



CITY OF COLUMBIA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2008
9:00 A.M.
EAU CLAIRE PRINT BUILDING
3901 ENSOR AVENUE

The Columbia City Council conducted a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, August 20, 2008 at the Eau Claire Print Building, 3901 Ensor Avenue, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Robert D. Coble called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m. The following members of Council were present: The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine, The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, The Honorable Kirkman Finlay III and The Honorable Belinda F. Gergel. The Honorable E.W. Cromartie, II joined the meeting at 9:20 a.m. Also present were Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Salley, City Clerk.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Minutes of May 12, 2008

Upon motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of May 12, 2008 as presented.

PRESENTATIONS

- 1a. ****Introduction of the August 2008 Employee of the Month (Mr. John Lanzone, Jr., Lead Software Trainer for Finance / Information Technology Department) – Mr. Vincent Simonowicz, Director of Information Technology**

Mr. Vincent Simonowicz, Director of Information Technology introduced Mr. John Lanzone, Jr., Lead Software Trainer as the August 2008 Employee of the Month. He described Mr. Lanzone as an extraordinary individual that has been employed with the City of Columbia for over five (5) years. He deals with payroll, human resources, accounting and software issues. Mr. Lanzone contributes all of his body and soul to the City of Columbia and goes the extra mile every time.

Ms. Missy Caughman, Interim Finance Director said that Mr. Lazone's enthusiasm and energy is the same as it was five (5) years ago. She added that all of his co-workers are supportive of this nomination.

Mayor Coble presented Mr. Lazone with a plaque and Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager presented Mr. Lanzone with tokens of appreciation for being selected as the August 2008 Employee of the Month.

2. Columbia Firefighter Appreciation Month Proclamation – The Honorable Robert D. Coble

Mayor Coble invited all firefighters that were in attendance to come forward. He said that Firefighter Appreciation Month and a thank you is a hollow gesture in comparison to what the Firefighters give. He noted that the Muscular Dystrophy Association is the sponsor of Firefighter Appreciation Month. The members of Council declared August 2008 as Firefighter Appreciation Month in the City of Columbia for all Firefighters in recognition of their daily service to communities and to the Columbia Firefighters for their 2008 "Fill the Boot" campaign.

Councilor Devine added that the Columbia Firefighters were gracious enough to feed all of the volunteers at the North Columbia clean up event; they even played with the kids.

- **Mr. Cromartie joined the meeting at 9:20 a.m.**
- 3. Presentation of the Charles R. Drew Wellness Center Design Award – Ms. Heather Mitchell, President of the Boudreaux Group

Ms. Heather Mitchell, President of the Boudreaux Group presented two (2) framed awards to the City of Columbia from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) South Carolina Chapter and the Brick Southeast Association for the design of the Charles R. Drew Wellness Center. She said that the Boudreaux Group was honored to help bring the vision of the city and the neighborhood to a reality.

Councilor Cromartie thanked the Parks and Recreation Department and the group that started this process. He said that it all started with the need to replace the roof of the old Drew Park Building.

- 4. July 2008 Monthly Business Spotlight Program Honoree (Cox and Dinkins, Inc.) – Mr. Angelo McBride, Senior Business Executive / Office of Business Opportunities

Mr. Angelo McBride, Senior Business Executive / Office of Business Opportunities introduced Cox and Dinkins, Inc. as the July 2008 Monthly Business Spotlight Honoree. He said that Cox and Dinkins, Inc. is a survey company that began in 1963 with two (2) employees and now employs fifty-five (55) individuals. They sponsor and support local music and visual art programs; public and private school programs; successfully promoted environmental legislation in the state legislature; and staff members hold appointed and elected positions on local and national boards and commissions.

Mayor Coble presented Mr. Ted Chalgren of Cox and Dinkins, Inc. with a proclamation for being selected as the July 2008 Business Spotlight Honoree.

Mr. Ted Chalgren, Cox and Dinkins, Inc. said that they have enjoyed every bit of their 45 years of service here in the City of Columbia. He said that they are proud to be a diverse firm operating out of a LEED certified building.

Mr. Angelo McBride, Senior Business Executive / Office of Business Opportunities presented Mr. Chalgren with a Certificate to the Fast Trac Business Program.

- 5. Recognition of Green Business Members – Ms. Melissa Gentry, P.E., Director of Public Works

Ms. Melissa Gentry, P.E., Director of Public Works introduced the following companies as Green Business Member Inductees. The next “Green is Good for Business” conference is scheduled for October 7, 2008.

Callison, Tighe & Robinson	Gamecock Alumni Broadcasters, Ltd.
Central Carolina Realtor Association	Garvin Design Group
City of Columbia – Parks & Recreation Department	Mungo Homes
City of Columbia - Purchasing Division	Reliable Services Electrical
Coldwell Banker United – Irmo Office	Resource Associates
Comfort Services of the Midlands	Rosewood Market
Edens & Avant	WACH – TV
Electric Cooperatives of SC	

6. Report on the 30th Annual Jubilee Festival of Heritage – Ms. Robin Waites, Executive Director, Mr. Cal Watson, President and Ms. Gloria James, 1st Vice President of the Historic Columbia Foundation

Mr. Cal Watson, President of the Historic Columbia Foundation invited the members of Council to the 30th Annual Jubilee Festival of Heritage on Saturday, August 23, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. on the grounds of the historic Mann-Simons Cottage and at the neighboring Modjeska Monteith Simkins House. This year the Historic Columbia Foundation will recognize the thirty (30) most significant African Americans in Columbia and Richland County. He reported that the Institute of Museum and Library Services provided a \$107,000 grant to the Historic Columbia Foundation to conduct research and programs related to the six (6) historic neighborhoods in Columbia. They will interview current and previous residents and develop online tours of the Lower Waverly, Cottontown, Heathwood, Hollywood-Rosehill, Arsenal Hill and Old Shandon.

