

**CHAPIN TOWN COUNCIL
PLANNING SESSION FOR 2017 WORK PLAN
MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, August 23, 2016
4:00 P.M.**

**Town Council Chambers
157 NW Columbia Ave, Chapin**

Members Present: Mayor Skip Wilson, Mayor Pro Tempore Mike Clonts, Member Robbie Frick, Member Kay Hollis, and Member Gregg White.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Communications Director Karen Owens, Finance Director Laura Culler, Utilities Director Andy Metts, Sanitary Engineer Dan Lambert, Zoning Administrator Chris Clauson, Police Chief Seth Zeigler, and Town Clerk Julie Hammond.

Guests: JJ Casey, John Thomason, Lil Mood, Al Koon, George Duke, Nancy Williamson, Bill Rawlings, Kevin Strickland, and Jennifer Oetgen.

A planning session meeting of the Chapin Town Council was held at Chapin Town Hall on August 23, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.

Call to Order: Mayor Wilson called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm, and determined there was a quorum. Mayor Wilson acknowledged that the appropriate notifications, in compliance with the SC Freedom of Information Act, had been met.

Presentation on Community Survey Results: Director Owens presented the 2016 Community Survey "Exhibit A" results. There was a total of 595 responses with 19% of responders living in Chapin and 76% of responders living outside of Chapin. Items surveyed included: overall perception, safety, parks and recreation, maintenance, code enforcement, transportation, and capital improvement priorities. The top six capital improvement priorities were as follows: streets and sidewalks; water and sewer upgrades; beautification; parks, playgrounds, bike paths, and open space; police; and historic and cultural amenities to include the theater.

Member White was disappointed in the number of actual Chapin residents who participated in the survey and indicated that planning and growth would be key. Member Hollis thought it was all interesting information. Member Frick pointed out the need for more sidewalks. Mayor Pro Tempore Clonts agreed with Member White.

Mayor Wilson appreciated everyone's input. He indicated that the Town had been working on clean-up by removing two dilapidated buildings and should consider establishing a Public Works Department to help with maintenance. The Mayor stated that the Town was making a big effort but had a long way to go. He indicated that 35-50% of residents were satisfied but from a grading standpoint that is not passing. Looking at positive results, residents felt safe and the Town's police force was doing a great job. He indicated that the next survey results would be more favorable in light of the planned improvements.

Chapin Historical Society: JJ Casey and John Thomason were introduced. Mr. Thomason explained the Chapin Historical Society (CHS) had been formed in February 2015. Their accomplishments thus far included a walk-through of downtown Chapin with representatives from South Carolina Archives and History Center (SCAHC) resulting in an eligible National Register Historical District being identified; the beginnings of a local Historical Preservation Ordinance; and approval as a Non-Profit 501c 3 Corporation.

The CHS would like Council approved funding of \$20,000 for their next steps which include: A Historic Research Study (\$10,000), undertaken by an approved professional consultant, utilizing a 50-50 State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) grant request; and the Historical Harvest & Historical DVD Media Piece (\$10,000) undertaken through a local professional filmmaker, with a 50-50 South Carolina Humanities Council grant request. Further information is included in “Exhibit B.”

Member White wondered if there would be any restrictions on property if they moved forward with the National Register Historical District; there was not. The Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore Clonts thanked them for their presentation.

Citizens Advisory Update: Lil Mood had been deferred and Al Koon gave the update for the Citizens Advisory Committee. The Advisory’s first meeting was on October 29, 2015 and meet regularly on a quarterly basis. Mr. Koon acknowledged the sidewalk from the Methodist Church to the Firebridge Neighborhood Project. He indicated that the S-48 Project was getting a lot of attention. He reported a student conducted a survey along S-48 (Columbia Ave) up to the interstate which revealed good information for locating crosswalks.

Mr. Koon indicated that the beautification of the Town should reflect attributes of the citizens. A community park would provide other amenities that Crooked Creek Park does not have. He mentioned the need for a permanent home for the Chapin Community Theatre and mentioned the idea of adopting an SCE&G boat landing. He said the committee supported the Labor Day Festival, Arbor Day, and Christmas decorations and welcomed any input from the Council.

Chapin Arbor Day Update: Lil Mood reported the Chapin Arbor Day Committee just began the process of its formation as a 501c 3 Corporation. The committee had the following items on its agenda: protecting trees by reviewing the Town Ordinance (implement and enforce) and from pruning for utilities; planting by developing a tree plan including trees for beautification that are native to the area, care, and watering.

The Arbor Day Celebration would be the 1st Friday in December (December 2, 2016). It would include planting the last four Sequoias followed by a luncheon. Mayor Wilson thanked Ms. Mood for the update.

