REGULAR MEETING - MARCH 5, 2015

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session on Thursday, March 5, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 114 West Sycamore Street, Lincolnton North Carolina.

Mayor John Gilleland opened the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Those in attendance were:

RHYNE CLONINGER EADDY HOVIS

Councilman Cloninger made the motion unanimously approved the ***REGULAR AGENDA.***

REGULAR AGENDA:

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY'S CODE OF ORDINANCES – TITLE VII- TRAFFIC CODE – CHAPTER 74 – TRAFFIC SCHEDULE VI. ADDING; LANGUAGE TO INCLUDE SR 1294 (LITHIA INN RD) BETWEEN SR 1298 AND NC 27 WITHIN THE CORPORATE LIMITS, AS REQUESTED BY NCDOT.

After opening the public hearing, Mayor John Gilleland recognized City Clerk Donna Flowers who spoke to the item. Mrs. Flowers explained the proposed amendment is the result of a request from Mr. Jimmy Hembrick with the Department of Transportation asking the City to amend said ordinance to concur with State ordinance. Change will required a change in signage as well as speed limit being listed in the City's Ordinance book. Although there would be no changes on the ground, action from City Council is required. With no one else to speak, Mayor Gilleland entertained a motion to close the public hearing.

Councilman Cloninger made the motion unanimously approved to close the Public Hearing.

Councilman Eaddy made the motion unanimously approved to approve the proposed amendments to the City Code Ordinance Title VII- Traffic Code – Chapter 74 as suggested.

PRESENTATION FROM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TO UPDATE COUNCIL ON THE VISITOR'S INFORMATION CENTER:

Mayor Gilleland recognized Mr. Ken Kindley, Director of the Chamber of Commerce, to speak. Mr. Kindley stated his appreciation to Council for the opportunity and introduced several individuals from the Chamber that were also in attendance. Mr. Kindley directed Councils attention to the packets he provided, giving details and information regarding how they are utilized by the Chamber. Multiple brochures are included with each having its on purpose. He gave statistics on website activity and their plans to update to make it more user friendly. In his presentation Mr. Kindley reminded Council of many of the ways the Chamber is serving and promoting Lincolnton and some of the cost associated with it. In closing, Mr. Kindley thanked Council for the support they have given to the Chamber and opened the floor for any questions Council may have.

Mayor Gilleland expressed his appreciation for the Chamber and what it does for the community.

PROPOSED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO INCREASE THE 2014-2015 FY BUDGET AS FOLLOWS: FEDERAL EQUITABLE CHECKING EXPENSE - $6,999.87:
(BA-01-15)

Mr. Steve Zickefoose, Finance Director, spoke to this item. He explained that as a result of work being done with the Department of Justice, the police department is entitled to shared proceeds. These funds represent that share. Mr. Zickefoose stated that other monies of this nature may be received in the future. Funds come directly from the Department of Justice and is restricted for use within the police department and can not be used for personnel. Credit was given to Chief Jordan for receiving the funds and will be conferred with regarding the correct expenditure of the money. Funds may be carried over into next years budget. There were no questions for Mr. Zickefoose.

Councilman Eaddy made the motion unanimously approved to approve the proposed amendment.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPLICATION TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR APPROVAL OF COMBINED ENTERPRISE SYSTEM REVENUE REFUNDING BOND; REQUESTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONS APPROVAL ON THE CITY'S COMBINED ENTERPRISE SYSTEM REVENUE REFUNDING BOND, SERIES 2015 AND CERTAIN RELATED MATTERS:
(R-04-15)

City Manager Jeff Emory and Finance Director Steve Zickefoose both spoke to this item. Mr. Emory explained that by submitting this application, the City stands to gain a significant amount of savings. Mr. Emory informed Council that bids have already been sent out to various banks. Staff is working with First Tryon Advisors and hopes to have everything completed by the end of the fiscal year while interest rates are still favorable.

Mr. Emory stated resolution will allow application to be submitted. Mr. Zickefoose added that resolution meets the standards of the Commission as it was drawn up by the bond council.. Mayor Gilleland expressed Councils appreciation for staff handling this process. There were no questions from Council.

Councilman Rhyne made the motion unanimously approved to approve the proposed resolution directing the application to the Local Government Commission for approval of restructure of the bonds.

DISCUSSION OF MOVE OF COUNTY OFFICES:

Mayor John Gilleland began by recognizing Chairman Mitchem and Commissioner Martin Oakes. Mayor Gilleland stated the item was place on the agenda to allow Council another opportunity to discuss ideas as a council to present to the County regarding the move of the County offices from downtown.

County Commission Chair Carrol Mitchem began by giving some detail as to the recent turn of events regarding the move and explaining why it was necessary. He continued expressing their desire to make the best decision for the tax payers and assuring Council the end to this dilemma is very near.

Chairman Mitchem welcomed the suggestion of a joint meeting. He did voice his disappointment that the City has not come forward regarding this issue until now. Mayor Gilleland said both entities were at fault for not initiating discussions and a joint meeting prior to today. Mr. Mitchem said "I think it would be a good idea for the City and County to meet annually to talk about things that we can work together on."