Councilor Gergel said that this organization has worked with limited monies and a compelling vision to make us aware of the things that make the City of Columbia so special.

Mayor Coble said that he will present a proclamation to the Historic Columbia Foundation on Thursday, August 21, 2008 at 7:15 p.m. and asked his peers to join him for the presentation.

Councilor Finlay said that he is looking forward to the new fundraising effort to raise \$250,000 to retire the debt on the Mann-Simons Cottage. This fundraising effort will start with letters to the Allen University alumni and then the business community. He hopes that everybody will be ready for the challenge.

7. Safety and Security Plan for Apartment Complexes - Ms. Elizabeth Whitener, Creative Management Inc.

Ms. Elizabeth Whitener, Creative Management Inc. explained how she has worked diligently and creatively as the owner of Riverside Apartments to provide a safer environment for residents. She said that as an owner and a management agent, she cannot control another person. She noted that in August 2003, Broad River Terrace had rampant crime; it was filthy; it was unsafe; students went through eighteen (18) bus drivers; and residents were scared. They decided to take on an integrated approach and now tenants pick up trash and are working to beautify their neighborhood; we have cleaned up the environment and trying to make it safe and attractive; we help them work on skills; we renamed it Riverside Apartments so people could be proud; management writes grants for summer programs and after school tutoring; we have a computer lab; domestic violence classes; PALS in the park; summer feeding programs; elderly bingo; we have a step team and are trying to get into the Christmas Parade; they are learning to communicate with the police; we screen residents and do criminal checks for visitors staying at least ten (10) days; we check employment every six (6) months; we do quarterly inspections; parking passes and visitors passes cut down on unwanted guests; and we have a year long waiting list. She said that the security measures are a great idea but, she doesn't want to sacrifice existing programs or lose resident relations. She suggested that they work together to find a reasonable program.

Mayor Coble suggested that Ms. Whitener be a candidate for the advisory committee.

Councilor Davis complimented Ms. Whitener for her sweat equity, noting that the difference is that she is an owner and she is local.

Councilor Gergel said that Ms. Whitener is a model of responsible ownership and management. She would like to tour the Riverside Apartments. She asked how large is the complex and what is the crime rate.

Ms. Elizabeth Whitener, Creative Management Inc. said that Riverside Apartments consists of one hundred four (104) units and that the crime rate is not perfect. She holds monthly resident meetings and we are serious about our efforts.

Councilor Devine recalled when the city had to step in to save these apartments. She said that there may be a happy median, but the city can take on a serious stand.

Councilor Cromartie said that he likes the approach of working with management to find a happy median. He has over 400-500 units in his Council District and admits that it is very diverse and challenging. He would like to see the neighborhoods make a recommendation on what should be done adding that owners and managers should be able to do the same.

Ms. Elizabeth Whitener, Creative Management Inc. said that taxes increased this year and it's hard to incorporate that into the budget. She said that they can apply for annual rent increases with the Columbia Housing Authority.

Councilor Finlay said that residents are getting less and their per capita is paying more, because you have made renovations and then taxes have increased and your margin reduces;; and we can't ask the lower income groups to pick up a higher burden. He said that the areas that are suffering should be pulling from the areas that are not suffering. He is pushing for a rebate of the 6% tax as long as owners are willing to invest in their properties.

Mayor Coble explained that the plan would have a triggering point. The city wants apartment owners to do what Ms. Whitener is doing, because city police can't screen tenants and by doing this you prevent the complex from deteriorating. We need to fashion an ordinance that doesn't penalize those that are doing what they are supposed to do.

Councilor Rickenmann said that reality is that we need to focus on legislation on a federal level since most complexes are subsidized. He is not sure that this is the best approach for where we are trying to go.

Councilor Finlay recalled that South Carolina is number two in the nation for violent crime and number four for property crimes; this is a countywide / statewide problem that we must embark on fixing, because it doesn't do any good to fix one area thus causing the problem to move around.

Councilor Devine said there are other things that we need in the city and if you put money into other places then you don't need as much for police services. She noted that the numbers of calls have reduced significantly for Riverside Apartments. We also need to look at ways to partner with managers that want to provide programs for residents and in turn we can reduce the instances wherein the police are needed.

Councilor Davis said that the primary problem is the ownership that doesn't care; that's unresponsive; and that doesn't provide management with the basic resources.

Mayor Coble asked if we should do this voluntarily or is an ordinance required. Whatever it is, how do we get it to the complexes that are a significant source of crimes?

