CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
MOUNT HOLLY CITY COUNCIL
Work Session
February 23, 2009
6:00 pm

Members present: Mayor Robert Whitt, Councilmen David Moore, Jerry Bishop, Bennie Brookshire, Frank McLean, Perry Toomey, and Councilwoman Carolyn Breyare.

Staff present: Eric Davis, City Manager, Jamie Guffey, Assistant City Manager, Danny Jackson, Assistant City Manager, Mike Santmire, Streets and Solid Waste Director, Chief Dale Oplinger, Fire Chief, and Chief David Belk, Chief of Police, James Friday, Utilities Director, Tina Pritchard, Parks and Recreation Director and Kemp Michael, City Attorney

Others present: Brooke Lopez, Attorney, Kemp Michael's office

CALL TO ORDER BY THE MAYOR
Mayor Whitt called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

INVOCATION
Mayor Pro Tempore Moore led the Council, staff members and attendees in prayer.

SET THE AGENDA
Mayor Whitt asked for any changes to the work session agenda. Councilman Toomey requested that Item #1 Discussion of Request for Co-Sponsorship of the Sports Hall of Fame Event be taken off the agenda and placed on the March business meeting. With no additional changes to the agenda, Mayor Pro Tem Moore made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilman McLean seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. (Motion carried)

Public Hearing on the Amendment to Section 16 of the Zoning Ordinance to Adopt the Revised Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM's) as required by FEMA
Mayor Whitt explained that this public hearing was moved from the regular meeting due to the local newspaper failing to advertise appropriately for the public hearing. Mr. Beal added that due to time constraints on this topic, the public hearing had to be a work session item. He advised that approval of the Flood Insurance Rate Maps has to be into Raleigh no later than March 2nd for the City to remain in the Flood Insurance Program. At this time, Mayor Whitt opened up the floor for citizens comments. With no one signed up to speak, Mayor Whitt closed the public hearing. Councilman Bishop made a motion to adopt the Flood Insurance Maps as presented. Councilman Toomey seconded the motion. All Council members voted in favor. (Motion carried)

Discussion of Commercial Retail Recruitment
Mayor Whitt introduced Chip Rodgers with the Buxton Group. Mr. Rodgers explained that the Buxton Group specializes in commercial, retail and restaurant recruitment. He further advised that the Buxton Group looks closely at individual areas to see what would be the best fit for each particular community. Mr. Rodgers gave examples of their recruitments in other areas. Mayor Whitt asked how much the Buxton Group charges for this service. Mr. Rodgers replied that the fee is normally $70,000 but the Group has agreed to give Mount Holly a 10% discount.

Mayor Whitt thanked Mr. Rodgers and advised that there services would be considered during the budget process.

Discussion of Road Paving Projects

Mr. Dupont presented Council with a Five (5) Year Master Plan in regard to road paving projects. He advised that staff took this information from the 2008 ITRE Report. Mr. Davis added that if Council accepts this report it will be used as a guide and brought back before Council each year. There were questions from the Council regarding the roads in the report that were outlined in red. Mr. Dupont advised that they represented paving projects that would create interconnectivity. Council discussed the possibility of interconnectivity and came to the consensus that they are not in favor of interconnecting the roads. Therefore, Councilman Toomey made a motion to approve the Five (5) Year Master Plan in regard to road paving projects omitting the items in red which allow the interconnectivity of streets. Councilwoman Breyare seconded the motion. All Council members voted in favor. (Motion carried)

Discussion of the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance

Mr. Guffey reported that this ordinance was first introduced to Council at the 2008 Retreat. He explained that at the time Council was in favor of this ordinance becoming part of the City's Land Development Plan and would only apply to new subdivisions. Mr. Guffey advised that the implementation of this ordinance would require a public hearing. Councilman Toomey made a motion to call for a public hearing at the March Council Meeting. Councilman McLean seconded the motion. All Council members voted in favor. (Motion carried)

At this time, Mayor Whitt called for a short recess.
The meeting reconvened at 7:11 p.m.

Discussion of the Safer Grant (Fire Department Grant)

Mr. Davis reported that the Fire Chief applied for the Safer Grant in the Spring of 2008. At that time there was a breakdown in communication therefore Council was not appropriately informed of the application process. He apologized for that. Mr. Davis continued stating that since the time of application, the city was awarded the grant. However, the City's economic structure has altered and he feels the City is no longer in a financial situation to accept and honor the Safer Grant. He advised that due to the current state of the economy, the challenge the city would face would include a 3.5 to 4 cents tax increase to our citizens. Mr. Davis further advised that after talking to FEMA employees, they have indicated that the City will not be penalized for denying the grant.

At this time Mayor Pro Tem Moore asked Chief Oplinger to come forward to answer a few of Councils questions. Mayor Pro Tem Moore began by thanking Chief Oplinger for applying for the grant and doing such a great job with his department. Council touched on questions regarding the ISO rating and the statistics for the past year regarding the fire calls. Councilman Bishop declared that he is not prepared to vote on this issue at this time. He advised that the Council is yet to get into the budget process; therefore the city's financial situation for next budget year is still unknown. Councilman Bishop suggested waiting until the initial budget meeting to make a decision regarding the Safer Grant. Council agreed to continue the discussion at the March 16, 2009 budget meeting.

Discussion of Whitewater

Mr. Guffey reported that the second payment of $143,000 is due to the Whitewater Center in the very near future. He advised that according to what the City has heard, the Whitewater Center is currently having some financial difficulties and is in negotiation with their bank to make their financial status current. Councilman Toomey asked that with the current financial status of the Whitewater Center if the City is still obligated to pay the $143,000. Mr. Michael commented that the City is legally bound to make the payment unless the Whitewater Center has ceased to operate. It was the consensus of Council to take a closer look at the contract with the Whitewater Center and bring this back up for discussion at the next meeting.

Committee Reports

Mayor Pro Tem Moore reported that the Beautification Committee met and are moving forward with beautification plans.

Councilman Toomey reported that the Construction Committee met and agreed to let go of some of the money for the construction of Tuck Park.

Councilman Bishop reported that the Utility Committee is going to schedule a meeting very soon.

Councilwoman Breyare reported that the Economic Development Committee has a meeting scheduled for Thursday night.

Closed Session

At this time, Councilman Bishop made a motion to enter into closed session. Councilman Toomey seconded the motion. All Council members voted in favor.

Mayor Pro Tem Moore made a motion to return to open session. Councilman McLean seconded the motion. All Council members voted in favor.

10. Adjourn

With no additional items for discussion, Mayor Whitt entertained a motion to adjourn. Councilman McLean made the motion to adjourn the February 23, 2009 work session meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Moore seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. ***(Motion carried)***

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.