

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
MOUNT HOLLY CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, January 22, 2024
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Moore called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The following were present:

Mayor David Moore	Jonathan Blanton, City Manager
Mayor Pro Tem Lauren Shoemaker	Brian DuPont, Assistant City Manager
Councilman Ivory Craig	Brian Reagan, Police Chief
Councilman Jeff Meadows	Ryan Baker, Fire Chief
Councilman Bryan Hough	Greg Beal, Planning Director
Councilwoman Phyllis Harris	Tony Walker, Streets and Solid Waste Director
Councilman Kenneth Reeves	Robert Stewart, Deputy Utilities Director
Marie M. Anders, City Attorney	Mark Jusko, Recreation Supervisor
Danny Jackson, Consultant	Michelle Wood, Finance Director
Tara Douglas, City Clerk	Alexis Hill, Human Resources Director

INVOCATION

Councilman Hough led the Council, staff, and attendees in prayer.

SET THE AGENDA

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion.

All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes from the January 8, 2024 Council Meeting
2. Approval of Minutes from the January 8, 2024 Closed Session

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Councilwoman Harris seconded the motion.

All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

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PRESENTATIONS

1. Better City

Jason Godfrey

Mr. Godfrey gave an overview of project development districts and tax increment financing. Mr. Godfrey gave three scenarios for a project development district. Mr. Godfrey explained how tax increment financing can be used when there is a public benefit for the use of the outlined or district area. Mr. Godfrey explained that tax increment financing is a tool to provide debt financing to projects. Mr. Godfrey explained that the local government could borrow funds on future tax income and that the debt is secured by those future revenue streams.

Councilman Meadows stated that the county must agree to the overall process and then negotiate the overall details. Councilman Meadows asked Mr. Godfrey what does the State of North Carolina call tax increment financing? Mrs. Anders stated that the State of North Carolina refers to tax increment financing as Project Development Financing, but the School of Government says that they are the same. Councilman Meadows asked Mrs. Anders what statute that we were using for this discussion? Mrs. Anders stated that the statute that is being referred to is N.C.G.S 158-7.3. Councilman Meadows wanted confirmation from Mrs. Anders that the statute was not N.C.G.S 159. Mrs. Anders stated that she would confirm.

Councilman Meadows asked if the tax increment financing could be used outside of the district area? Mr. Godfrey stated that he believes that the answer is yes. Councilman Hough followed up on Councilman Meadows question asking if we wanted to use the tax increment financing for a Veteran's Park amphitheater could we use the tax increment financing for a gym at Tuckasee Park or would we need to formalize another district? Mrs. Anders stated that she is by no means an expert on tax increment financing but reviewed the frequently asked questions from the School of Government on the topic of tax increment financing which in her opinion was leaning towards the money staying within the designated district.

Councilman Meadows stated that we could have multiple districts. Councilman Hough asked would it make sense to approach the county project by project or approach the county one time. Councilman Meadows stated that he would like for staff and Council to look at a little different district area. Councilman Meadows asked Mr. Blanton if he knew of other jurisdictions that have used the tax increment financing.

Mr. Blanton stated that the City of Woodfin, located in Buncombe County, used this successfully. Mr. Blanton stated that he would be glad to reach out to Gaston County to get the conversations started. Councilman Hough stated that Dr. Eagle from a protocol standpoint would be the recommended point of contact. Councilman Hough stated that he would like for the council to move forward with working with the county.

Councilman Meadows discussed the idea of synthetic tax increment financing. Ms. Anders stated that she and Mr. DuPont reviewed the synthetic tax increment financing topic at a recent training from the School of Government and that sometimes when local governments are talking about doing a tax increment financing that they are really doing a synthetic tax increment finance.