Planning Commission Update: George Duke reported that the Planning Commission had spent the last eight to ten months working on the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that growth in Chapin and the surrounding area was the biggest issue facing the Town at this time. Chairman Duke indicated that a viable way to control population is through water and sewer. By working with Lexington County the Town could ensure the use of a sewer system and not septic tanks. Additionally, the Town as the utility provider has a responsibility to provide a sanitary sewer system to new residents and businesses.

Chapin Business Alliance: Nancy Williamson indicated that the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) counseled over 6,000 clients each year in South Carolina. The SBDC offers free, confidential

consulting on financing, marketing, employee management, importing and exporting, technology, market expansion, bookkeeping, manufacturing, and government procurement. She specializes in web design and social media and is also an Official City Partner for Google and Trusted Verifier. The Newberry Area SBDC served 217 clients, started 11 new businesses, generated \$411,000 in capital formation, and created/retained 34 jobs in 2015. They also provide local area workshops which can be found in “Exhibit C.” Mayor Wilson thanked Ms. Williamson for her presentation.

Chapin Emergency Operations Center: Bill Rawlings represented the Chapin Emergency Operations Center (EOC). He addressed two subjects: relocation of the Emergency Response Center to the Town Hall and creation of a Chapin Emergency Advisory Radio Station. There would be an installation fee of \$1,000 to relocate the antenna to Town Hall which he suggested be done prior to the upcoming fall hurricane season. An Advisory Radio Station was estimated to cost between \$9,000 and \$12,000. Further information can be found in “Exhibit D.”

Mayor Wilson suggested a detailed list of services that are conducive to the EOC. Mr. Rawlings asked Council where they stood on this and if he was heading in the right direction. Member White indicated it would need to be researched prior to allocation of funds. Member Hollis agreed and stated that Council could not make a decision at this time.

The Mayor stated that the EOC was for emergencies but could be used for other things that could be tied into Channel 2. Mr. Rawlings indicated it could provide drinking water or sewer advisories. Mayor Pro Tempore Clonts thought the radio station would be a great resource.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion: Council deferred Staff Recommendations to allow the Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion presentation “Exhibit E” by Kevin Strickland and Jennifer Oetgen of Hussey Gay Bell to occur.

Mr. Strickland explained the need for the wastewater treatment plant upgrade. They evaluated different alternatives which included: no action (which would result in developments using septic tanks or private utilities); modification of the existing lagoon treatment facility (which was not as economical or efficient as other alternatives); and new wastewater treatment plant alternatives (which included conventional activated sludge, orbital (carrousel) activated sludge, and sequencing batch reactor).

Ms. Oetgen explained the new wastewater treatment plant alternatives and indicated that the orbital plant was the preferred alternative because of the lowest capital cost and had the lowest operation and maintenance costs. She indicated at the current interest rate a financed project of \$12,000,000 would increase a customer’s bill by \$4 to \$6 a month.

Mayor Wilson opened discussion and stated that this was information only and a public meeting would be held in September. Director Metts stated that if anyone had any questions or would like a tour to let him know.

Staff Recommendations

Communications/Technology Upgrades: Director Owens reported she was waiting for vendor estimates on streaming the Council meetings live.

Economic Development Strategic Plan Grant: She asked the Council to pursue a Hometown Development Grant from the South Carolina Municipal Association to contract for professional services to develop an Economic Development Plan to further define a strategic plan for the community, further information can be found in “Exhibit F.” Director Owens recommended pursuing a grant of \$25,000 but budget matching funds of \$15,000 in case the Town were to receive less than what was requested and still be able to proceed with the RFP process.

Grant Writer: Director Owens suggested budgeting funds for a part-time grant writer. She indicated this had budgeted but not hired because of other priorities.

Sidewalks, Bike Paths, and Park: Administrator Clauson presented a map depicting the sidewalk network in town; highlighting those which are planned, existing, and proposed “Exhibit G.” He indicated the need to connect the gaps in the sidewalk network and pursue bike paths based on the community survey. The Town was actively planning the park at Town Hall with Morgan Grimball of Grimball-Cotterill and suggested a good place for other parks would be in new developments.

Police Upgrades: Chief Ziegler reported that manpower was an issue in the Police Department and to maintain officers 24 hours a day would require an addition of one officer. He also recommended the purchase of another vehicle because there is no spare at this time.

Public Works: Director Metts requested the need for a Public Works Employee to help maintain streets and sidewalks (not adequately cared for by Lexington County and South Carolina Department of Transportation), seasonal grass cutting, and other maintenance work. He would acquire and review cost estimates for starting a Public Works Department compared to contracting the work out. He indicated the information would be ready within three weeks.

Mayor Wilson thanked everyone and indicated that everything would be considered and prioritized.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

COUNCIL APPROVED: _____

J. Robert “Skip” Wilson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Julie Hammond, Town Clerk