



**REGULAR MEETING OF FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, MAY 10, 2021 – 1:00 P.M.
CITY CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
324 WEST EVANS STREET
FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA
MEETING CONDUCTED THROUGH ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Teresa Myers Ervin, Mayor Pro Tempore George Jebaily, Councilwoman Pat Gibson-Hye Moore, Councilwoman Lethonia Barnes, Councilman Chaquez T. McCall, Councilman Bryan A. Braddock and Councilman C. William Schofield.

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. Randall S. Osterman, City Manager; Mr. James W. Peterson, Jr., City Attorney; Mrs. Casey Moore, Municipal Clerk; Mr. Scotty Davis, Deputy City Manager; Mr. Clint Moore, Assistant City Manager of Development; Mr. Kevin Yokim, Assistant City Manager of Administration/Finance; Chief Allen Heidler, Florence Police Department; Chief Shannon Tanner, Florence Fire Department; Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning; Mr. Michael Hemingway, Director of Utilities; Mrs. Jennifer Krawiec, Director of Human Resources; Mrs. Amanda P. Pope, Director of Marketing/Communications and Municipal Services; and Mr. Chuck Pope, Director of Public Works.

MEDIA PRESENT

Notices of this regular meeting of City Council were provided to the media and individuals requesting a copy of the agenda informing them of the date, location and time of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ervin called the May 10, 2021 regular meeting of Florence City Council to order at 1:03 p.m.

INVOCATION

Mayor Ervin gave the invocation for the meeting. The pledge of allegiance to the American Flag followed the invocation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to adopt the minutes of the April 8, 2021 Swearing In Ceremony and the April 12, 2021 Regular City Council meeting and Pro tem Jebaily seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously adopted.

APPEARANCE BEFORE COUNCIL



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Ms. Andrea Jackson and Ms. Janice Albert, My Brother's Keeper Shelter

Ms. Jackson and Ms. Albert, volunteers, began their presentation by explaining to Council the services provided by My Brother's Keeper Shelter (MBK Shelter):

Hot Meals – Approximately 220 delivered daily to needy adults and children in the city.

Grocery Care Packages – Approximately 90 delivered bi-weekly to seniors and shut-ins.

Weekend Care Packages – 100 delivered to children weekly thanks to Help for Kids organization.

Clean Clothing and Hygiene Products – Provided as requested.

MBK Shelter prepares meals at Trinity Baptist Church in their new commercial kitchen. Food is delivered to satellite locations of Levy Park, Iola Jones Park, Northwest Park, and Timrod Park. They also have a dedicated delivery route to provide food for homes of sick, shut-in and disabled persons. MBK Shelter is the only agency in Florence that serves well-balanced, hot meals seven days per week. In 2020, MBK Shelter served 75,000 meals. From January through April 2021, they have already served 24,518 meals.

MBK Shelter desires to be the premiere feeding organization for the City of Florence, expand their scope to provide the healthiest meals possible, and install a commercial hood and upgrade the kitchen to add generators and solar panels to allow continued operation during power outages. MBK Shelter also desires to secure financial support from the City of Florence and is hereby requesting \$30,000 in funding.

Councilwoman Moore expressed her support for MBK Shelter and thanked them for what they do for the community.

Pro Tem Jebaily asked what interaction they have with other entities in the area, i.e.: Meals on Wheels and the Senior Leatherman Center. Ms. Jackson said they currently do not coordinate with the other entities and they mainly operate independently; however, they are not opposed to the idea. Ms. Albert further elaborated that COVID caused Meals on Wheels to shut down and MBK Shelter stepped in to deliver meals to their seniors.

Pro tem Jebaily asked Councilman Braddock of his opinion on how all the different agencies could work together, being that Councilman Braddock works with House of Hope. Councilman Braddock said House of Hope has worked with MBK Shelter for several years as well as with the No One Unsheltered Program. Councilman Braddock said MBK Shelter bridged the gap when the other entities shut down during COVID. He said a tractor trailer load of food is donated weekly from Performance Food Group and is dispersed among approximately 12 organizations, to include House of Hope and MBK Shelter.

Councilwoman Moore said when all the other organizations shut down due to COVID, MBK Shelter stepped in to make sure the community was fed. She said this is a program unlike any other.

Councilman McCall also said he appreciates all the work they do with the community.

