

**REGULAR MEETING OF NEWBERRY CITY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, NEWBERRY, SC
September 12, 2017 – 7:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Mayor Foster Senn, Councilman Zebbie D. Goudelock, Councilman Thomas Louis Boyd, Councilman David T. Force, Councilman Edwin E. Wicker and Councilman R. LeMont Glasgow

Members Absent: Councilman David E. DuBose

Also Present: City Manager Matt DeWitt, Municipal Clerk Jennie O'Shields, Utility Director Tim Baker, Police Chief Roy McClurkin, Division Director Tamra Tootle, PRT Director Scott Sawyer, Fire Chief Keith Minick, Planning and Development Director Ward Braswell, Public Works Director Mac Bartley, Opera House Director Molly Fortune and City Attorney Robert Lake.

Others Present: Burt Mohler, Mr. and Mrs. Tim Swygert, Kevin Goodman, Hugh Smith, Jason and Jessica Rivers, Mary Lane Arden, Randy Malloy, Robbie and Mary Alex Kopp, Chris Kemper and family, Phil and Jan Fortune, Lucille Kinard, Denise Reid, Stuart Smith, Michael Parker, Andrew Morris, Brandon Wicker, Richard Doran, Lisa Toland, Gregg Taylor and others.

News representative: Kelly Duncan

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Senn called the meeting to order and led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilman Glasgow gave the invocation.

MINUTES:

Councilman Goudelock made a motion, seconded by Councilman Boyd to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of Newberry City Council held on August 8, 2017 as presented. Mayor Senn declared the motion carried following a unanimous vote of City Council members present.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mayor Senn advised that members of City Council had received a copy of the Financial Report and Financial Summary for the period ending August 31, 2017 and noted that the report would be attached to the minutes. City Manager DeWitt gave a brief summary of the financial report highlighting the decrease in all utility systems which is directly attributed to the weather and the decrease in tax revenue, due to revenue adjustments from years past.

RECOGNITION OF EMPLOYEES

Mayor Senn and City Manager DeWitt recognized Tim Swygert for his thirty years of service with the Newberry Fire Department. Tim began his employment with the City on August 31, 1987, and holds the position of Fire Captain for the Newberry Fire Department. Tim was presented with a certificate and gift selection packet commensurate with his years of service.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Eclipsefest Recognition

Mayor Senn and City Manager DeWitt extended a special thanks to Parks, Recreation and Tourism, Police and Fire Departments along with the Newberry Opera House staff for their collective efforts in making the Eclipsefest event a huge success. Through numerous calls, letters, emails and Facebook posts, The City of Newberry staff and volunteers were commended for going above and beyond to provide each and every participant with a memorable experience. Mayor Senn presented the participating departments with a Certificate of Appreciation.

ORDINANCE:

Second and Final Reading of Ordinance #2017-1012 to establish rates for the Oakland Tennis Complex

Mayor Senn offered up for second and final reading ordinance #2017-1012 to establish rate and fee tables for the Oakland Tennis Complex. The ordinance included fees for daily court rentals, reserved court fees, annual play passes and rental of the tennis ball machines. The rates addressed in the ordinance are comparable to rates throughout South Carolina after checking with nine different facilities throughout the state. The rates will be posted on the website, in the pro-shop and in the brochure. The hard courts are free to use when available.

Councilman Boyd made a motion, seconded by Councilman Wicker to adopt the second and final reading of Ordinance #2017-1012 which establishes rates for the Oakland Tennis Complex. Mayor Senn declared the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the City Councilmembers.

ORDINANCE:

Second and Final Reading of an Ordinance # 2017-1013 to authorize the regulation of rental properties

Mayor Senn indicated that the City of Newberry has reinstated the rental regulation process that was first established in 2006 and outlined in Chapter 8.5, Article II of the City Code. It was determined that the need still existed to regulate rental properties due to the recent increase of incidents and of law enforcement presence at rented dwellings and the consequential disruption of peace and tranquility of the community. Mayor Senn stated that

communities such as Clemson, Irmo and Columbia have seen great success in the adoption of similar ordinances.

Mayor Senn recognized Jessica Rivers at the podium. Mrs. Rivers posed questions about evictions and the number of police reports against tenants in a single instance.

Mayor Senn reviewed the ordinance in its entirety and addressed all questions once the section was covered. Some of the items highlighted were the inception of the rental registration policy in 2018, no fees for rental registration, no changes in the business license regulations, the three-offense statute and when the offenses are no longer counted against the landlord.

