

MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
August 16, 2021

The August 16, 2021 Regular meeting of the City Council was held at the City of Dillon Wellness Center, 1647 Commerce Drive, Dillon, SC. Notices of this regular meeting of City Council was provided to the media and individuals requesting a copy of the agenda informing them of the date, location, and time of the meeting.

Councilmembers in attendance:

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Phil Wallace
Councilmember Timothy Cousar
Councilmember James David

Councilmember Douglas Jackson
Councilmember James Washington

- I. **Call to Order** - Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Wallace called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Benny Genwright gave the invocation.
- II. **Approval of Agenda**
Councilmember Cousar made a motion to approve the agenda with an addition of Resolution #16-21 designating an authorized representative and contact person for purposes of the American Relief Act of 2021. Councilmember Jackson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- III. **Approve minutes of the July 12, 2021 Regular Council Meeting**
A motion was made by Councilmember Washington and seconded by Councilmember Washington to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.
- IV. **Mayor Pro Tem's Report**
Dr. Wallace began his report speaking on the corner of Jefferson and 24th Avenue. He said someone has brought to his attention that trash was all down the street. If people are doing yard work, they are responsible for hauling off their own trash. He said if we know who is doing this, we can clean it and send them a bill. Next, Dr. Wallace talked about the First Friday Event being a nice event. He said this is the first event that he has attended and it was so good. He also said the atmosphere was good. He complimented the Dillon Community Alliance on a great job and he said he appreciates their efforts. Lastly, Dr. Wallace wanted to give an update on COVID-19. He said we are not in a good place. He said if you look at the statistics, Dillon hasn't done a very good job getting people vaccinated and we are kind of a hot spot for the Delta Variant. Dr. Wallace said he was asked to show science that the vaccine works. He said he pulled up on the internet where the curve plummeted but the Delta Variant is easier to spread and if you have been vaccinated and you get it you will probably experience symptoms of a cold or sore throat. Dr. Wallace finished his report by saying if we are going to stop the spread, everyone needs to get vaccinated.

City Manager's Report

Glen began his report talking about an email that he received from the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) to do a Resolution designating someone to be a contact person for the

American Rescue act. He went on to say hopefully our first half will come to us in September. Glen went on to say on this resolution he will be the person to sign all documents. Glen runs the city and council directs him in his functions so it's appropriate for Glen and Janet to administer this says Dr. Wallace. Glen said initially the funds were to be spent by December 2024 but that has been extended to December 2026. Glen said he has spoken to the auditor to see if we have had any lost revenue. In the American Rescue Plan there should be a 4.1% increase during that time period and if we haven't had that income then it would be revenue loss. Lastly, Glen said he has good news. The City ISO rating that we received about 2 months ago is a 3. This is how your insurance determines what your rate is and the lower the number the better the coverage. Chief Bailey said they did a study for the city of Dillon and we went from a 4 to a 3 which should save money on your home owners insurance. Tina has a letter so if anyone needs it, they can get a copy of that letter for your insurance provider. The city limits of Dillon ISO rating was a 6 in 2005, but is now a 3.

Finance Report

Finance Director, Janet Bethea gave copies of the Financial Report to the Mayor Pro Tem, City Council, and the City Manager.

Todd Davis – Downtown Revitalization

Todd Davis began his report by saying he is hearing good things on the golf course and hospitality. He said he is speaking on behalf of the Dillon Community Alliance (DCA). The last few months he has been to 4 or 5 cities and towns. He has been to Marion, Lake City, Hartsville and those downtowns are light years ahead of us. He went on to say he walks to the Post Office and counted the buildings from his office to the Post Office and he has counted 34 buildings and 19 of the buildings are empty. He went on to say that means 56% of our buildings on Main Street are empty. This council is always trying to make the city of Dillon a better place to live. You spend a lot of time on the festivals you have the tools to make Main Street better. He said he is guilty of not pushing Main Street more. Mr. Davis said he sits at home and wonder what can we do to make things better. I came to you guys with ideas. Remember there was a vacant building beside the theatre and we were able to put together Lockemy Court. We also did the South Plaza where the concerts are held. Remember the barbecue cook off we did the upfit grants and façade grants. He went on to say he and Glen went to Florence to copycat what they were doing. We did Holiday Goodness, we did a park at the wellness center, and we took down some buildings which is really a failure to demolish buildings. I am asking you to make a consideration or commitment. DCA is equip to do just about anything that you want to do downtown. All of them have a desire to make Main Street better. We can use hospitality funds and I am asking for a small commitment to Main Street. We have the American rescue money that can be used to make downtown better. He said he doesn't know if you are still in the hunt for a downtown coordinator but he doesn't think we need one right now because there is nothing downtown. We have to start doing something with these deadbeat property owners on Main Street. It's time to take Main Street back. The buildings are empty and falling apart. They represent the biggest threat in our community. Mr. Davis went on to say when he goes into a town, he always wants to see the Main Street. He said he has a general manager coming in tomorrow to look at buildings that we have and I hope he doesn't count the empty buildings on Main Street. We are used to looking at these buildings but