Mr. Joey McMillian, Mr. Gary Finklea, and Mr. Barnett Greenberg

Mayor Ervin said these three individuals have requested to speak on the Rental Registry Ordinance and the Business License Fee.

Mr. Joey McMillian spoke first. He said Act 176 was exciting to those that own small businesses and for those that do business in multiple municipalities. To his surprise, after the city took action in regard to



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Act 176, he has ended up with more taxes and more paperwork to fill out, which has been burdensome. Mr. McMillian acknowledged that some businesses received a tax cut (65%), but all his businesses received a rate increase. He said there is now a business license fee on commercial properties, something that has never been done in Florence before. He said he met with city staff and was told the business license fee was for two reasons: 1) because everybody else is doing it; and 2) the city will be sued if they do not impose the tax. Commercial properties already pay high property taxes and Mr. McMillian asked that the business license fee for commercial properties be revisited. Mr. McMillian then spoke on the Rental Registry Ordinance. He said his business does 500 residential transactions a year and 95% of those homes would not meet the standards required by the ordinance. It will be burdensome for property owners to abide by the standards. He acknowledged that something does need to be done in the city, but this registry is overkill.

Councilman Braddock asked Mr. McMillian if there is something specific he would like revisited in regard to the business license fee on commercial properties. Mr. McMillian noted again that 65% of businesses saw a tax cut while 35% saw an increase and asked for this to be addressed, he does not think it is fair for the 35% to pay more in taxes. He said growth will be hindered in Florence because of the increase in taxes on commercial properties and will cause businesses to locate outside the city.

Councilman Braddock asked Mr. McMillian his opinion on the “unforeseen consequences” with the passing of the rental ordinance and asked if he noticed any of these being realized. Mr. McMillian said there are good landlords and property owners that want out of the business because of the burden being placed on them and it is uncertain who will replace them. He said there are not a lot of properties that will meet the standards required and it is going to cause a problem in Florence.

Pro tem Jebaily asked for clarity on the number of those that received a rate increase versus a rate decrease with the reclassifications. He said he understands that the goal was for the city to remain revenue neutral with the passing of the ordinance, meaning the city would receive neither a gain nor a loss in revenue due to the reclassification. He said he further understands that 65% of those realized a reduction in their rates while 35% realized an increase. Mr. Kevin Yokim, Assistant City Manager of Administration/Finance, said that is correct.

Mr. Gary Finklea spoke next. He said he would like Council to entertain either repealing the Rental Registry Ordinance or delaying implementation of the Ordinance 1-2 years. The rental registry serves the purpose for providing a procedure to the International Property Maintenance Code the city has adopted. He further said this International Property Maintenance Code is 95% efficient for the purpose of bringing nonconforming properties into conformance. The ordinance the city passed to add a procedure to the code is not necessary, the International Property Code already has a procedure in place. Mr. Finklea said he does not fault Council for not realizing this, but he does fault city staff. He said the city needs an ordinance with additional procedures with a notice of violation and to encourage property owners and property managers to do the right thing, not penalize them. The current ordinance does not accomplish this. When the Rental Registry Ordinance was passed on first reading, it was completely replaced with a more appropriate document for second reading. Mr. Finklea said he, the city manager and the city attorney already performed two edits to the document that passed, so even staff recognizes the current ordinance can be improved on. He again requested to delay implementation of the ordinance to allow time to find out what portion of the ordinance is necessary and what is not. The reason he was told the city needed to adopt a rental registry ordinance was to be able to provide notice to the offending landlord; however, the International Property Maintenance Code already includes a section that pertains to notices and orders, as well as method of service. He said the allegations made to use the rental registry ordinance as a way to notify property owners is a farse. All that is necessary is a complaint driven procedure to bring homes up to the International Property Code standards. He also mentioned the unintended costs to tenants and said this ordinance punishes good tenants. Unforeseen taxes will fall on the tenant, which can



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lead to homelessness. Mr. Finklea reiterated what Mr. McMillian already said, there are very few older homes that can abide by the standards and currently, due to COVID, the cost of materials and building supplies makes it difficult to comply.

Mr. Finklea also spoke on the business license fee, saying property owners already pay a tax based on the rental income they receive. For tax purposes, residential rental properties are considered commercial properties and are taxed at 6%. Also, most properties take 3 months of rent to pay for property taxes. There should be an exception for business license taxes being assessed against property owners because business owners already pay a tax on their rent through the property tax. He recognized that Council is concerned with housing problems throughout the city; however, the business license tax and the rental registry are sending a strong message to those individuals that have the choice to not annex and do business with the city. He reiterated that both the business license and the rental registry ordinance will not burden the property owner because they will just pass the cost along to the tenant. Also, people are still recovering from unemployment income loss due to the pandemic and this will just place a greater burden on them.

