment. These include community benchmark assessments; retail GAP analysis/leakage and opportunities; and City master plans. **City's Designated Marketing Organization (DMO)** - The City is accruing monies in the DMO Special Fund in FY14 but has not selected a DMO for receipt. The Georgetown Partnership provides an immediate available vehicle to accomplish the City's need for community identify branding and marketing utilizing set aside funds. The next steps will be to (1) convene the initial Board of Directors and adopt bylaws. (2) If Council approves, an RFP can be issued for an outside firm to help with branding and marketing, (3) Continue the Main Street application and organization development, (4) apply for grant retail GAP analysis study, (5) begin forming core committees and recruiting volunteers for Main Street, (6) official Main Street recognition July 2014, and (7) baseline assessment, development and training from MASC team. Approval of a DMO will be included on the March agenda.

Council Member Smalls asked for a progress report on the fire debris on Front

Street. Mr. Miller said the dumpsters were pulled today preparing for the festival. There were some issues with the contract on the asbestos clean-up. Mrs. Vida Miller is helping to iron those out. Once they begin it should take about a week. Mr. Carter stated most debris that can be picked up, other than the asbestos debris, has been removed. The City will be choosing a consultant to produce a study to research, analyze, and prepare a redevelopment plan for the 700 block of Front Street.

4. UPDATE ON BEN COOPER PARK

Mr. Jonathan Heald referred Council to the conceptual plan that was developed for Ben Cooper Park. He was given the project and instructed to put down \$70,000 worth of concrete in the Park with no specific location. He compiled the plan to see how the Park would be developed if the pad was placed in the center as a focal point. It includes improvements to Prince Street that would allow a drop-off area and improvements to Washington Street, and the development of Ben Cooper Drive, for a parking area. He said these improvements are key in the overall plan. A bathhouse is included as are basketball courts. Currently the spray pad is near completion. Public Works crews are working to assemble and install benches that will surround the pad. Planting material will be selected and purchased in early March. The remaining spray pad equipment should be delivered in mid March and installed by the contractor in mid April. Mr. Heald anticipates the Park will be open for Memorial Day. Council Member Jayroe asked if this was an acceleration of the budgeted plan. He said the Park was never fully funded for this entire development. It is a concept that if the spray pad is constructed, this is how we can develop the remaining area. Keeping in mind, once the concrete is on the ground it forces other things to happen, or not to happen. The spray pad, the equipment for the pad, the landscaping and benches around the pad are the only items that were funded.

Mr. Heald presented proposed future phases of Ben Cooper Park for Council consideration. West Prince Street, \$175,000; Washington Street and Ben Cooper Drive, \$200,000; parking lot, \$275,000; bathhouse/restrooms, \$175,000; basketball courts(suggested by the Committee), \$375,000; and miscellaneous construction, \$50,000. He stated the numbers are very high and there are no funds allocated. Currently he is working on a grant application due on March 15th requesting funds to help with some of these projects.

5. EAST COAST GREENWAY

Mr. Heald said the City will receive approximately \$630,000 from the Transportation Enhancement Fund from the Federal government through the State DOT for some bicycle/pedestrian trails. The money will be available in October of this year and we need to spend it or risk losing the funds. The City must contribute at least \$126,000. Staff is proposing a portion that connects US Highway 17 near the Hampton Inn with Front Street. He offered three options: Meeting Street, Bay Street and Greenwich Drive. Any of the options would be a link of East Coast Greenway which is a 3,000 mile trail system from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida. The three options were reviewed in detail and Greenwich Drive seemed to be the best-suited. Mr. Heald said he will need formal approval from Council prior to talking with

property owners. This will be presented at the March meeting with a brief overview of the three choices and most likely approval of the Greenwich Drive route as the preferred option.

In addition, Mr. Heald passed out his conceptual plan of East Bay Park to Council and said he would be happy to talk with them after the meeting.

6. RECEIPT OF GOAT ISLAND CONCEPTUAL PLAN

Mr. Carter provided City Council a copy of the Goat Island conceptual plan prepared by Steve Goggans and Associates. He asked them to review the plan and said at some point this needs to be discussed and decided if Council wishes to move forward.

7. PUBLIC SERVICES

A. Approve Second Reading of an Ordinance to Vacate Right of Way to the Georgetown Hospital System as outlined in the Agreement between the City and the Hospital System.

Mr. Carter noted the fifth preamble of the ordinance should read, *the City Council of the City of Georgetown wishes to facilitate this project so long as its conditions are met and it does not have a negative financial impact on the citizens*. Mr. Heald said this is an agreement between the City of Georgetown and Georgetown Memorial Hospital for the City to serve as an intermediary between the Hospital and DOT to obtain possession of the right-of-way. If negotiations between the City and DOT are successful and are in line with what the hospital wants, we would then proceed with a formal right-of-way vacation, contacting all utilities and all emergency service providers to receive their input. Once this takes place the matter would be brought to City Council for approval. Mayor Pro Tempore Wayne asked for discussion. Council Member Jayroe asked what the City would get in return. Mr. Heald said we get to be in good graces of Georgetown Memorial Hospital and help facilitate their building expansion.

Mayor Pro Tempore Wayne called for the question.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Edward S Kimbrough, Council Member
SECONDER:	Carol R. Jayroe, Council Member
AYES:	Jayroe, Kimbrough, Barber Sr., Bradley, Smalls, Wayne
ABSENT:	Jack M. Scoville Jr.

8. ADMINISTRATION

A. Status report update on debris removal efforts within the City of Georgetown

Mr. Carter said trucks from Florida are in town and our goal in the next few weeks is to keep them here. They will be working in the West End, moving to Willowbank and Country Club Estates.

Council Member Jayroe said Keep Georgetown Beautiful is sponsoring *Cleaning Our City One Street at a Time* this Saturday from 9:00 - 11:00 am, meeting at Ben Cooper Park. She asked Council if they could join her and come together as a team to help with this project.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn Special Meeting/Workshop.

Mayor Pro Tempore Wayne called for the question.

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS] MOVER: Edward S Kimbrough, Council Member SECONDER: Carol R. Jayroe, Council Member AYES: Jayroe, Kimbrough, Barber Sr., Bradley, Smalls, Wayne ABSENT: Jack M. Scoville Jr.

The Special Meeting/Workshop was adjourned at 5:54 PM.

Ann U. Mercer
City Clerk

Date Approved: 04/17/14