

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
MOUNT HOLLY CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, September 14, 2009
Council Chambers
7:00 pm

Call to Order

Mayor Robert Whitt called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The following were present:

Mayor Robert Whitt	Eric Davis, City Manager
Mayor Pro-Tem David Moore	Jamie Guffey, Assistant City Manager
Councilman Jerry Bishop	Danny Jackson, Assistant City Manager
Councilman Frank McLean	James Friday, Director of Utilities
Councilman Bennie Brookshire	Dale Oplinger, Fire Chief
Councilwoman Carolyn Breyare	David Belk, Chief of Police
Kemp Michael, City Attorney	Mike Santmire, Streets and Solid Waste Director
Brooke Lopez, Attorney, Kemp Michaels' office	

Call to Order by Mayor Whitt

Mayor Whitt called the Mount Holly City Council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Invocation

Reverend Scott Anderson pastor of the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church led the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Boy Scout Troop 59 of the First United Methodist Church in Mount Holly led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Set Agenda

Mayor Whitt asked for any changes, additions or deletions to the September 14, 2009 Council Meeting agenda. Councilwoman Breyare asked that Consent Agenda Item # 1 be moved to Other Business Item #3. Mayor Whitt advised that he is switching Presentations #1 and #2. With no additional changes to the agenda, Mayor Pro Tem Moore made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilman Brookshire seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Resolution Declaring Bullet Proof Vests as Surplus Property
2. Approval of Purchase of Three New Police Vehicles
3. Approval of an Agreement for the Charlotte Regional Information Sharing System (CRISS)

Mayor Pro Tem Moore made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilman McLean seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. (Motion carried)

MINUTES

1. Approval of the minutes for the August 10, 2009 business meeting.

Councilman McLean made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2009 business meeting presented. Councilwoman Breyare seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation of Resolution Honoring Jack Stevenson

Mayor Whitt introduced Mary Jane Stevenson, the widow of Jack Stevenson and their family members. Mayor Whitt read the resolution honoring Mr. Stevenson and his time serving on the City of Mount Holly Planning Board and presented it to the family.

2. Presentation of Resolution Honoring Former Mayor Charles Black

Mayor Whitt introduced former Mayor Charles Black and his family and asked that they come forward while he presents a resolution honoring former Mayor Black. Mayor Whitt read the resolution and presented it to Mr. Black and the family. Former Mayor Black said a few words regarding his years as Mayor for the City of Mount Holly and thanked the City Officials for honoring him at tonight's meeting.

3. Presentation of Award to the Parks and Recreation Committee

Mike Waters with the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Society presented the Recreation Commission with the Outstanding Citizens Advisory Committee Award. He advised that this award was given to the Mount Holly Recreation Commission for their work in development of the Mountain Island Park, Tuck Park and Catawba Heights Park.

4. Presentation of Parks and Recreation Citizen Board Member Award

Mike Waters presented Frances Springs with the Outstanding Board Member Award from the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Society. He advised that Ms. Springs won this award for her continued service and for her work in getting PARTIF grants for Tuck Park.

5. Presentation of City Logo

Ann Danzi came before Council to ask permission to hold a contest for a design of a City logo. She advised that this logo would not take the place of the City Seal but would be a design that could be used to identify the things like directional signage for points of interest throughout the City. Council agreed to move forward with this project but the logo would have to come before Council for final approval.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Public Hearing on the application for the Community Development Block Grant

Mayor Whitt declared that we are now in the public hearing on the application for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Mr. Jackson advised that in August the City Council directed staff and consultants from Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates to pursue obtaining the necessary information to consider applying for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The grant would involve a Revitalization Project in the River Street area. The project would involve housing rehabilitation, assistance, demolition, street, drainage and sidewalk improvements. Also involved with the project would be certain improvements to River Street Park. Mr. Jackson advised that the main eligibility criterion that has to be met is that the resident income level be low to moderate according to State standards. The consultants have conducted the required field work to determine the income level of the area. At this time, Mr. Jackson introduced Mr. Walser to report on these findings. Mr. Walser advised that of the twenty-five (25) homes in the project area, seventeen (17) qualified. Mayor Pro Tem Moore commented that the City should work very hard to acquire the funds for the homes in that area that is in need of repair. Mr. Walser advised that the grant does not require any matching funds from the City and he feels somewhat confident that the City will have a good chance of being awarded the grant. There was discussion among Council regarding the project area being in the Overlay District. It was determined that the CDBG project started well over a year ago which was before the Overlay District was approved. There was no one signed up to speak at the public hearing therefore, Mayor Whitt declared that we were no longer in the public hearing. At this time, Councilman Bishop made a motion to approve the resolution for the City of Mount Holly to move forward with the application process for the Community Development Block Grant for the River Street area. Mayor Pro Tem Moore seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