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NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion of a committee to relocate the artifacts from Old City Hall *Jonathan Blanton*

Mr. Blanton stated that at the January 8, 2024 meeting, direction was given to staff to possibly form a committee for the relocation of the artifacts from the Old City Hall. Mr. Blanton asked for additional guidance from the Council on what they envisioned the committee to look like. Councilman Hough stated that appropriate city staff and Council representation should be part of the committee. Councilman Hough suggested Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker and Councilman Reeves for the potential Council representatives. Councilman Hough suggested that the additional possible committee members could be Nancy Wrenn from the Historical Society , Joy Walker, and Willie Melton. Councilman Hough recommended that they should be contacted to make sure that they understand what this means. Councilman Hough also suggested a curator. Councilman Hough stated that the premise for the committee recommendation by Councilman Meadows was to secure a place that has suitable storage for the artifacts. Councilman Reeves stated that we need to move the artifacts quickly. Councilman Meadows stated that there are a lot of moving parts to this discussion. Councilman Meadows stated that this is not only protecting the artifacts, but also designing the new space while maintaining their integrity. Councilman Meadows stated that there is almost 2000 square feet of space in this building that could become a transition area for the artifacts. Councilman Reeves stated that he would like to get something done to protect the artifacts first and then Council can come back to discuss the committee. Mayor Moore stated that we need further input from the Historical Society, but that the artifacts that are in the basement of the Historical Society are our priority. Councilman Craig mentioned Gaston County Museum of Art went through a similar process and suggested reaching out to them for guidance on their process.

Mr. Blanton stated that staff is seeking direction from Council for the scope of the committee. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker suggested that the moving of the artifacts may not need a committee and suggests moving the artifacts quickly. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker stated that a committee could pick up from there. Councilman Hough asked Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker to clarify her suggestion. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker suggested that the Council move forward with the committee but give staff the authority to move items immediately.

Councilman Hough made a motion to approve the committee as suggested and direct city staff to begin moving artifacts as soon as possible. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion. Councilwoman Harris asked for further discussion and stated that she feels as though Mayor Moore should have been asked if he has any recommendations since this would be a Mayor

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
MOUNT HOLLY CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, January 22, 2024
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:30 PM

appointed committee. Mayor Moore stated that he would like to see the Historical Society heavily involved. Mayor Moore stated that there were some great names mentioned for the committee but does not feel that there needs to be a committee appointed tonight. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker asked Mayor Moore if it is possible to start the committee, but not have all the appointments in place? Mayor Moore stated that we could do the framework of the committee tonight and then go from there. Mrs. Anders stated that there had been a motion and a second to that motion made. Mrs. Anderst stated that once the discussion is finished, Council can either call to question or the motion can be withdrawn. Mrs. Anders stated that in general committees are appointed by the City Council unless the City Council chooses to delegate the committee appointments to the Mayor. Mrs. Anders stated that the Council should consider whether or not the Council is attempting to delegate the committee appointments to the Mayor or attempting to set up the committee and the appointments. Councilman Hough stated that the motion came from the Council, so it is a Council appointed committee. Councilman Hough stated that he gave a framework and suggested names to contact which fall within the discussion that occurred.

Mayor Moore took the vote on the motion to approve the committee as suggested and direct city staff to begin moving artifacts as soon as possible. The following Councilmembers were in favor: Councilman Meadows, Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker, Councilman Craig, Councilman Reeves, and Councilman Hough. The following were against: Councilwoman Harris

Mr. Blanton asked for a point of clarification from Councilman Hough on the motion made and if the motion was made based on the slate of candidates suggested to include Nancy Wrenn, Joy Walker, and Mr. Melton. Mr. Blanton clarified that Councilman Reeves and Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker would be the Council representatives along with city staff with a possible curator? Councilman Hough stated that this was correct. Councilman Hough stated that as time goes on that there may be others based on their expertise who may need to be added to the committee.

Councilman Reeves wanted clarification that the motion included moving the artifacts as soon as possible. Councilman Meadows stated that yes this was part of the motion. Councilman Craig asked Councilwoman Harris why she voted against this motion. Councilwoman Harris stated that since she is the liaison to the Historical Society that she felt like she would be on this committee.

Councilman Meadows stated that he would be agreeable to amending the motion if Councilwoman Harris wants to be on the committee. Mayor Moore stated that he feels that this would be a good idea. Councilman Hough stated that he is ok with this and that he was just trying to get Councilman Reeves involved as a new councilmember. Mrs. Anders stated that if Councilman Hough wishes to amend his motion and Councilman Meadows wishes to second

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
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6:30 PM

that amendment then there could be a new vote. Councilman Hough stated that we would have three councilmembers on the committee and that there could be a potential quorum if the Mayor attends committee meetings. Councilman Hough stated that in the past that there have only been two Council representatives. Mrs. Anders stated that this is a good point when considering any sort of amendment to the motion.