Mayor Ervin asked Mr. Osterman to clarify that the rental registry requires a business license and a registration fee, not an increase in taxes. Mr. Osterman replied the ordinance requires a business license for those who own 5 or more rental units as well as a \$25 rental permit application fee initially. The rental permit application will be waived after the initial year for those owning more than 5 rental units. If the individual owns 1-4 rental units, they are required to pay the \$25 rental permit fee annually. The \$25 fee is per application, not per unit.

Councilman Braddock said cost of materials and availability is an issue and it may not be viable for property owners to make the required repairs and said they need to look at ways to mitigate this unforeseen situation. Mayor Ervin replied that implementation of the rental registry is imperative to begin the registration process and to allow property owners time to make repairs to those units they know are not compliant. There will be lee-way after implementation to allow for these repairs and if there is a complaint against a property, the property owner or manager will be given a warning initially and allowed proper time to complete necessary repairs.

Councilwoman Moore acknowledged Councilman Braddock's concern regarding cost and availability of supplies for property owners to make repairs; however, most of these property owners knew their properties were not up to code prior to the pandemic.

Councilman Schofield said as a business owner in retail and the building supply industry he can attest to the shortage of supplies. Also, being a commercial property owner, it takes him four months of rental income to pay for the property taxes. He said Council must find a way for these ordinances to benefit everyone.

Mr. Barnett Greenburg spoke last, saying he is a realtor and broker in charge of a brokerage firm. He also requested the ordinances be revisited to make it fairer and more reasonable for everyone involved. He said many people are saying the rental registry ordinance is flawed and it has already gone through several revisions. This ordinance is a drastic change from a decades long policy and the public needs to know what they are dealing with. This ordinance hurts everybody, and the cost will be passed to the tenant, whether it is a residential or commercial property. It sends a bad message to those that invest in real estate or have businesses in the city. He requested this to be publicly revisited so the community can have a say. The previous meetings were held via Zoom in which several people either did not know about the meetings or were not able to be involved. The rental ordinance should be transparent in regard to the law, and there are several things in the ordinance that are extreme overkill. He said he has already seen



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some unforeseen consequences from these ordinances and there should be a way to address those bad property owners instead of penalizing all. As did Mr. Finklea and Mr. McMillian, he asked that Council revisit the rental registry ordinance as well as the commercial business license fee.

Councilman McCall asked Mr. Yokim for clarity on the standardization bill that was passed by state legislature. Mr. Yokim said last fall, the state legislature passed a business license standardization bill. Based on the provisions in state law, the Municipal Association crafted a model business license ordinance in which they encouraged all municipalities to adopt instead of each municipality having to modify their existing business license ordinance. Councilman McCall asked if the city modified the existing business license ordinance in accordance with state law, would it have created either a windfall or a shortfall. Mr. Yokim replied the city would have resulted in approximately a \$500,000 shortfall in result of the reclassification. Mr. Yokim further explained the reclassification, which is now state law passed by the legislature. One of the provisions in the bill required that all businesses be classified the same throughout the state. With assistance from the Municipal Association, the city moved forward with the reclassification. As a result, if the city kept their current fees, a \$500,000 loss in revenues would have occurred. Therefore, the law allowed for a one-time rebalancing so that municipalities would not realize a windfall nor a loss in revenue. The city also utilized the Municipal Association for assistance in the rebalancing calculations. Councilman McCall asked if the city was required to adopt the business license ordinance. Mr. Yokim replied that state law required the reclassification, which in turn requires an ordinance.

Councilman Braddock asked on the timeline for implementation. Mr. Yokim replied another provision of the bill was a uniform payment date of April 3, 2022. All municipalities will either have to adopt the model ordinance drafted by the Municipal Association or modify their existing ordinance to comply with state law.

Councilman Schofield asked Mr. Yokim if it was necessary for the city to pass the ordinance as soon as they did. Mr. Yokim, said it was not necessary but it was desired for two reasons: 1) there was a concern that if the city waited, staff would have had to do a lot of the reclassification and rebalancing work themselves instead of having assistance from the Municipal Association since there are approximately 200 municipalities in the state and; 2) the rental registry ordinance contains a business license component to it on residential rental property, to be effective in 2021. Councilman Schofield referenced a portion of Act 176 regarding the reclassification and Mr. Yokim confirmed that, per state legislature, City Council could pass an ordinance to reclassify certain businesses to different rate classes if they desire.