REPORTS AND UPDATES

8. City Manager's Report – Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager - *Please see Item 31a.*
9. Staff Reports - *Please see Item 31a.*
 - Debris Removal Services – Ms. Melissa Gentry, P.E., Public Works Director
 - Holiday Decorations for Main Street and Five Points - Ms. Melissa Gentry, P.E., Public Works Director
 - Park Street Improvements - Ms. Melissa Gentry, P.E., Public Works Director

TRAFFIC ENGINEERING

10. Four-Way Stop Request-Intersection of Duncan Street and Sims Avenue

Upon motion by Dr. Gergel, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to approve the installation of a four-way stop control at the intersection of Duncan Street and Sims Avenue as requested by the Shandon Neighborhood Council.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

11. Council is asked to approve the appointment of Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine as a Council Liaison to EdVenture and the Columbia Museum of Art. - *Approved*

Upon motion by Dr. Gergel, seconded by Mr. Finlay, Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Ms. Tameika Isaac Devine as a Council Liaison to EdVenture and the Columbia Museum of Art.

Upon motion by Mr. Rickenmann, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve **Item 12.** A Request for a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity for Luella M. Bolton doing business as BBB Taxi, located at 132 Martin Carter Road, Hopkins, SC 29061 and **Item 13.** A Request for a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity for Crystal A. Gary doing business as Shuttle Way, located at 7356 Garners Ferry Road, Suite 128, Columbia, SC 29209 on a single motion.

12. Council is asked to approve a Request for a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity for Luella M. Bolton doing business as BBB Taxi, located at 132 Martin Carter Road, Hopkins, SC 29061. - *Approved*
13. Council is asked to approve a Request for a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity for Crystal A. Gary doing business as Shuttle Way, located at 7356 Garners Ferry Road, Suite 128, Columbia, SC 29209. - *Approved*
14. Palmetto Capital City Classic Request for Funding

Councilor Devine explained that Mr. Cromartie, Mr. Davis, Mayor Coble, Mr. Baker and herself met with the representatives from the Palmetto Capital City Classic and discussed the fact that the event is always in September, but their funding is provided at the end of the year. This funding recommendation will get them on a cycle where they are not having difficulty booking components of the event. She suggested that the City Manager schedule a follow up meeting regarding the status of the 501(c) (3) application and other issues.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager agreed to schedule the follow up meeting and noted that Mr. Baker has now resumed an active role as part of the committee process and will be the liaison person for the City of Columbia. He said that this has prompted the need for him to extend invitations to all members of Council to attend such committee meetings going forward so that anyone that wants to attend will have the information.

Councilor Devine further suggested that a letter be sent to representatives of the Palmetto Capital City Classic clarifying that Mr. Allison Baker is the liaison between them and the City of Columbia and that he is responsible for handling all requests for the City Council and that information is to be provided to Mr. Baker for the Council; the whole relationship needs to be clarified in writing; we need to be clear on next year's game; what that game will be; and what the city's involvement will be. We also need to conduct a meeting with representatives of the Classic and Benedict College regarding the city's desires.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager agreed to proceed with making the arrangements to meet with representatives of Benedict College and the Palmetto Capital City Classic as quickly as possible.

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve funding for the Palmetto Capital City Classic in the amount of \$75,000.00 (\$50,000 for 2008 and \$25,000 for 2009) from the Hospitality Tax Surplus Fund.

15. **Ordinance No.: 2008-083 - Amending the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 11, Licenses, Permits and Miscellaneous Business Regulations to add Article X, Security and Safety and the appointment of an Advisory Committee. – The Honorable Mayor Robert D. Coble

Mayor Coble explained that Mr. Ken Gaines, City Attorney drafted an Ordinance that has several significant provisions. One is a triggering event; there would need to be a level of crime that would trigger the need for a safety and security plan. He admitted that 1% would not be the best way of doing this and asked staff to review the practical impact of a 1% crime level and to thoroughly analyze whether that works. He suggested that City Council form a committee of apartment owners and managers and possibly residents. Each Council member can have one or two appointments. They also need the right associations at the table. He suggested that Ms. Elizabeth Whitener would be a great addition to the committee. The Advisory Committee would review the Ordinance and make suggestions on how best we can implement this. It is clear that the results can be measured. He stated that the Security Officers are the least important part of the plan and the most important aspect is the screening of residents. The more you do on the front end with screening then the less you have to do with enforcement on the back end. Do we do a voluntary or a more federally mandated program? It will work and it is a program that the City of Columbia can't do; the property owner has to do it.

Councilor Davis said that the criterion needs to be definitive in terms of why we are requiring the necessary measures on the part of ownership; say that it is the shootings. He is not clear on what the magic number should be to declare a complex a nuisance, but the people living there may think that one shooting is too much. He is tired of people calling him and management is not doing a thing; they know who's not on the lease; they know when people are smoking dope on their grounds; and certain managers aren't doing one thing about it. He believes that screening residents comes into play as well. He added that when you reach out to the owners they ignore you, because they know that there are no teeth to what we have right now.

Councilor Rickenmann recommended a friendly amendment to the formation of the committee. He suggested that the first objective be to work together to come up with a voluntary program for a safety plan and monitoring residents without us having to enact an Ordinance. The second tier is that if they can't come up with a plan within 60-90 days then the city would have to move forward to enact the Ordinance. He hopes that the solution comes from within the group and not the City of Columbia.

