

## **JUNE 15, 2020**

A Special Called Meeting was held at the M.S. Bailey Center at 5:00 PM with Mayor McLean presiding with Councilmembers Cook, Jenkins, Neal, Kuykendall, Roth, and Walsh. The City Attorney and the Assistant City Manager were present. The meeting was held in person for Council and City staff with the press being able to view the meeting on the City's Facebook. Notice was sent to all local news media on June 12, 2020.

- INVOCATION** The invocation was given by Reverend John Baughn from Grace Baptist Church.
- PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE** Mayor McLean asked Council and the audience to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.
- PUBLIC HEARING  
BUDGET FY 2020-21** Mayor McLean stated that the first item on the agenda is a Public Hearing regarding the proposed fiscal year 2020-21 budget for the City of Clinton. Mayor McLean stated that if citizens wishing to ask questions regarding the budget may post their questions on Facebook and City staff would answer them. Mayor McLean stated that if anyone present wanted to speak may come to the podium one at a time. Mayor McLean opened the floor for comments. Council and City staff did not receive any questions or comments. Motion was made by Councilmember Cook to close the Public Hearing and seconded by Councilmember Kuykendall. The vote was unanimous.
- SECOND READING  
ORDINANCE  
BUDGET 2020-21** Mayor McLean stated that the next item on the agenda is the second reading of an Ordinance to appropriate and raise revenue and adopt a budget for the City of Clinton, SC, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. Councilmember Walsh asked if the \$180,000 the City would receive for the School Resource Officers is reoccurring or just a one-time amount and Ms. Morrow, Finance Director, stated it is reoccurring revenue. Councilmember Walsh asked where is the Advertising Expense in the budget. Ms. Morrow stated that each department carries an Advertising Expense in their budget. Ms. Morrow stated that this expense is listed as Legal Ads and Advertising. Councilmember Walsh asked if the Police Budget has funds for Community events in order to build Community relations. Ms. Morrow stated that the 2020-21 budget has an expense account named Marketing and it is for City-wide events. Ms. Morrow stated that this expense account is in the Public Works Administrative budget. Councilmember Walsh asked if the City has seen a decrease in revenue due to COVID-19 and Ms. Morrow stated no just a fluctuation in the City's cash flow. Ms. Morrow stated that some revenue streams would not reflect COVID-19 issues until next year such as Business License.

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Ms. Morrow stated that next year the City may see the repercussion from COVID-19. Ms. Morrow stated that currently the City has not seen a downside to the Revenues. Councilmember Walsh asked if the City starts to see a significant change because of COVID-19 what procedures would City staff follow. Ms. Morrow stated that Council could revise the budget. Ms. Morrow stated that the City has procedures in the Financial Policy to follow when Council revises a budget. Ms. Morrow stated that City staff also reviews the Financial Statements on a monthly basis. Ms. Morrow stated that City Staff would look at the budget by November to see what if any effect COVID-19 is having on the City's revenues and expenses. Councilmember Roth asked if City staff anticipated a revised budget and Ms. Morrow stated revising the budget would depend on how COVID-19 affected the City's largest utility customers. Councilmember Walsh asked who are the City's largest customers and Ms. Morrow stated Asten Press, Presbyterian College, Bi-Lo, and Ingles. Councilmember Jenkins asked if the budget contains funds for the Martha Dendy project. Mr. Higgs, Assistant City Manager, stated that the City did not budget those funds in a particular expense account. Mr. Higgs stated that the City would pull those funds from other accounts. Mr. Higgs stated that the City is waiting to see if the Martha Dendy Project is accepted by the Sales Tax Commission. Mr. Higgs stated that if Council wishes to use funds for the Martha Dendy Project then the City would make those funds available. Councilmember Jenkins asked who makes the decision on where the City's ads are sent. Mr. Higgs stated that each department usually makes the decision on where to place the ads but the City Manager has the authority to make the final decision. Councilmember Cook asked if City staff could give Council a dollar amount on how the Bi-Lo closing would affect the City and Ms. Morrow agreed. Mr. Higgs stated that the Economic Development Department is working on bringing in another grocery store. Councilmember Jenkins asked which services are being increased in the proposed budget. Ms. Morrow stated that the garbage pickup would increase by \$1 and the Water Rate has a 12% increase which affects the average water user by \$1.75 to \$2.00 a month. Councilmember Jenkins asked if the proposed garbage fees would include the pickup of two cans and Ms. Morrow stated yes. Councilmember Roth made a motion to approve the second reading of the Ordinance to appropriate and raise revenue and adopt a budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021 and seconded by Councilmember Neal. The vote was six to one with Councilmember Jenkins voting no.