Pro tem Jebaily referenced the portal offered by the Municipal Association that businesses may use to obtain their business license. Mr. Yokim replied the portal allows those who conduct business in multiple locations to enter their information and the South Carolina Department of Revenue will then disperse the information along with payment to the impacted municipalities. Pro tem Jebaily said a concern has been raised by those that own commercial property. The business license ordinance that was passed in 1987 exempted those who owned commercial properties from paying a business license fee; however, every other municipality in South Carolina requires a business license for commercial property. The current ordinance has brought the city into conformity with the rest of the municipalities throughout the state. Pro tem Jebaily used Magnolia Mall as an example and said up until the passing of the ordinance, Magnolia Mall was not required to obtain a business license while all the individual stores/tenants operating within the mall were. This ordinance will require Magnolia Mall to also obtain a business license. This change was not required by state legislature but was done so to bring the city to conformity with the rest of the state. Mr. Yokim said that is correct.



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Mayor Ervin asked Scotty Davis, Deputy City Manager, to clarify if a representative of the State Chamber of Commerce came to Florence some years back to speak to business owners and realtors in reference to the bill. Mr. Davis said that is correct, a Chamber representative was working with Representative Jordan to pass the bill and it involved discussion with the Board of Realtors. Mayor Ervin said, for the record, this did not happen overnight, this has been a concern for several years for leaders throughout the state and the Municipal Association. Throughout the whole process, city staff has been available to any business that had any questions and city staff will continue to be available.

ORDINANCES IN POSITION

Bill No. 2021-10 – Second Reading

An Ordinance to amend the budget for the City of Florence, South Carolina, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021.

Councilwoman Moore made a motion to adopt Bill No. 2021-10 on second reading and Councilwoman Barnes seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) to adopt Bill No. 2021-10.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

Bill No. 2021-11 – First Reading

An Ordinance to annex and zone the parcel located at 2499 Rainford Road, identified as Florence County Tax Map Parcel 01221-01-158.

Councilman Schofield made a motion to pass Bill No. 2021-11 on first reading and Councilwoman Barnes seconded the motion.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Planning Director, said this is a single lot annexation and the proposed zoning is Neighborhood Conservation-15 (NC-15). City water and sewer services are currently available.

Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend the zoning request of NC-15 and city staff concurs with planning commission's recommendation.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) to pass Bill No. 2021-11.

Bill No. 2021-12 – First Reading

An Ordinance to annex and zone a portion of Lake Oakdale and the Lake Oakdale dam, identified as a portion of Florence County Tax Map Parcel 00751-01-049.

Mr. Dudley said the applicants have requested that this item be deferred. Without objection, this item was deferred.

Bill No. 2021-13 – First Reading

An Ordinance to amend the Planned Development District for The Grove at Ebenezer.

Councilman McCall made a motion to pass Bill No. 2021-13 on first reading and Councilwoman Moore seconded the motion.



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The Planned Development District (PDD) was created in 2016 by ordinance. The developer is requesting an amendment to The Grove PDD to permit 15-foot front setbacks for Phase III and future single-family detached residential development. This request is based on space constraints due to stormwater infrastructure, utility rights-of-way, and a future addition to the city’s Rail Trail.

Planning Commission unanimously recommended the request for the front setback requirement and staff concurs with planning commission’s recommendation.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) to pass Bill No. 2021-13.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 2021-11

A Resolution to approve the City of Florence Community Block Grant Budget for fiscal year 2021-2022.

Councilwoman Moore made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2021-11 and Councilwoman Barnes seconded the motion.

Mr. Dudley gave an overview of the proposed CDBG budget for fiscal year 2021-2022.

The proposed CDBG Budget for FY 2021-22 is as follows:

Planning and Administration	\$ 55,300
Emergency Rehabilitation	\$ 100,000
Section 108 Loan Repayment	\$ 69,000
Down Payment Assistance	\$ 40,000
Demolition	<u>\$ 26,900</u>
Total	\$ 291,200

Council voted unanimously (7-0) to adopt Resolution No. 2021-11.

Resolution No. 2021-12

A Resolution to designate Juneteenth, June 19 as an official holiday for the City of Florence.