Councilor Finlay said that we need to study police effectiveness by looking at statistics; in 2006 South Carolina as a state had 776 violent crimes per 100,000 residents; we had 1,256 violent crimes per 100,000 in the City of Columbia, which is 160% of the state average. We need to look at this in totum. In 2007, we had 1,542 violent crimes in the City of Columbia with a population of approximately 122,000. We must include a police component.

Councilor Devine agreed with Mayor Coble. We need to provide an opportunity to hear suggestions from the owners and management. We need to send a message to the owners that do not care; the ones that don't want to participate. She noted that there are not many, but we have to put something in place for those that are not willing to participate. We need to come up with proactive measures and collaborate and develop resources. She asked that we look at other things that can be done to reduce crime stats. If it seems that owners and management are doing all they can and there are still high crime rates and residents don't feel safe, then we need to come up with something else, because the safety and security plan may not address the issue.

Councilor Cromartie suggested that they include a representative on the committee from the Columbia Housing Authority and Bethel Bishop Apartments, although they are managed by the City of Columbia. He added that there are other large apartment complexes and he needs help identifying them. He said that there is a problem with the way we define an apartment community, because it should not include two (2) units. He said that law enforcement is essential along with everything else.

Councilor Davis said that it takes a long time to track down apartment community owners and absentee landlords. As a friendly gesture, before the committee is put into place, we should extend an invitation to the property owners that we are particularly concerned about. He stated that the crimes aren't always committed by people who live there. Everybody is responsible and single family homes are a concern also. It isn't always about income, it's about impact. He won't continue to allow absentee owners and others traumatize residents.

Mayor Coble outlined the motion to form a Safety and Security Advisory Committee to include two appointments from each Council member of someone who owns or manages a site, representatives from the appropriate apartment associations, the Columbia Housing Authority, the Columbia Council of Neighborhoods, all large apartment complexes, the Directors of all City of Columbia Development Corporations and the Columbia Police Chief.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager recommended that they include the appointment of the Chair of the Code Enforcement Taskforce and certain staff positions from the code enforcement side of the Fire Department and the Director of Planning and Development Services as advisory members.

Mayor Coble said that he would ask his office to call the first meeting and he asked the members of Council to e-mail Ms. Julie Ruff the contact information for their appointees within one week. He asked the City Manager to include the necessary staff positions.

Councilor Cromartie nominated a representative from the Colony Apartments.

Councilor Davis nominated Ms. Mary Myers as the President of the Residents Association for Gable Oaks and Mr. Bill Manley who is putting together a concept of a network of block captains.

Councilor Finlay nominated Mr. Mark Stuckey from InterMark Management.

Councilor Devine nominated Mr. Wayne LeGrant of Omni Property Management Services and the manager of Arrington Place Apartments

Councilor Cromartie suggested that the Columbia Housing Authority representative be an at-large appointee and he will call Mr. Gilbert Walker the Executive Director for a nomination.

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve the following:

- City Council is to form a Safety and Security Advisory Committee composed of apartment owners and managers. Each Councilmember is to appoint two (2) representatives. The Council will finalize all appointments on September 3, 2008.
- Staff is to invite Property Owners where concerns currently exist.
- Staff shall review the practical impact of the 1% trigger mechanism (1% of the total number of major reported crimes) and determine the most appropriate level of major crimes that would trigger the need for a safety and security plan.
- The Committee shall define an Apartment Community.
- The Committee shall study Police effectiveness within Apartment Communities.
- The Committee shall determine if the City should enact an Ordinance or a voluntary plan.
- The Committee shall develop an internal safety plan to include monitoring of tenants and visitors.
- The internal safety plan should be developed within 90-days and a report should be presented to Council on December 3, 2008. On December 3, 2008 the Council will discuss and consider any revisions to the proposed Ordinance, the internal safety plan, the definition of apartment communities and the triggering mechanism. If the Committee doesn't meet this deadline, then the Columbia City Council will move forward to enact the proposed Ordinance.

16. Assembly Street Taskforce – The Honorable Robert D. Coble

Mayor Coble said that part of the referendum that was being considered by Richland County was a portion of funding for the relocation of the railroad on Assembly Street. He suggested that they start a planning process for Assembly Street. Clearly we know that we have to fund North Main and Harden Street before we can fund another project. That is without question. Secondly, we know that doing a lot of streetscape projects at the same time is problematic, but this is such a long-term project that if you don't start now, we will never get there. He said that there is not an existing funding source, but if you look at Assembly Street from Elmwood to Olympia and Rosewood, it affects so much of our community. He noted that everyone gets held up by a train at the southern end of Assembly Street. The fair and football games are attended by people from around the state. He repeated that this is long range planning and it does not change the current priorities. He asked the Council to endorse the establishment of a taskforce.

Councilor Cromartie noted that it costs a tremendous amount of money to relocate railroad tracks.

Councilor Davis doesn't have a problem with this as long as funding is not earmarked until the North Main Street project is completed with total funding dollars in the bank. He asked the Council to consider some of the requests from folks within the Farrow Road corridor as well. The understanding is, for the record, that no money will be set aside for this project until both North Main and Harden Street are complete with money in the bank.

Councilor Cromartie agreed with Mr. Davis and requested the same for Harden Street. He doesn't want the committee members going to Washington, DC lobbying for money for Assembly Street while the city is still lobbying for money for North Main and Harden Streets.

