The regular meeting of the Lincolnton City Council was held in Council Chambers of City Hall at 7:00 p.m. on April 2, 2015.

The following members of the City Council were present:

RHYNE CLONINGER GILLELAND EADDY HOVIS

Mayor John Gilleland called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilman Eaddy made the motion unanimously approved the *REGULAR AGENDA* with an addition to Item # 10 currently listed.

Councilman Cloninger made the motion unanimously approved the *CONSENT AGENDA* as follow:

- **March 5th regular meeting minutes**
- **Call to Public Hearing for May 7th City Council Meeting**

  Hazard Mitigation Plan
  ZMA-1-2015 – Application from HRN Broadcasting, Inc.

- **Approval of Destruction of Public Records – Waste Water Treatment Plant**

REGULAR AGENDA:

PRESENTATIONS

Recognition of the Lincolnton Student Advisory Council
Jill Eaddy, Advisory

Mayor John Gilleland recognized Mrs. Jill Eaddy, Advisory for the Lincolnton Student Advisory Council. Mrs. Eaddy gave a brief overview of the councils origin, its makeup and its purpose referencing some of the projects they have undertaken through the years since their creation. Students from three different committees spoke to Council about their current projects. Seth Baxter, a seniorfrom West Lincoln High School represented the Business Committee and presented a video produced in their efforts to recruit Chick-Fil-A to Lincolnton. Logan Scott, a junior at West Lincoln High School and Karleigh Morrison, a junior from North Lincoln High School represented the Schools Committee which is the committee that addresses issues within the schools. Andrew Cesmat and Raxel Leiton, both seniors at North Lincoln High School, represented the Community Committee. Their main project is the mural currently being painted on the Anderson Building along the Marcia H. Cloninger Rail-Trail. Kathryn Macomson, a senior at Lincolnton High School, represented the Charity Committee. Some of their projects have been the Angel Tree, giving Valentine to the nursing homes as well as Christmas Caroling at the nursing homes. This committee was also involved in the Glow Run, they will be conducting their Adopt-A-Street clean up and their annual car wash to raise funds for the Student Memorial.

Mayor Gilleland commended the students for their efforts and hard work and Mrs. Eaddy for her leadership. City Councilman Eaddy noted Taco Bell being in Lincolnton due to the hard work of the Advisory Council members. Both Hampton Inn and Taco Bell are here as a result of this committee.

Presentation from First Federal Savings Bank
Wayne Hoyle, CEO

Mr. Wayne, Hoyle, CEO of First Federal Savings Bank addressed the Mayor and City Council requesting their consideration in regards to a written agreement granting naming rights for 10 years for the new park located between Sycamore and Pine Street at the old depot. As stated in a letter distributed to Council at the meeting, First Federal is celebrating its 75th anniversary and would like to honor the accomplishments of the employees past and present by providing financial support for the park. The bank is proposing a $50,000 dollar donation this year and $5,000 for the following 5 years for a total of $75,000.00.

Being no questions regarding the request, Mayor Gilleland and the Council members thanked Mr. Hoyle for the proposal and agreed to table their decision to the next month’s meeting. Councilman Eaddy commented his desire to move quickly on this issue.

RESOLUTION
(R-06-15)

Consideration of Series Resolution reflecting the actual terms of the bond refinancing – total savings over a seven year period- $811,013

City Manager Jeff Emory and Finance Director Steve Zickefoose spoke to this item informing Council of the excellent interest rate of 1.65% and other detail of the bond refinancing, disclosing the immediate savings being slightly above $135,000.00. . Mr. Zickefoose started by explaining this as the last step to complete the refinancing process. He clarified this as a savings not revenue as well as the $811,013 savings being over a six year period.

Councilman Eaddy made the motion unanimously approved to approve the Series Resolution.

APPOINTMENTS
APPT-03-15

Consideration of applicants for appointments to the Lincolnton Recreation Commission & Lincolnton Planning Board

Mayor John Gilleland called separate motions from Councilman for appointments to fill two vacancies on the Lincolnton Recreation Commission and a total of two vacancies on the Lincolnton Planning Board, one ETJ and one inside the city limits.

Councilman Eaddy made the motion unanimously approved to appoint John Cloninger III to the Recreation Commission

Councilman Cloninger made the motion unanimously approved to appoint Eric Radebaugh to the Recreation Commission

Councilman Rhyne made the motion unanimously approved to appoint Eugene Poinsette to the Planning Board.

There being no application for the ETJ vacancy, Mayor Gilleland directed this vacancy to be re-advertised.