Mayor Ervin made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2021-12 and Councilwoman Moore seconded the motion.

Mr. Davis reported President Abraham Lincoln decreed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863; however, news of the signing of the proclamation was withheld in parts of the United States until June 19, 1865 – marking the symbolic date representing African American freedom. In 2018, South Carolina designated June 19 as the “Juneteenth Celebration of Freedom Day” but the legislature did not make Juneteenth an official legal holiday.

Mayor Ervin said this resolution will recognize the holiday for city staff and be a paid holiday. She said the city is moving forward and becoming more inclusive.



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Councilwoman Barnes said she is very proud to be part of this Council. She said July 4th is celebrated throughout the nation; however, that date does not signify freedom for all those that reside in the United States.

Councilman Braddock agreed with Councilwoman Barnes, this is a great move for the city.

Mayor Ervin also concurred with Councilwoman Barnes. Although July 4th celebrates the freedom of the United States from another country, it does not signify freedom for all citizens. It was not until Juneteenth that all citizens gained freedom.

Resolution No. 2021-13

A Resolution by the City of Florence formally designating the City of Florence Municipal Courtroom at 324 West Evans Street as “The Honorable William Howard ‘Taft’ Guile, Jr. Courtroom” for Judge Guile’s instrumental role as a municipal court judge and for his many years of service to the Florence community.

Mayor Ervin made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2021-13 and Councilwoman Moore seconded the motion.

Mr. Dudley reported the request to name the courtroom was received from the family of Judge Guile. Judge Guile gave over 40 years of service to the Florence community, serving as a City Police Officer, Florence County Sheriff’s Department, Florence County Magistrate and as a Municipal Court Judge, where he served until his death. Procedurally, this matter went to Planning Commission in which they unanimously recommended the naming of the Courtroom.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) to adopt Resolution No. 2021-13.

Resolution No. 2021-14

A Resolution of City Council approving Downtown Redevelopment Grants for Fourth Quarter, FY21.

This item will be discussed in Executive Session.

REPORTS TO COUNCIL

Mayor Pro Tem Jebaily

Pro tem Jebaily gave a report to Council on the Mayor Pro Tempore position. He said following the previous meeting in April and at the request of the Mayor, he consulted with fellow Councilmembers on their opinion of the Mayor Pro tem position. He announced that he will be fulfilling his two-year term as the Pro tem and thanked Council for their support.

Councilwoman Lethonia Barnes

Councilwoman Barnes began by thanking staff for the two-day Council Retreat team building session. She said Council was able to come up with several goals and objectives they could tangibly start working on. She expressed her eagerness to begin work as a Councilmember for the community. Based on the consensus of discussions that were had at the Retreat, Councilwoman Barnes made a motion to establish three ad hoc advisory committees, consisting of three members of Council each: Community Redevelopment Committee, Business Development Committee, and the Marketing and Public Relations



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Committee. She suggested that she be the chair of the Community Redevelopment Committee, with Pro tem Jebaily being the chair for the Business Development Committee and Councilman McCall being the chair for the Marketing and Public Relations Committee. She further explained that if the motion to establish the committees is approved, members will be selected at the next Regular Meeting of City Council.

Mayor Ervin said there is already a Community Redevelopment Committee (Neighborhood Revitalization Committee) that she chairs and Pro tem Jebaily is a member of and it has been in place since 2014. Pro tem Jebaily said it is his understanding that when there is a changeover in Councilmembers after an election, ad hoc committees that were previously in place with the prior Council are no longer, and there should be a council vote on a new committee. He said the three suggested committees all arose from discussions at the retreat in which they all worked together to come up with these ideas. Pro tem Jebaily seconded the motion to establish the three committees.

Mayor Ervin said the purpose of the retreat was to bring Council together to establish communication among members. There should have been communication and discussion among Council before any motion or action is taken on this Report to Council. She said not discussing this with all members prior does not reflect well with what was learned at the retreat session. While this appears to be well thought out and planned, action items on the agenda should be communicated with the full Council. Mayor Ervin asked Councilwoman Barnes if she communicated with every member of Council her intentions to establish the proposed committees. Councilwoman Barnes said she spoke with most members, but not everyone, and asked if it is a requirement that she does. Mayor Ervin answered it is not required by law, but the purpose of the retreat was for better communication among Council. Councilwoman Barnes said forming committees was discussed at the retreat.

