

MONDAY – 6:30 P.M.

MARCH 30, 2009

JOINT CITY-COUNTY

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City met jointly with the Commissioners of Pasquotank County on the above date and time at the conference room of DRS. Those attending were: Mayor S. S. Atkinson, J. M. Baker, D. B. Evans, L. A. Hummer, R. E. King, B. S. Meggs, E. K. Rivers, J. A. Stimatz, V. C. Watts, City Manager R. C. Olson, City Clerk D. S. Pierce-Tamplen, City Attorney W. H. Morgan, City Manager Intern R. A. Lyons, Fire Chief L. M. Mackey and Public Utilities Director P. A. Fredette, Commissioners: Stevenson, Wood, Griffin, Dixon, Perry and Trueblood, County Manager Keaton, Assistant Manager Bunch, County Clerk Jennings and Superintendent of Water Gregory.

Mayor Atkinson called the meeting to order and welcome those attending. Chairman Stevenson called upon Commissioner Wood for the invocation and Commissioner Griffin to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Following a delicious meal provided by Montero's, Chairman Stevenson continued with the business meeting.

Mayor Atkinson said that he feels it is a good step to continue to have these quarterly meetings. It gives us an opportunity to share concerns as well as an opportunity to resolve issues. With the uncertain economy there are challenges facing each unit of government. We are both experiencing strains in our revenue. He sees the commissioners and the council working together to jointly fund many things that go on in the City that require both of us to partner on such as the Parks and Recreation and Fire to name a couple. He thinks that we are heading in the right direction and we have a common goal.

1} DISCUSSION OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE TAX COLLECTION AGREEMENT:

County Manager Keaton said this was discussed last year and the County based their budget off of the 1½%. We have never formulized the agreement since it originated in 1989. We amended it once in 1994 when the motor vehicle law came into effect. The City was paying was paying 2.5% for property collections other than motor vehicle and 1.5% for motor vehicle collections. During the current fiscal year, the County agreed to reduce the tax collection rate to 1.5%. This was not in a contract form. The County presented a contract for future years with a collection rate of 1.5% for all collections. Although the City requested a flat fee charge for tax collection, 1.5% is a cost savings to the City and the commissioners feels it is equitable.

2} AMENDMENT TO FIRE CONTRACT:

City Manager Olson stated for many years the County has been contracting with the City for fire protection in the area fringing the city limits which is known as the Central Fire District. The contract is for a period of three years and includes a 5% increase per year. The contract provides needed services to the citizens of the Central Fire District and assures that mutual aid will be received and given as needed not only in the County but in the City limits. This agreement provides needed funding to assure the best possible fire protection in the City and during County responses.

3} Review of Water Contracts:

John Gregory said he would like to review of the out of pocket funds that we have already spent for the reverse osmosis water treatment project. C & L Contractors have prepared the site and it is ready for us to go ahead and put a water plant there, but we are not quite ready with our funding at this time. We have spent \$309,899 out of pocket. At the same time if you have been out to the Mount Hermon area you can see that we have been busy laying our raw water lines. We have spent \$2.2 million with Sandford Contractors and we owe about \$300,000 more if we stay in our \$2.5 million total. Land and easement he has spent \$462,992 trying to acquire easements and buying some land and we bought 12 acres of land to put the plant on. We have about 4 production wells that are going to cost us about \$1.2 million. The water plant is \$6.7 million. We hope to get underway with that shortly. We have 13 miles of concentrate line to lie. We have the discharge line and header to it and we will probably end up spending a million dollars on that. We have 24' finish water line to run from the plant back over to in front of the existing Wal Mart that will tie into our major trunk line. Of course we have to add in some contingency and engineering which is another \$2.3 million for a total estimated cost of \$17 million. This is just an idea of how far we have been and how far we have to go.

Mr. Keaton said that they have applied for \$3 million for the finish water line from the Stimulus package. That line is already permitted and ready to bid out. Some of the other pieces still have some permits to obtain. That line is a package deal and we can do it with a separate line. This was an ideal project and we should be hearing from that soon.

Ms. Hummer said that she has a question on the discharge line and the aerial spray. Has this aerial spray been tested?

Mr. Gregory replied no it hasn't been tested. Aesthetics of it doesn't look good. We have some meetings coming up with some people that we need to discuss

that with. Also, it is a cost savings. If we spray it out we have a good opportunity of getting a grant for this program. It is a little bit different.