PUBLIC COMMENT – Three (3) Minute Limit

Mr. George Puckett
200 Margarette Avenue
Mount Holly, NC 28120

Mr. Puckett advised that he came to last months meeting and commented on the speeders in his neighborhood. He advised that the speeding has continued and would like to know if there are any plans to do anything about this because his concern is also for the children and school zone that is on his street. Mayor Whitt advised that his issues would try to be addressed before the end of the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Consideration and Approval of the Mountain Island MOU

Mayor Whitt advised that this item was taken off the consent agenda because there were concerns from Council that this could obligate the City to spend money in the form of Police and Fire protection to this area as well as pay for things such as signage. Mayor Whitt clarified that the MOU gives the City an easement to go on forest service property for the purpose of greenways. He further advised that it states in the MOU that the City has the right to terminate the contract at any time. Mayor Pro Tem Moore made a motion to approve the Mountain Island MOU. Councilman McLean seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried).**

At this time, Mayor Whitt called a short recess.

2. Discussion of the 110 McGinnis Street/Reiser Annexation

Mr. Beal gave Council a quick refresher on the history of 110 McGinnis Street/Reiser Annexation. He reviewed the process from the time application was made up until the time Council approved the annexation with the condition that the Developer run an eight (8) inch gravity sewer line to Deerfield and the Developer maintain a private pump station and line for the purposed development. At that time, Mr. Reiser asked that Council table their decision to give him additional time to research the option. Mr. Beal advised that Mr. Reiser has recently requested to come back before Council regarding the project. Mr. Beal added that he and Mr. Friday have met with Mr. Reiser several times and checked on the cost of the eight (8) inch gravity line and the pump station as set by Council and this is a very costly option. Furthermore, Old Hickory Grove Road sits on a ridge line therefore it would promote additional pump stations in the area. There was discussion among Council regarding the pump station and the eight (8) inch gravity line option. Another option that Mr. Reiser would like considered is for the City to sell him water as an outside customer. After the discussion Council agreed with Staff's recommendation and Councilman Bishop made the motion to call for a Public Hearing at the October Meeting on the Re-Zoning of the property at 110 McGinnis Street. Mayor Pro Tem Moore seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. (Motion carried). The public hearing will be held at the October 12, 2009 Council Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Consideration and Approval of the Re-naming of an Existing Pawn Shop

Mr. Beal advised that according to Section 10.6 of the City Code, applicants that are applying to open a pawn shop in Mount Holly have to come before Council for approval. Mr. Beal introduced Kent Houge, the applicant for the proposed pawn shop. Mr. Houge advised that he is a resident of Mount Holly and is looking forward to opening his business in here. Mr. Beal advised that all of Mr. Houge's credentials have checked out and the proposed site at 908 Timberlane Drive has served as a pawn shop in the past. Councilwoman Breyare made a motion to approve the application from Mr. Houge for a pawn shop to be located at 908 Timberlane Drive. Councilman Bishop seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Junk Vehicle Enforcement

Mr. Jackson came before Council to ask for direction regarding the enforcement process of junk vehicles. He advised that Staff has completed an assessment of the junk vehicles within the city limits and in the past have enforced this ordinance concerning junk vehicles on a complaint driven basis. Mr. Jackson asked Council if they would prefer that Staff enforce the ordinance as written or on a complaint driven basis. Councilman Bishop commented that junk vehicles have been a problem in Mount Holly for several years. He feels if the ordinance is not going to be enforced then Council should do away with the ordinance all together. It is the consensus of the City Council to move forward with the enforcement of the Junk vehicle Ordinance.

2. Status Report on Marketing of City Owned Properties

Mayor Whitt advised that this item will be handled as a closed session item.