Mayor Ervin explained that, at the retreat, a group activity took place with City Council and staff in which they agreeably identified three areas of focus. Also, the purpose of the retreat was for Council to communicate and work together. Councilwoman Barnes said the committees were discussed in group discussion at the retreat, and she is simply carrying out what was discussed. She said she did not realize further communication was necessary since all of Council was present when the discussion of forming committees arose at the meeting. Mayor Ervin said the three initiatives were discussed at the retreat, but how or who was not. She further said it was not a requirement to discuss anything with her, but it is common courtesy. Mayor Ervin said she called Councilwoman Barnes the Friday before the meeting and left a voicemail, but never received a return call. Mayor Ervin said the question is not about the committees, it is about communication. In the past, when an item is placed on the agenda, information was provided to all members on the item.

Councilwoman Barnes acknowledged receiving a phone call from the Mayor, but said it was regarding a separate matter. She said she was working on forming a committee and shared the paperwork with staff for review and then Mayor Ervin took the initiative as her own and appointed her to chair the committee. Mayor Ervin asked Councilwoman Barnes not to throw accusations. Mayor Ervin said she was working on a similar initiative prior to becoming Mayor. After meeting with staff, she thought to combine the two initiatives together as one committee. Mayor Ervin explained that the referenced committee is the Community Aesthetics Committee. Mayor Ervin again requested better communication and Councilwoman Barnes said she would like the same from Mayor Ervin.

Pro tem Jebaily spoke, referring to the next item on the agenda: Appointments to the City/County Conference Committee, and asked Mayor Ervin if that was an item she planned on bringing before Council, to which she replied it is. He stated he never received a phone call or any communication



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regarding this committee or any action she had planned and if she planned on bringing that item to the table it should have been communicated.

Councilwoman Moore asked if community revitalization would be included in the Community Redevelopment Committee or if they are different. Councilwoman Barnes said a lot would fall under the Community Redevelopment umbrella, but it mostly deals with neighborhoods. She said she is already working on what could potentially fall under the umbrella, but it could all be discussed once the committees are formed. Pro tem Jebaily said at the retreat Community Redevelopment, Business Development and Marketing were the three “umbrellas” that Council identified as areas to focus on. After discussion, many items were placed under each of these umbrellas and neighborhood revitalization was one of those items that ended up under the Community Redevelopment umbrella. His understanding from the process at the retreat is that committees would be formed from these umbrellas, the committees would then meet with staff and define the parameters of each umbrella, and staff would then determine a course of action. Councilwoman Moore said she feels very strongly about neighborhood revitalization. Mayor Ervin said community revitalization began in 2014 and has been implemented through the city’s consultants through the Community Revitalization Plan. She acknowledged that staff has been working diligently for years to make community revitalization a reality.

Mayor Ervin said when there are items on the agenda that require a vote, it should be clarified in advance along with an explanation. Councilwoman Barnes expressed confusion, and said she thought establishing these committees would be a good thing since they all agreed at the retreat they would work on these initiatives. She said she did not think she needed to talk to everyone about these committees because it was something they had already agreed on. Mayor Ervin said Council did decide those were the three initiatives they would focus on at the retreat, but beyond that there was no discussion.

Mayor Ervin said there is a motion and a second and called for a vote. Council voted unanimously (7-0) to establish three ad hoc advisory committees: the Community Redevelopment Committee chaired by Councilwoman Barnes, the Business Development Committee chaired by Pro tem Jebaily and the Marketing and Public Relations Committee chaired by Councilman McCall.

Appointments to Boards and Commissions

City/County Conference Committee

Mayor Ervin said appointments to the City/County Conference Committee are by the Mayor. This is a joint committee with the County and has been in operation for several years. With no objection, Mayor Ervin appointed herself, Councilwoman Moore and Councilman Schofield as members of the committee.