Ms. Hummer asked if there would be a study done on how it will affect the wildlife, wetlands and property because there are winds that blow all the time in that area. This spray is going to be disbursed back on to private property. There is a lot of wildlife over there that people are concerned about. Are you going to spend this \$1 million without looking at all that?

Mr. Gregory said no and our next step will be a public meeting and we will discuss it with whoever is interested to come to the meeting to give their input. Mr. Gregory then went over the RO Water Cost Estimates.

4} UPDATE ON AIR PARK:

Mr. Olson advised that Parks Land Development has completed the installation of the curb and gutter, as well as the placement of the stone base for the roadway. The remainder of the major earthwork involves the completion of the detention pond A. Consolidated Road was patched utilizing a NCDOT approved section of 12" sand – 8" asphalt base and 3" of asphalt binder. Most of the patch has held up to the concrete and cement treated base traffic; however, the edges of the patches have failed and will need attention soon. We spent \$120,960 on the first pavement repair.

Sewer installation was continuing yesterday. All that is remaining is the installation of the gravity sewer along Aviation Parkway; tie in of the sewer force main and the completion of the sewer pump station.

Barnhill is involved with the installation of the Cement Treated Base and the pouring of the concrete. Placement of all the cement treated base paver was completed on Wednesday. All densities are good and the CTB should be ready for paving next week. They will be placing two, two-inch lifts. The final concrete pours were completed on Thursday by Heard Concrete, Barnhill's subcontractor. Initial test breaks on the beams are coming in a little low but this is expected with a fly ash mix. Due to the concrete and CTB work, our next payment request from Barnhill will be approximately \$1.3 million. To date Parks has been approved for payment in the amount of \$1,898,375.76 and Barnhill has been approved for payment in the amount of \$1,782,750.62.

He presented a power point presentation depicting the items that he talked about. He answered various questions and concerns from the Commissioners and the Council Members

5} COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Councilman King said he thought this was a very good meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Baker said she has a couple of things. If you didn't attend any of the Arts Center opening this week end you missed a fabulous event for Elizabeth City. One that will serve us well for many, many years and don't listen to the blogs in the paper, as those people are moving very slow. It was obvious that they didn't participate. It was the usual people without signing their names. Don't listen to that. She did have a question that is city-county related. If the County is going to get involved with the EMS Agreement this year as we have talked about it and talked about putting since all the ambulances are based at the hospital, we had talked, at least in the City, about putting one down at Weeksville and training our fire fighters to be EMS certified. Is that something we are doing between us this year?

Mr. Keaton replied that the County has relocated one ambulance down the Nixonton Fire Department to try to help and spread them out some. We have a meeting plan for the EMS people to come and talk about this issue.

Councilman Stimatz stated at our September meeting we had a long discussion concerning our Central Communication support and the need for an Interlocal agreement. He would like to know what the status is on preparation of the Interlocal agreement.

Mr. Keaton said they are working on the new resolution but we haven't made any more efforts on the Interlocal Agreement.

Mr. Stimatz said if he isn't mistaken the two managers were tasked to develop that.

Mayor Atkinson said that sounds like something that we can work on for our next meeting.

Mr. Stimatz said the other thing has to do with the tight economic conditions in each unit of government's budget to look more seriously at merging services, in particular Planning and Fire. He would suggest that be put on our next meeting agenda to discuss seriously this merger.

Mr. Wilson, from the audience questioned the progress on the property that ECSU owns.

6} CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Councilman R. E. King, seconded by Councilwoman L. A. Hummer to retire into Closed Session as per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (4); discussion of expansion of a local business. Those voting in favor of the motion were: King, Hummer, Baker, Evans, Meggs, Rivers, Stimatz and Watts. Against: None. Motion carried.

Upon the end of the Closed Session:

A motion was made by Councilwoman L. A. Hummer, seconded by Councilman R. E. King to return to regular session. Those voting favor of the motion were: Hummer, King, Baker, Evans, Meggs, Rivers, Stimatz and Watts. Against: None. Motion carried.

7} ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, Mayor Atkinson adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

Dianne S. Pierce-Tamplen, MMC
City Clerk

Stephen S. Atkinson
Mayor