Councilman Cloninger expressed his agreement with the idea of a joint meeting which will allow both parties to talk and share ideas realizing, however that the final decision will be made by the Board of Commissioners.
Councilman Rhyne communicated his desire to hear the true cost as it relates to the different proposed ideas that has been entertained to help combat all of the misinformation that is available. Chairman Mitchem responded explaining some of the reasons why there has been so many different numbers. He also addressed the fact that it was never the County's plan to move all of the county offices out of the downtown area. He said there has been some misinformation regarding what was to be done being spread around. Councilman Eaddy expressed his appreciation for Chairman Mitchem and Commissioner Oakes being in attendance and their willingness to discuss the issue.

Commissioner Oakes spoke to Councilman Rhyne's question about the total cost of various scenarios for the project, stating that the original plan six years ago was around 25 to 30 million dollars. He said a new scaled down version is looking to be less than 1.6 million.

Mr. Oakes said a very ballpark estimate for moving the court system to the hospital is about 4 million dollars. Councilman Rhyne clarified the cost being somewhere around 6 million with moving the health department and the court system to the hospital.

There was more discussion generated regarding the cost of the move and which offices will be moved. Chairman Mitchem concluded by suggesting that City Manager Jeff Emory contact County Manager Kelly Atkins regarding possible dates for a joint meeting. Mayor Gilleland agreed stating that the meeting should be schedule within the next two weeks.

Councilman Cloninger made a motion unanimously approved to hold a joint meeting with the County Commissioners to discuss the building options as soon as dates can be arranged.

Mayor Gilleland, speaking on behalf of the City Council, expressed his appreciation for their attendance, for the information presented and for their willingness to attend. At the suggestion for City Manager Jeff Emory, potential dates for the meeting were considered and discussed. Mr. Emory was directed to submit three potential meeting dates to the County Manager. March 30th , 31st, and April 1st .

CONSIDERATION OF DATE FOR PUBLIC INPUT FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING INITIATIVE:

City Manager Jeff Emory explained the need to determine a date near the latter part of May, to schedule a public forum to receive public input for the strategic plan. Once scheduled the event would be held in the Lentz Gym at Betty Ross Park from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Mr. Emory said Centralina Council of Governments would need to confirm a definite date for the forum soon for advertising purposes. Mayor Gilleland proposed May 26th or 28th. There was some discussion regarding the Council members and staff's role during the forum as Council has not received much information up to this point. As pointed out by Councilman Rhyne. Mr. Emory stated more details would be shared at the next meeting to be held at 5:00 pm in the Fire Department Training room on April 2nd..

UPDATE ON GRANTS/REIMBURSEMENTS RECEIVED FROM ELECTRICITIES:

Finance Director Steve Zickefoose informed Council of some reimbursement opportunities he and Mr. Emory learned about through Electrcities. Based on those programs, the City has devised strategies to take advantage of those available dollars. Because it is a reimbursement program, no match is involved.

Mr. Zickefoose explained the first project, which is a customized City project, has a $6,000.00 eligibility. The City's new website redesign and implementation as an entry. Upon completion and submittal of proof of payment, reimbursement will be awarded. Another $4,000.00 grant is available for which the City has submitted the Strategic Plan development has been submitted. Notification has been received confirming that plan has also been accepted therefore once completed and proof of payment has been submitted, the City will be reimbursed $4,000.00.

Mr. Zickefoose explained the third opportunity, being a $1,500.00 grant. He Explained that Alive After Five was submitted for this grant and has received notification that event meets the requirements and qualifies for the grant which can offset some of the expenses.

City Manager Jeff Emory commended Mr. Zickefoose work his hard work. Mayor and Council were pleased with the fact there were no matching funds involved.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT/OVERTIME REPORT:

City Manager Jeff Emory distributed a revised report to Council as he spoke to this item. Mr. Emory referenced the report regarding the various funds and where they stand this year compared to last year. There was some discussion regarding the Electric Fund. Mr. Emory was pleased to report that he has been notified there may not be an increase this year in the wholesale purchase of electricity. He said however, the City may still need to pass on a small electric rate increase due to a letter received last year from the Local Government Commission regarding the Electric Fund.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Robert Tomlinson came before Council to express his appreciation for the City's Public Works, Sanitation, Police and Fire employees for their hard work and long hours over the last few weeks with the ice and snow. He stated he felt their overtime was well desired. He did, however, express his concern for the overtime for festival staff and City staff. He suggested comp time as an alternative to overtime during the week. He also recommend decreasing the Business and Community Developments budget by the amount they have left at the end of the fiscal year and give to a department that will use it.

NEWS MEDIA:

No questions from the new media

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilman Cloninger made the motion unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting.

DONNA C. FLOWERS, CMC	**JOHN O. GILLELAND, Jr.**
CITY CLERK	**MAYOR**