Councilor Finlay suggested that they make a priority list, because Harden Street and North Main Street are not the only projects that were committed to. He noted that when the federal lobbyist was in town, we had five (5) to six (6) items on our list and this was not one of them. He agreed that no money needed to be moved until the two (2) projects are finished. He believes that if the City of Columbia demonstrated that we have a priority list and that we are going to knock things off the list one after the other, then we would end up with a lot less confusion and overlap and a better chance.

Councilor Devine suggested that the taskforce develop a strategy for approaching the railroad companies about stopping on the tracks on Assembly Street, noting that this happens during rush hour traffic.

Councilor Rickenmann fears that any project in the metro area is considered a Columbia project. He doesn't think that we can afford to add another project until we finish Harden Street and North Main.

Mayor Coble explained that the Water Resource Act is a different pot of money. He agrees that the Assembly Street project should not be on the list until the others are funded, but we should begin planning and doing things in the interim. He noted that this is not intended to be a disguise for skipping over other projects.

Councilor Finlay stated that we have a certain amount of political capital and he will put every ounce of his political will into gaining federal funding for North Main first and Harden Street second.

Councilor Gergel said that she would like to see us move forward on a variety of projects. She commended the Mayor for moving in this direction.

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Dr. Gergel, Council voted unanimously to establish an Assembly Street Taskforce to study the Assembly Street Railroad Relocation and Streetscaping. Realizing that North Main Street and Harden Street are current priorities, we will not request or accept any funding for Assembly Street until those two (2) projects are complete. The intent of the Taskforce is to bring the following individuals/groups together for planning purposes only. Mr. John Hardee as Chair; Dr. Pastides as the President of the University of South Carolina, the neighborhoods of Olympia, Main Street, Vista, Cottontown, and Elmwood; the Columbia Development Corporation; Vista Guild; City Center Partnership; Bill Shanahan and our Capital City Stadium; the Fairgrounds; Chamber of Commerce; other governments such as Richland County; the business community; and City Staff.

Councilor Davis further requested that a copy of this motion be shared with the Assembly Street Taskforce members so they are not distracted and do not go out and ask for money.

17. Audit Committee Meetings

Councilor Finlay noted that the Council is scheduled to meet on December 10, 2008, which is an off week. He believes that the Council should meet on December 3 and 17, 2008 instead.

Ms. Erika D. Salley, City Clerk explained that in past years the City Council would attend the National League of Cities (NLC) conference during the first week of December and that's why the Council is scheduled to meet during the second and third weeks instead of the first and third weeks.

Councilor Devine explained that the NLC conference is during November this year.

There was a consensus of Council to amend the Council meeting schedule to meet on

December 3 and 17, 2008 instead of December 10 and 17, 2008.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager explained that there is an opportunity for some training and orientation that needs to take place as it relates to the role of Council as an Audit Committee. He strongly urged the Council to authorize him to move forward with scheduling the training and orientation.

Upon motion by Mr. Finlay, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, the Council voted unanimously to conduct Audit and/or Budget Committee Meetings on the following Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. All meetings are to be confirmed at least seven (7) days in advance.

September 10, 2008 – Audit Committee Training and Orientation
September 24, 2008 – Audit Committee Meeting
October 8, 2008 – Audit Committee Meeting
October 22, 2008 – Audit Committee Meeting
October 29, 2008 – Audit and Budget Committee Meetings

17a. Funding for the Cultural Council of Richland and Lexington Counties – The Honorable Robert D. Coble - *Please see Item 31b.*

Mayor Coble asked that this discussion be deferred until the City Manager gives his report.

17b. Five Points Parking Committee Update – The Honorable Belinda F. Gergel

Councilor Gergel distributed a list of the Five Points Parking Committee Members and the mission statement. The first meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 27, 2008 at 5:15 p.m. at the Capital Senior Center.

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon motion by Mr. Rickenmann, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve the **Consent Agenda Items 18.** through **23.** and **25.** through **28.** on a single motion.

CONSIDERATION OF BIDS, AGREEMENTS and CHANGE ORDERS

18. Council is asked to approve the Purchase of Wildland Protective Clothing, as requested by the Fire Department. Award to Wally's Fire and Safety, the lowest bidder in the amount \$20,672.40. This vendor is located in Mullins, SC. *Funding Source: 2559999-627100 9502000101-627100 (\$6,890.80); 2559999-627100 9502000102-627100 (\$6,890.80); and 2559999-627100 9502000103-627100 (\$6,890.80) - Approved*
19. Council is asked to approve Project #SS7072; Emergency Repair of the 30-inch Sanitary Sewer Force Main at Candi Lane and CSX Railroad. Award to Carolina Tap and Bore, Inc., the lowest bidder in the amount of \$129,800.00. This vendor is located in West Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: Water Improvement Fund / Account #SR7072 - Approved*
20. Council is asked to approve Project #WM3865; Emergency Water Main Relocation at Bridge over Crane Creek on Monticello Road, as requested by Utilities and Engineering. Award to Ideal Construction, the lowest bidder in the amount of \$67,150.04. This vendor is located in White Rock, SC. *Funding Source: Water Improvement Fund / #WM3865-851500 - Approved*