CONTRACTS
C-03-15

Consideration of 2015 Alive After Five Series contract which includes approval of map and the beer sales

Ms. Brooke Sherrill, Chair of the DDA came before to Mayor and Council to request permission to again host the Alive After Five summer series in downtown Lincolnton with the sale and consumption of alcohol. Ms. Sherrill requested event be held in both the 100 & 200 block of East Main Street beginning at 6:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m.

Being no question for Ms. Sherrill, Cloninger made the motion unanimously approved to approve the 2015 Alive After Five summer series.

As noted at the beginning of the meeting, this item was amended to include additional discussion.

Continuing to the second part of her request, Ms. Sherrill asked for permission to change the layout of the Hog Happenin event and to eliminate the beer garden opening up the entire event to alcohol consumption. This new layout will move the stage from West Main Street to South Aspen Street. Councilman Rhyne questioned opening up the consumption of alcohol to the entire event being safer than having a designated beer garden area. Ms. Sherrill reported the proposed changes are a direct result of recommendations received from the public safety committee. Several member of that committee were present and explained their stance on the changes and why they felt they were needed. Police Chief Rodney Jordan , in response to questions from Councilman Rhyne, admitted his concern with these changes and the ability to police the entire area in regards to alcohol consumption, however stated he has confidence in his staff and their judgment regarding how to best handle this event. In light of the Chiefs concerns, Mayor Gilleland recommended treating the request as two separate issues. Much discussion was generated between Council and staff regarding officer's needed to work the event, who is liable in the case of an accident/incident. Councilman Eaddy clarified there is no request for additional beer outlets and concurred with the opinion of the safety committee. He did however request the stage not be set up in a way that will allow event goers to use the steps as seating during concert. Councilman Cloninger expressed his agreement with Councilman Eaddy in seeing an open event. More discussion was generated regarding the move of the stage and expansion of the beer garden with Ms. Sherrill reporting that both of these changes were recommended by the safety committee. Public Works and Utilities Director Steve Peeler did inform Council that with the moving of the stage, the 100 block of South Aspen Street will be blocked off around mid-night Thursday night and reopened around mid-night Saturday night. Councilman Eaddy suggested directional signs be posted to aid in directing traffic, downtown business shoppers and/or event goers. Again, Councilman Rhyne, as well as Mayor Gilleland voiced their concerns with these changes. Fire Chief Heavner and Captain Brian Green briefly explained what generated their proposal and why. Being no more discussion, Mayor Gilleland called for the vote. Councilman Rhyne requested a report be provided to Council at June 25th Council meeting reporting any differences these changes made and any incidences that occurred.

Councilman Cloninger made a motion unanimously approved to approve the relocation of the stage and to expand the consumption of alcohol throughout the entire event.

Before moving on, Ms. Sherrill was acknowledged and congratulated for her work on the Reinhart Building and being named Main Street Champion at the North Carolina Main Street Conference in Morganton.

CONTRACTS
C-04-15

Carolina Thread Trail Grant Agreement - $42,000 matching funds

Planning Director Laura Elam gave a brief history of this item stating grant funds will be used for a sidewalk project elimination the gap at the intersection of East Main Street and Highway 321. With Councils permission, Mrs. Elam continued, application was made and the City was successfully in receiving the grant. If Council chooses to enter into this agreement, grant funds will cover a portion of the funding necessary for the sidewalk project.

Councilman Eaddy made a motion unanimously approved to approve request to enter into the agreement.

CONTRACTS
C-05-15

Contract between the City and Centralina Council of Governments for assistance with developing a strategic plan for Lincolnton

City Manager Jeff Emory spoke to this item explaining contract is for work done on the strategic plan which has been going on for several months. Mr. Emory stated this contract, which is a total of $9,500.00, will complete the process and recommends adopting. After a short discussion, Mayor Gilleland called for the vote.

Councilman Rhyne made a motion unanimously approved to approve the contract between the City and Centralina Council of Governments for the $9,500.00.

CONTRACTS
C-06-15

Consideration of contract between the City and Pierce Group Benefits for FSA for employees and other voluntary benefits

Human Resources Director Tayna Osborne presented a proposed contract from Pierce Group Benefits that would allow the City to offer Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA's) and additional employee paid voluntary benefits. Mrs. Osborne stressed these benefits are voluntary and would be offered at no cost to the City. These are benefits that most entities, she explained, already offer to their employees but due to software issues, the City was unable to implement. Examples of savings where provided for Councils review. Mrs. Osborne informed that since some of the benefits are pre-tax, the City can also realize a savings.

Councilman Eaddy made a motion unanimously approved to approve the request to enter into the agreement for Flexible Spending Accounts and other voluntary benefits.