strangers coming into town are not. Main Street is our community identity. He said he has examples of what other towns are doing. You have to make these building owners responsible for their buildings. These buildings are bringing the value of Main Street down. I think all of the goodwill with these property owners have been exhausted. I'm asking to make another commitment on these grants. It was a learning curve for us. Lake City has Darla Moore who has pumped millions into that town we can't do it. Marion is just like us we have better opportunities and their Main Street is nice. You can go eat at 2 or 3 restaurants or go to a coffee house. We need that here. He said he is asking you to find a way if you can give some grants and I think I can match what you give to them. Mr. Davis said he thinks you should give DCA a year or two to do something with Main Street.

Dr Wallace said we approved \$60,000 for a downtown coordinator grants writer position. He said we have gotten burned with the grants. If we look at those buildings \$30,000 goes a long way. I think it's a great idea to enforce this a make it expensive to be vacant. We can use the fine money and put in an account to use as upfit money. Todd Davis responded you can give \$50,000 and let DCA make the decision on who gets the money. DCA can handle the applications and leg work and they can also not give a dime until your project is complete. I hope you will consider it. Mr. Davis ended his report saying he is tired of going to Florence to eat. People want to be able to leave their house and eat within 5 minutes. The graduating classes now have to go out of town to do their celebratory things.

Lawrence Flynn – Pope and Flynn Group

Lawrence Flynn, a bonding attorney, gave information on the SRF Loan procedures for the Hillside Pump Station.

V. Citizen's Report

None

VI. Old Business

None

VII. New Business

Ordinance #21-11 Annex 1600 Block of Commerce Drive MPN# 049-00-00-063 – 1st Reading

Councilmember Cousar made a motion to annex the property into the City limits. Councilmember Jackson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance #21-12 Annex Trinity Behavioral Care 1719 Commerce Drive MPN# 049-00-00-174 - 1st Reading Councilmember Cousar made a motion to annex the property into the City limits. Councilmember Washington seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance #21-13 SRF Loan – 1st Reading After some discussion, Councilmember Cousar made a motion agreeing to the terms of the SRF Loan. Councilmember Jackson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Resolution #16-21 Designating an authorized representative and contact person for purposes of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Councilmember David made a motion to accept Glen Wagner and Janet Bethea as authorized representatives. Councilmember Cousar seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Councilmember's Reports

Councilmember David began his report saying that Todd Davis ideas for Downtown are excellent ideas. He said we need to make a determination on the buildings downtown that need to be removed or renovated. He said he didn't think we should do any Upfit Grants but giving money on the backend is a good idea. Councilmember David said we have to be proactive with downtown. He went on to say we were proud of downtown at one point. He also said that he thinks Council should get with DCA to discuss downtown. Lastly, he asked if we have a stormwater schedule where each opening is reviewed? Burt Rogers responded no and he does much of that himself. Councilmember David asked if he could get a schedule for that.

Councilmember Washington asked if we can clean the Rownds and Son area or will he, do it? Glen responded we will or he will but we will have to hire someone.

IX. Executive Session

Councilmember Washington made a motion to go into Executive Session. Councilman Jackson seconded and the motion passed 5-0. After discussion Councilman Jackson made a motion to go back into open session. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Adjourn

With no further business to discuss, Councilmember Cousar made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Jackson seconded and the motion passed 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

Approved: _____

Dr. Phil Wallace, Mayor Pro-Tem

Attest: _____

Tina Scott, Council Clerk

Date Approved: _____

Aug September 13, 2021