21. Council is asked to approve the Purchase of Octane Fitness Equipment, as requested by the Fire Department. Award to Fitness Resource, the lowest bidder in the total amount of \$88,105.99. This vendor is located in Lexington, SC. *Funding Sources: 1012303-657900 (\$41,409.81); 2082306-657900 (\$12,334.84); 2082317-657900 (\$6,167.42); 2082319-657900 (\$5,286.36); 2082320-657900 (\$5,286.36); 2082322-657900 (\$5,286.36); 2082323-657900 (\$6,167.42); and 2082324-657900 (\$6,167.42) - Approved*
22. Council is asked to approve the Security Contract in Parking Garages, as requested by Parking Services. Award to International Security Management Group (ISMG), the lowest bidder in the amount of \$97,260.12. *Funding Source: 5313101-636600 - Approved*
23. Council is asked to approve CIP Project #SD8059A05; Agreement for Engineering Services to Perform Topographic Survey and Site and Civil Engineering for Improvements to the Delverton Drainage Ditch, as requested by Engineering Operations. Award to Cox and Dinkins, the lowest bidder in the amount of \$128,820.00. This vendor is located in Columbia, SC. *Funding Source: 2008/2009 Stormwater Utility Budget - Approved*
24. Council is asked to approve the Purchase of Vehicles as requested by Various Departments in the total amount of \$546,895.00. - *This item was withdrawn from the agenda. The Director of Fleet Services is asked to review the efficiency of the various hybrid vehicles that are available.*

<u>Department</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Vehicle</u>	<u>Qty.</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Fire Dept. / Shop Maint.	1012305-658500	Chevy Colorado	2	Herndon Chevrolet	\$31,426.00
General Services**	6308972-658500	Ford Crown Victoria	18	Vic Bailey Ford	\$390,420.00
Development Services	1014101-658500	Ford F-250	1	Vic Bailey ford	\$20,530.00
Utilities / Water Dist. & Maint.	5516203-658500	Ford F-350	2	Benson Ford Mercury	\$51,870.00
Utilities / Water Dist. & Maint.	5516203-658500	Ford F-350	2	Vic Bailey Ford	\$31,978.00
Utilities / Water Dist. & Maint.	5516203-658500	Ford F-250	1	Burns Automotive	\$20,671.00

**Denotes replacement vehicles for the Police Department

ORDINANCES – SECOND READING

25. Ordinance No.: 2008-062 – Granting an easement to SCE&G Company for the Installation of Utilities along a portion of City property for the Lincoln Street Parking Garage; Richland County TMS# 09013-13-09 (portion); CF# 250-259 – *First reading approval was given on August 6, 2008. - Approved on second reading.*
26. Ordinance No.: 2008-063 – Annexing 4033 West Beltline Boulevard; Richland County TMS# 11613-01-01; 11613-01-02 and 11613-01-03 – *First reading approval was given on August 6, 2008. - Approved on second reading.*
27. Ordinance No.: 2008-064 – Annexing 211 Redbay Road; Richland County TMS# 28901-03-31 – *First reading approval was given on August 6, 2008. – Approved on second reading.*
28. Ordinance No.: 2008-067 – Authorizing the transfer of an unopened portion of Kensignton Road approximately 0.21 acre (9,003.49 square feet) adjacent to Richland County TMS#09103-02-24 to South Development Corp. – *First reading approval was given on August 6, 2008. – Approved on second reading.*

MAP AMENDMENTS (REZONINGS) – SECOND READING

Mr. Larry Gates, President of the Whaley Street Neighborhood said that they were left out of this process even though they did all that they were supposed to do.

Councilor Cromartie explained that the Map Amendment for Whaley Street was approved on August 6, 2008.

29. Rezone to add –CC overlay district to all parcels to implement Interim Measures for Community Character Protection to the following areas:

- a. **Cottontown** - Generally bounded on the east by Route 277 and Bull Street, on the south by Elmwood Avenue, on the west by N. Main Street, and on the north by the unopened Northeastern Freeway (Route 277). – *First reading approval was given on July 16, 2008. Second reading consideration was deferred on August 6, 2008. – Approved on second reading.*

Mr. Marc Mylott, Director of Planning and Development Services explained that at the last meeting there was a discussion about Cottontown, Shandon and Hollywood/Rosehill and the extent to which commercial properties should be included. The Council has already approved the text for the Interim Measures and staff has removed (for the most part) the commercial properties from the maps and shared those with the respective neighborhoods. They have communications from Shandon and Hollywood/Rosehill that they are okay with the new boundaries. He reported that Cottontown was generally accepting of the new boundaries with the exception of a handful of properties that have concerns about relating to their long-term effort to pursue a historic district and design preservation. As a result they suggested a proposed boundary that is being provided today.

Councilor Devine said that this is not a Public Hearing, but they will allow Ms. Appleby to speak.

Ms. Alice Appleby of 1208 Confederate Avenue said that she purchased the commercial property 16-years ago and that she is much vested in Cottontown. She is concerned, because she is on the boundary of the neighborhood and no one can tell her the value of staying in or being excluded from the district. She urged the Council to be visionaries and to go with the right decision and not the popular decision. She feels that she is being penalized for doing a good job and that the new boundaries are a good compromise. She wants to stay out of the district.