Councilwoman Barnes asked for the record to show that she is the only Councilperson that asked to be on this committee. She said this is a long-standing committee and was created by her brother (County Councilman Al Bradley) and former City Councilman Powers. The committee ceased meeting due to poor communications between the City and the County. In re-establishing the committee, the County has appointed her brother, Councilman Bradley, to be the county chair. She said her brother then notified the city with a request that she also be on the committee in order to show good faith that they are trying to work together. She expressed agreeance in the appointment of Councilman Schofield because of the role his father served on County Council. Councilwoman Barnes said the Mayor has historically never served on every committee and asked Mayor Ervin why she has taken the position to elect herself to all the committees. Mayor Ervin asked Councilwoman Barnes how many times she has called her about the City/County Conference Committee and Councilwoman Barnes responded she called the week before last. Mayor Ervin said Councilwoman Barnes only asked when appointments would be done, there was



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no question on who would be appointed, nor did Councilwoman Barnes express her desire to serve. Mayor Ervin reiterated poor communication. There was further discussion on various phone calls between the two. Councilwoman Barnes said as a newly elected Councilmember she wants work and be placed on committees. She further elaborated, saying citizens continue to ask why the Mayor has to do all the work herself, to include the invocation for Council meetings, insinuating Councilmembers are not willing to work with the Mayor. Mayor Ervin said she discussed the invocation for the meetings with Councilwoman Barnes. In this discussion, she said Councilwoman Barnes expressed nervousness towards the idea. Councilwoman Barnes interjected, saying that conversation never took place and she never said she was nervous to give prayer.

There was further discussion between Councilwoman Barnes and Mayor Ervin on conversations they had in relation to the City/County Conference Committee. Mayor Ervin said both Councilwoman Moore and Councilman Schofield communicated with her that they would like to serve on the Committee and reiterated that Council needs to communicate with each other. Councilwoman Barnes asked the Mayor to do the same, saying she is the leader and should give Council direction.

Pro tem Jebaily said he wanted to bring up a point of concern with the Mayor. He said she is speaking on communication among Council, but they are currently discussing an agenda item that was not communicated with everyone prior to the meeting. He said, until this moment, he had no idea who Mayor Ervin planned on appointing to the committee or that it was even something she planned on moving forward with. He said it is disingenuous to ask another member of Council to call her when she is not calling anyone herself. Pro tem Jebaily asked the Mayor if she called him to discuss the appointments, and the Mayor responded that previous Mayoral appointments to standing committees have never been discussed with all of Council. Pro tem Jebaily argued that the City/County Conference Committee is not a standing committee because there are no standing committees after a new election. While there is a history of a prior City/County Conference Committee, these appointments are for a new committee. He further asked for the same respect in regard to communication that Mayor Ervin has requested. Mayor Ervin said the City/County Conference Committee is an established committee in which the Mayor makes the appointments. The other three committees in the previous agenda item are new committees with no guidelines and no basis until they have been established by the committees.

Without further discussion, Mayor Ervin again announced the appointments to the City/County Conference Committee: Mayor Teresa Myers Ervin, Councilman William Schofield and Councilwoman Pat Gibson-Hye Moore.

[Break: 3:26 p.m.]

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman McCall made a motion to enter into Executive Session and Councilwoman Moore seconded the motion. Without objection, Council entered into Executive Session at 3:40 p.m. for a discussion of matters relating to a proposed economic development project; to receive legal advice relating to City Council protocols for conducting meetings during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic; and for a discussion relating to a personnel matter and the receipt of legal advice relating to a personnel matter.

Council reconvened Open Session at 4:44 p.m. and took action on the following items:

Resolution No. 2021-14

A Resolution of City Council approving Downtown Redevelopment Grants for Fourth Quarter, FY21.



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Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2021-14 and Councilwoman Moore seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously (7-0) to adopt Resolution No. 2021-14.

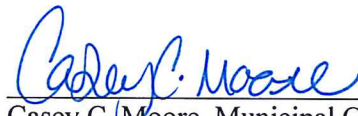
Mayor Ervin said they also received legal advice relating to City Council protocols for conducting meetings during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Councilman Braddock made a motion that anyone who wishes to appear before City Council contact the City Manager and the City Manager will then make arrangements for them to safely appear on a case-by-case basis and Councilman Schofield seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Mayor Ervin said they also had discussion and received legal advice on a personnel matter in Executive Session. Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to adopt an amendment to the City Manager's contract, referred to as the two-and-two option, to extend the contract for two more years with the ability to extend it for two additional years beyond that.

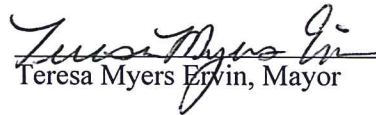
ADJOURN

Without objection, the May 10, 2021 Regular meeting of City Council was adjourned at 4:46 p.m.

Dated this 14th day of June 2021.



Casey C. Moore, Municipal Clerk



Teresa Myers Ervin, Mayor