Councilman Hough made a motion to amend his previous motion to replace Councilman Kenneth Reeves with Councilwoman Phyllis Harris and still include Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker as Council representatives for the committee. Councilman Meadows seconded the motion.

All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

2. Historical Museum Proposal for Design Services

Creech and Associates

The representative from Creech and Associates presented their design proposal. Creech and Associates stated that there were no costs listed in the packet until there is a clear understanding of the scope of services that is desired.

Councilman Hough made a motion to approve the proposal for design services from Creech and Associates. Councilman Craig seconded the motion.

All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

Councilman Meadows stated that there would need to be a budget amendment for design, project budget and for moving the artifacts. Mr. Blanton stated that for the February 12, 2024 meeting that staff would coordinate with Creech and Associates to provide a budget amendment for their project. Mr. Blanton stated that staff would coordinate with the Historical Society Museum to get an immediate cost on what is going to be needed. Councilman Meadows also mentioned the move would be in two phases.

Councilman Meadows stated that subject matter expertise would be needed and suggested a subcommittee and curator to assist. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker asked Mrs. Anders what the procedure is for creating a subcommittee. Mrs. Anders stated that if Council creates the subcommittee, then it would be up to the Council to make sure that it is created and stays that way. Mrs. Anders stated that the committee can create its own subcommittee. Mrs. Anders stated that it all depends on how much control the Council wants to have.

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
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3. Discussion of November 11, 2024 meeting schedule-Holiday ***Jonathan Blanton***

Mr. Blanton stated that the approved 2024 City Council meeting schedule lists the November 11, 2024 business meeting on Veteran's Day. Mr. Blanton stated that he is looking for direction from Council whether to keep the meeting date or move the meeting to another day. Mr. Blanton reminded Council that November 11, 2024 is a city holiday and that the offices would be closed.

Councilwoman Harris made a motion to amend the 2024 Council meeting schedule to reflect the regular meeting date be changed from November 11, 2024 to Monday, November 18, 2024. Councilman Reeves seconded the motion.

All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

4. Discussion to set a date for the 2024 City Council Retreat ***Mayor Moore***

Mayor Moore proposed Friday, March 1, 2024 beginning at 9:30 am for the 2024 Council Retreat. Councilman Craig stated that he wanted it on the record that this meeting is a public meeting.

Councilwoman Harris made a motion to amend the meeting schedule to reflect the City Council retreat date on Friday, March 1, 2024 at 9:30am. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker seconded the motion.

All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

CLOSED SESSION

1. Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S 143-318.11 (a) (3 and 5)

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to go out of the regular meeting and into closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S 143-318.11 (a) (3 and 5). Councilman Reeves made a motion to go out of the regular meeting and into closed session at 7:25 pm . Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker seconded the motion.

All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

Mayor Moore entertained a motion to come out of closed session and back into the regular meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker made a motion to come out of closed session and back into the regular meeting at 7:57 pm. Councilman Hough seconded the motion.

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
MOUNT HOLLY CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, January 22, 2024
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:30 PM

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Councilman Hough made a motion to go under contract with PID# 123831 located at 204 E. Central Avenue for \$330,000, \$10,000 earnest money, and a closing date of September 25, 2024. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker seconded the motion.

All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

Councilman Hough made a motion to go under contract with PID# 123832 located at 206 E. Central Avenue for \$425,000 with \$10,000 earnest money, a closing date of September 2, 2024, and the current owners will lease for 9 months. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker seconded the motion.

All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

Councilman Meadows made a motion to go under contract with PID# 123826 located at 132 E. Central Avenue for \$375,000, with \$5,000 due diligence, a closing date of September 2, 2024, tenant lease for 9 months, and \$15,000 moving expenses. Councilman Hough seconded the motion.

All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

ADJOURN

With no additional items for discussion, Mayor Moore entertained a motion to adjourn the January 22, 2024 Council meeting. Councilman Hough made a motion to adjourn the January 22, 2024 Council Meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Shoemaker seconded the motion.

All Council Members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.