The owners of 2219 Bull Street and 1417 Bull Street thanked the Council for not including them in the boundaries.

Mr. Paul Bouknight, President of the Cottontown Neighborhood Association said that the proposal took out one hundred eight (108) properties and the ones we kept are cross street properties.

Councilor Davis reported that he attended the meeting and talked to most residents that are interested in the outcome of this. The bottom line purpose as you look at commercial versus residential is to prevent encroachment as much as possible. He said that based on the compromise the proposal makes sense as far as the intended outcome. He asked his colleagues to support the compromise.

Councilor Devine understands what Ms. Appleby is saying but the whole point of the Interim Measures and preservation is to protect the character of the neighborhood. This property faces the interior of the neighborhood and it's on the edge, but there has to be a demarcation line somewhere.

Councilor Gergel said that she rode through Cottontown and looked at these properties. She commended the neighborhood association on the time and energy given to the process; because we want to do all we can to preserve the interesting and dynamic features of neighborhoods.

Upon motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Rickenmann, Council voted unanimously to give second reading approval to the Map Amendment / Rezoning to add –CC overlay district to all parcels to implement Interim Measures for Community Character Protection to the following areas of **Cottontown** - Generally bounded on the east by Route 277 and Bull Street, on the south by Elmwood Avenue, on the west by N. Main Street, and on the north by the unopened Northeastern Freeway (Route 277).

- b. Shandon** - Generally bounded on the north by Devine Street, to the east by Kilbourne Road, to the south by Rosewood Drive, and the east by Harden Street. – *First reading approval was given on July 16, 2008. Second reading consideration was deferred on August 6, 2008. – Approved on second reading.*

Councilor Gergel reported that the executive committee of the Shandon Neighborhood Association did meet on Monday night and they endorsed the proposed borders.

Councilor Rickenmann asked Mr. Mylott to clarify why the corner of the backside of Meadow Street was excluded and then included one (1) block up off of Devine Street.

Mr. Marc Mylott, Director of Planning and Development Services said that he doesn't recall why that particular street was excluded and included and then he explained that the philosophy of the blue line is where you have residential structures facing each other.

Upon motion by Dr. Gergel, seconded by Mr. Cromartie, Council voted unanimously to give second reading approval to the Map Amendment / Rezoning to add –CC overlay district to all parcels to implement Interim Measures for Community Character Protection to the following areas of **Shandon** - Generally bounded on the north by Devine Street, to the east by Kilbourne Road, to the south by Rosewood Drive, and the east by Harden Street.

- c. Hollywood/Rose Hill** - Generally bounded on the north by Heyward Street; on the east by S. Harden Street; on the south by Rosewood Drive; and on the west by S. Marion Street. – *First reading approval was given on July 16, 2008. Second reading consideration was deferred on August 6, 2008. – Approved on second reading.*

Councilor Gergel reported that she met with this neighborhood as well and they endorse the borders as recommended by staff; they are ready to move.

Upon motion by Dr. Gergel, seconded by Mr. Cromartie, Council voted unanimously to give second reading approval to the Map Amendment / Rezoning to add –CC overlay district to all parcels to implement Interim Measures for Community Character Protection to the following areas of **Hollywood/Rose Hill** - Generally bounded on the north by Heyward Street; on the east by S. Harden Street; on the south by Rosewood Drive; and on the west by S. Marion Street.

RESOLUTIONS

30. Resolution No.: R-2008-039 – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine at Music of Main - *This item was withdrawn from the agenda due to the event being canceled.*
31. Resolution No.: R-2008-041 – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine and Annual Gay & Lesbian Pride Movement at Finlay Park - *Approved*

Upon motion by Mr. Cromartie, seconded by Ms. Devine, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No.: R-2008-041 – Authorizing consumption of beer and wine and Annual Gay & Lesbian Pride Movement at Finlay Park.

- **Council recessed at 11:46 a.m.**
- **Council reconvened at 12:02 p.m.**

REPORTS AND UPDATES

- 31a. **City Manager's Report – Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager said good morning Mayor and members of Council this is the City Manager's Report for August 20, 2008: I just want to acknowledge some recent personnel actions that have been taken to include the appointment of Chief Carter as the Chief of Police; Vincent Simonowicz as the Director of Information Technology; Tony Lawton as the Director of Community Development; and Melisa Caughman as the Interim Director of Finance. Based on the outcome of the functional audit that was performed for us by the University of South Carolina, we have undergone staff reorganization and we now function under a three (3) bureau concept and I will keep the Police Department and Fire Department as direct reports. This past Monday, we had the opportunity along with the Mayor and Dr. Gergel to meet with the CFO Advisory Committee.

Mayor Coble said that Dr. Gergel happened to be at City Hall getting her stationary and they decided to join the meeting. He believes that it would not be appropriate for members of City Council to join this committee since it involves hiring someone.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager said that when the committee does schedule a meeting it is a public meeting and he will be sure to notify all of the Council members and if someone wants to sit in on a meeting they can certainly do that.