OTHER BUSINESS

Officially Set the Filing Fees for the 2015 Municipal Election – Update from Board of Elections on Cost of the Municipal Election

Mr. Bradley Putnam, Director of the Board of Elections appeared before Council and gave an update. Mr. Putnam reported that the estimated cost for the general election to be approximately $18,892.00. He explained the increase being due to early voting being offered at the Senior Center verses the Citizen Center. Because of this change, staff at the Citizen Center location can no longer be provide this service. Mr. Putnam confirmed that there will be additional expenses if a primary is necessary.

As additional information, Mr. Putnam reported that on March 31st House Bill 402 was introduced which directs the Elections Committee of the General Assembly to look into switching all municipalities to even number years. This would eliminate all election cost for municipalities and is an option for the City. Some discussion was generated on the issue with Mr. Putnam clarifying several questions from Mayor and Council.

Councilman Cloninger made the motion unanimously approved to have no change in filing fees for the 2015 Municipal Election. $48.00 for Mayor & $36.00 for Council member.

Update on City Website

Mayor Gilleland recognized Ms. Abby Cole to speak to this item. Before beginning, City Manager Jeff Emory commended Abby on all of the time and hard work she and other have put into this project. Upon taking the podium Ms. Cole, Events and Marketing Coordinator for the City of Lincolnton thanked Council approving the funds for this new website which was a needed change.

Ms. Cole briefly explained the reason behind the decision to make changes to the City's website as it does not currently reflect a true picture of the City. Steps were taken to form a committee of employees who then made the decision to contract with CivicPlus, a company that specializes in municipal web design for this project. In light of the goals that were identified by the committee, the City entered into an agreement with CivicPlus and work on the website began.

Ms. Cole explained that because the City currently contacts IT services, one person from each department has been designated to create, edit and or publish content to that departments pages. She then presented a snap shot of the website along with instructions on how navigate the pages of the website explaining and listing many of the new features that will now be available to the public.

Mayor and City Council expressed their appreciation to Abby and all those involved in the process. City Manager Jeff Emory thanked Council for approving the funds necessary to get this done.

Mayor Gilleland called for a seven (7) minute recess.

Mayor Gilleland resumed the meeting calling it back to order continuing with Item #16 , recognizing Mr. Robert Tomlinson.

Request to discuss concerns about current City Lobbyist, registration, safeguards to prevent opportunities of conflict of interest and policies and procedures to guarantee equal treatment to all citizens completing agenda request forms

Mr. Tomlinson began by thanking Mrs. Flowers for getting him requested information then proceeded by reciting Webster's definition of a Lobbyist and for conflict of interest. Mr. Tomlinson expressed his concerns in light of some of the recent issued in Charlotte and the recent articles regarding lobbyist in the Charlotte Observer. He stated he was encouraged by one of the two local newspapers to come before Council. Mr. Tomlinson gave reasons lobbyist registration would be ideal. It would provide more insight on who is meeting with whom, what changes or services the lobbyist are seeking and require a lobbyist to list with whom they speak and the outcome. Mr. Tomlinson continue stating that DDA, based on the previous cited definition, fits into the category of a lobbyist as they request tax payer money from time to time for different events.

Mr. Tomlinson questioned why lobbyist are not required to register in Lincolnton as they are in Washington. He stated that the establishment of a lobbyist registration would be a win-win for everyone requiring any and all questionable request or gifts to be listed. He felt it would also prevent elected officials from making appointments to boards based on their contributions or political persuasion.

In conclusion, Mr. Tomlinson stated that if the City established some type of lobbyist registration and disclosure forms, current lobby meetings would have to be reporting.

Determine Date for a Budget Work Session: Tuesday, April 21st or Thursday, April 23rd at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall

Mayor John Gilleland presented two possible dates for a budget work session. Due to the lack of information that will be available on the two proposed dates in April, Councilman Rhyne suggested scheduling the work session on May 7th at 5:00 p.m. before the May City Council meeting. Meeting will be held at 5:00 p.m with a meal being provided.

Monthly Financial Report/Overtime Report

City Manager Jeff Emory gave his monthly financial report giving an update on status of several funds. Mr. Emory did report receiving a positive sales tax report for January which is a direct result of the local economy. He also referenced the possible sales tax revision being a good thing for Lincolnton and Lincoln County.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Robert Tomlinson addressed Council and suggested sending out invitation to the citizens who live in the areas and that will be directly affected by proposed events. Another suggestion was to insert a mini agenda into each utility bill to remind citizens of Council Meetings.

NEWS MEDIA:

No questions from the new media

ADJOURNMENT:

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

DONNA C. FLOWERS, CMC
CITY CLERK

JOHN O. GILLELAND, Jr.
MAYOR