3. Budget Amendments

Councilwoman Breyare commented that she was somewhat confused after reading the information on regarding the budget amendments as to what they are for. Mr. Guffey explained that one is for funds that have been received through fines, forfeitures and penalties by the Police Department that must be turned over to Gaston County Schools. He advised that the second one is for reimbursements that the Fire Department has received from the insurance company for damages to the fire engine. The third is one is for the Black History Sidewalk Project. He advised that the City holds the money for that Committee. Mayor Pro Tem Moore made a motion to approve the budget amendments. Councilman Bishop seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mayor Whitt asked Ms. Pritchard to report on the vandalism at the skate park. Ms. Pritchard advised that it started out as small things like trash and graffiti but has gotten much worse over the past two (2) weeks. She advised that the Police have been contacted but no arrests have been made. Council was upset that they were not made aware of the vandalism situation sooner. Councilman Bishop made the motion to appropriate funds to the Police Department for an extra officer to patrol Tuck Park at all times. Councilman Brookshire seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor.

Mayor Pro Tem Moore asked the status of the video cameras for Tuck Park. Mr. Guffey advised that Staff is currently working on the price of the cameras.

Mr. Davis advised that he included a letter from the State regarding the waste treatment plant. He advised that the information in the letter is said to affect only the waste treatment plants located in the Catawba River Basin. Therefore narrowing it down to Belmont and Mount Holly waste treatment plants only. Mayor Whitt asked for Council's permission to write a response letter to the State to dispute the claims. It was the consensus of Council to move forward with the letter.

Mr. Davis reported that the occupancy tax bill has been ratified. He advised that Staff will be providing additional information in the near future.

Mr. Davis reported that the Parks and Recreation Department is using inmate labor at the cost of \$1.00 per day. He advised that the Streets Department and the Utilities Department are looking to use this program as well.

Mr. Davis reported that the Police Department is trying a new electronic citation program. The citations are written on laptops and automatically downloaded at the end of the day to the Clerk of Courts office.

Mr. Davis reminded Council of the Marking the Thread Event tomorrow at 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Davis reported that the City served as a host site for a webinar regarding H1N1. He advised that Department Heads and staff from some adjoining cities attended.

Mr. Davis reported that Staff is beginning preparation for the 2nd Citizens Academy Program. He advised that the City plans to have 15 students and plans to start the program a few weeks earlier this year as well as shorten the length of each night.

REPORTS

Councilman McLean commented that the backyard at the residence at 210 Madison Drive is in terrible shape and suggested that the Zoning Department go out and look at it.

Councilman Brookshire thanked Staff for the appearance of Main Street.

Councilman Bishop asked for an update on the status of the speed bumps at Tuck Park. Mr. Guffey advised that Staff is working on getting cost estimates for the project. Councilman Bishop also suggested that Staff put a sign up at the dog park warning the citizens of the mud in that particular area.

Councilman Bishop asked the status of the house on Linear Street that was hit by the fire truck. Chief Oplinger reported that the fire truck has been repaired. He advised that the insurance company is getting ready to settle with the homeowners in regard to the house. He further advised that the house is very likely to be a total loss and is going to be demolished.

Councilwoman Breyare commented that one of the senior citizen's called her and wanted to know what happened to the bulletin board at the Tuck Center. Ms. Pritchard advised that the board was moved to the opposite wall so staff could paint.

Mayor Whitt asked if it was normal practice for the City to put up the banners for the Autumn on Main event. Mr. Guffey responded that this is not normal practice for the City but agreed to help out after receiving a phone call asking for help.

Mr. Davis reported that Mike Santmire had gall bladder surgery and has had somewhat of a relapse. He has been communicating with staff via email and hopes to be back next week.

Mayor Whitt informed Council that the dinner for former Mayor Charles Black cost \$763. This will come out of the Council's budget line item for special events.

Mayor Pro Tem Moore commented that he would get in touch with the Sports Page regarding the Council's Christmas Party and schedule it for the first Monday in December.

CLOSED SESSION

1. Closed Session (*pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes 143-318.11 (a)(3)&(6)*)

At this time, Councilman McLean made a motion to enter into closed session. Councilman Brookshire seconded the motion. All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion carried)

Mayor Pro Tem Moore made a motion to come out of closed session. Councilwoman Breyare seconded the motion. All Council members voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

Mayor Whitt advised that no action was taken during closed session.

ADJOURN

With no additional items for discussion, Mayor Whitt entertained a motion to adjourn. Councilman McLean made the motion to adjourn the September 14, 2009 Council meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Moore seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. **(Motion carried)**

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.