Councilor Finlay said that this is an issue that leads to disharmony on this Council; when issues come before us that have been met on without anybody knowing.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager said that in keeping with the instructions he has given to executive staff, when there are issues involving the whole Council he will take the responsibility for ensuring that all Council members are notified of those meetings and then they can make the determination on whether they want to attend, but nobody will be left out. He said that John Spade will continue to work on the calling tree to make it more functional and to assure that messages are being delivered as we intended. He continued his report as follows: The process for selecting a CFO has to be done and of course our goal is to identify the very best available finance professional, because I consider this to be one of the most significant appointments that I will be involved in as City Manager. I certainly appreciate the composition of a committee, I believe it was needed; we are off to a very good and positive start. There was considerable exchange and we are moving forward to issue the position description today and we will begin sending that to professional journals and publications. The process will be comprehensive and intense. Our ultimate goal is to select a CFO during January 2009. On the issue of policy recommendations, Chief Anderson asked about the possibility of amending the citywide nepotism policy. Many of you might be aware that the fire service and police service

are both generational rites of passage for a family and it's not uncommon to have three (3) generations in one (1) family serving in the fire service or the Police Department. We talked about that and concluded that in order for us to do this we would have to amend the citywide policy, so I am bringing that to you this morning. I do support revising the policy to permit hiring members of the same policy within the same department or division, but the parameters would be that relatives cannot have direct supervisory responsibility over their relatives. The Fire Department has taken an additional step; Chief Anderson has committed that no two (2) relatives will be assigned to the same station, so with your support on that policy we would like to move forward with updating the policy in the Employee Handbook to reflect the new language, which takes effect immediately.

Councilor Finlay said that after 9/11 some families lost three (3) or four (4) members. I am okay with this, because it already exists in the city. You need to make it very clear to public safety that if we end up in a situation where three (3) or four (4) family members are in the same station that is going to cost somebody their job, because wiping out a whole family would be unacceptable.

Councilor Davis asked staff to consider situations wherein multiple stations may respond to the same call.

Upon motion by Mr. Rickenmann, seconded by Mr. Finlay, Council voted unanimously to approve an amendment to the citywide Nepotism Policy to allow the hiring of members of the same family within the same division or department as long as a relative doesn't have direct supervisory responsibility for another relative. As an additional safeguard, relatives will not be assigned to the same Fire Station.

Chief Bradley Anderson, Columbia Fire Department said that he understands that Council doesn't want employees at the same station, but we have multiple stations responding to incidents so it may be difficult to keep relatives from responding at the same incident. He absolutely understands their concerns.

Mr. Charles P. Austin, Sr., City Manager reported that the Municipal Association of South Carolina set up the South Carolina ORBIT trust to comply with the new federal accounting rules. Groups wanted to invest in equities and the South Carolina Supreme Court ruled that the trust is illegal. That doesn't have a negligible impact on us because we are not a member. I just mentioned that because we did have some discussion about us becoming a part of the trust. As follow-up to the discussion at the August 6th Council meeting, I would like to answer the questions raised regarding the physical screenings of police officers. Currently, there are no established physical screenings for police officers. Chief Carter is in support of implementing a process to screen the officers; however a funding source has not yet been identified to accommodate this request. Another question was raised at the August 6th Council meeting that I would like to address. The funding for the CRIMESTOPPERS program was paid out of my contingency account in January 2007. It will be paid from my contingency again this year, and going forward, the Police Department will budget for the program. Please allow me to make one other point of clarification. In the program narrative portion of the JAG FY 2008 Local Solicitation; the Columbia Police Department included language that noted little change in the Department's manpower since 2002. This statement has been taken out of context and used to erroneously assert that only one officer has been hired since 2002. The program narrative went on to also acknowledge that "there was also high turnover during this time period, which left the City's streets replete with new trainees." There have been numerous new hires to the Police Department during this time period; only one officer was hired under a JAG Grant. The yearly totals for the number of sworn police officers from 2002 to 2007 are as follows: 07/01/2002 (345); 07/01/2003 (334); 07/01/2004 (329); 07/01/2005 (331); 07/01/2006 (331); and 07/01/2007 (346). Finally, I am pleased to report that staff has worked with SCE&G on an assessment of the lighting in the downtown business corridor bounded by Taylor, Barnwell, Laurel and Pickens. Within these blocks, the areas that have been most concerning are

Blanding at Barnwell Streets and Blanding at Henderson Streets. The specific locations that have been mentioned are the Columbia Fire Station, Club Level, and the Township Auditorium, but many of the businesses in the area have complained about how dark the area is after normal business hours. SCE&G has assessed the corridor, proposed a site plan with new lights and replacements, reviewed the plan with City staff, and implemented the plan. The project is now complete, and traffic engineering staff reports that the area is well lit. Hopefully, the improved lighting will aid with many of the safety concerns that have been expressed in the area.

31b. Funding for the Cultural Council of Richland and Lexington Counties – The Honorable Robert D. Coble

The members of Council briefly discussed this matter. There was a consensus of Council to continue this discussion on August 21, 2008 and to invite Mr. Andrew Witt, Executive Director and Ms. Joan Brady, Community Development Advisor to meet with City Council on a later date to further discuss the role of the Cultural Council in the City of Columbia.

APPEARANCE OF PUBLIC HAVING BUSINESS WITH CITY COUNCIL

No one appeared at this time.

The Executive Session was deferred until August 21, 2008 at 9:00 a.m.

- **Council adjourned this meeting and recessed at 1:19 p.m. prior to convening the Retreat.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Erika D. Salley
City Clerk