City Attorney Lake explained the appeals procedure stating that landlords would go before the Planning and Development Director for an informal hearing first to try and resolve the issue after 3 offenses at one particular residence. He further explained that the second step would require the landlord to appear before City Council to escalate the appeals process and reiterated that if the property owner has remedied the problem then this will be taken into consideration.

In conclusion of the reading of the Ordinance, Mayor Senn stated that there were as few as ten estimated problem properties in the whole city and that the goal of the Ordinance was to remedy the civil unrest of the public and find cohesion between members of the community.

Mayor Senn also stated that any landlord could reach out to the police department to inquire about a potential tenant having public record of offenses and that the City Police Department would attempt to contact landlords after two criminal reports had been filed upon a single tenant.

Chief McClurkin reiterated the Mayor's remarks clarifying that tenants would not receive citations for infractions that they were not involved in and similarly that citations would not be issued to victims.

Mayor Senn recognized Jimmy Morris from the audience. Mr. Morris asked Council to review of the ordinance in one year.

Councilmember Boyd made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Wicker to approve the second and final reading of Ordinance #2017-1013 to authorize the regulation of residential rental properties. Mayor Senn declared the motion carried following a unanimous vote of City Councilmembers present and voting.

ORDINANCE:

Second and Final Reading of Ordinance # 2017-1014 to amend Utility Rates

Mayor Senn stated that through recent communication from DHEC, it has been recommended to cities across South Carolina that provide utilities to update their practice to ensure conservation and economic development. Currently the City's residential rate structure for water has far too many levels according to DHEC. This new proposal simplifies the table by collapsing the rate in accordance with DHEC's recommendations.

Councilmember Goudelock made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Boyd to adopt the second and final reading of Ordinance # 2017-1014 to amend the current utility rates. Mayor Senn declared the motion carried following a unanimous vote of City Councilmembers present and voting.

RESOLUTION

Mayor Senn announced that the Municipal Association of South Carolina was offering a Hometown Economic Development Grant to cities in South Carolina to implement economic development projects that positively impact the quality of life in the community. The grant program would also promote and recognize innovation in economic development practices. The Staff has indicated that with Council approval, the City of Newberry will apply for the Hometown Economic Grant.

Councilmember Wicker made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Glasgow to adopt the Resolution as presented allowing the staff to apply for the Hometown Economic Grant. Mayor Senn declared the motion carried following a unanimous vote of City Councilmembers present and voting.

DISCUSSION

Mayor Senn stated that Charles Weathers with the Weathers Group has been invited by the City Staff to discuss a Vision Plan for the City of Newberry. There will be session to include constituents, an open forum to the public, a session for City Department Heads and also Council. Mayor Senn further stated that since this is an added session and not a part of the published annual calendar, it is necessary to agree on the date so they can be announced to the public. The proposed date is October 12th, 2017 at 4:00 pm.

Councilmember Boyd made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Wicker to add October 12th at 4:00 PM as a work session for Council. Mayor Senn declared the motion carried following a unanimous vote of City Councilmembers present and voting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Senn announced that on September 1st, he signed a Proclamation for the Jasper Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution to support the constitution and declare the week of September 17 – 23, 2017 as Constitution Week. The DAR recognizes the patriotism upon which our country was founded. The Jasper Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution are to be commended for their generous services and for their efforts to promote American History.

Mayor Senn also reminded the public about the College Street Bridge Celebration in conjunction with Bethlehem Baptist Church to be held on September 30, 2017 from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm. The entire community is invited.

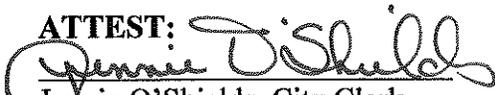
Mayor Senn also announced that there would be a dinner to honor Israel Brooks on October 7, 2017 at the Medallion Conference Center in Columbia. Mr. Brooks was a native of Newberry and the first African American Highway Patrol Officer in South Carolina. Later in his career, President Bill Clinton appointed Mr. Brooks as a United States Marshall for the District of South Carolina.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before City Council, Councilman Goudelock made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 P.M. Councilmember Boyd seconded the motion which was carried by a unanimous vote of City Council members.



Foster Senn
MAYOR

ATTEST:

Jennie O'Shields, City Clerk
Newberry, South Carolina

(SEAL)