**WATER TAP  
RECREATION  
COMPLEX**

Mayor McLean stated that the next item on the agenda is to authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Gar-Con for an eight inch Water Tap at the Recreation Complex on Highway 56. Motion was made by Councilmember Kuykendall to authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Gar-Con for a Water Tap and seconded by Councilmember Neal. The vote was unanimous.

**PURCHASE  
SCADA**

Mayor McLean stated that the next item on the agenda is to authorize the City Manager to make an emergency purchase to replace the failed Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System (SCADA). Mayor McLean stated that the SCADA System is used to monitor and switch power in the City's Substations. Mayor McLean stated that the low bid was Atlantic Power for \$10, 544. Councilmember Cook made a motion to authorize the City Manager to purchase the SCADA equipment for a cost not to exceed \$10,544 from Atlantic Power and seconded by Councilmember Jenkins. The vote was unanimous.

**ADMINISTRATIVE  
BRIEFING**

**CODE  
ENFORCEMENT**

**JULY 4TH**

Mayor McLean recognized Mr. Higgs. Mr. Higgs stated that at the last Council meeting Council discussed the City's Code Enforcement procedures. Mr. Higgs stated that he has met with Code Enforcement concerning these issues. Mr. Higgs stated that within the last sixty days Code Enforcement had eighty-two reported cases and twenty-seven of those cases have been resolved. Mr. Higgs stated that City staff is in the beginning stages of monitoring Code Enforcement's progress but Council would receive a monthly update on this progress. Mr. Higgs stated that the City would celebrate July the Fourth on Friday, July 3, 2020 and the City's offices would be closed. Councilmember Walsh stated that the City Manager told her that the Rhythm on the Rails would be discussed during the Administrative Briefing. After some discussion Councilmember Walsh agreed to discuss the event during her Reports and Recommendations.

**AMEND AGENDA**

Mayor McLean stated that the Councilmember's Reports and Recommendations have been left off the agenda and there is a need to amend the agenda and include the reports. Motion was made by Councilmember Jenkins to amend the agenda and seconded by Councilmember Walsh. The vote was unanimous.

**COUNCILMEMBER  
REPORT**

Councilmember Jenkins stated that the Martha Dendy Community Group would like to meet with Council regarding the Martha Dendy property.

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Mr. Higgs stated that if it is the will of Council to call a Special Called meeting then City staff would be able to facilitate the virtual meeting.

Motion was made by Councilmember Jenkins to hold a virtual Special Called meeting with the Martha Dendy Community Group on Monday, June 29, 2020 at 6:00 PM and seconded by Councilmember Walsh. The vote was unanimous. Councilmember Jenkins stated that the City has pulled their ads from the Clinton Chronicle and are sending the ads to other newspapers without discussion from the full Council. Councilmember Jenkins stated that she wanted to know why the City does not support the only local newspaper in Clinton. Councilmember Jenkins stated that this local business pays a business license, property taxes, and utilities. Councilmember Jenkins stated whether the City does not agree with the articles or the mistakes made in the articles this is the only local newspaper Clinton has and the City should support this local business. Councilmember Jenkins stated that there are not any ads in regards to the Council meetings especially the Public Hearing regarding the budget and many of our citizens cannot afford to buy more than one newspaper. Councilmember Jenkins stated that the City Manager is responsible for the daily operations of the City but according to State law Council has the authority to enquire about any conduct of any office or department of the Municipality and make an investigation of the Municipal affairs and give the information to the public. Councilmember Jenkins stated that the City has always spent tax payer's dollars within Clinton when possible. Councilmember Jenkins stated that she would like to know why the City is not putting the City's ads in the Clinton Chronicle. Councilmember Jenkins stated that she would like a response at the next Council meeting and Mr. Higgs agreed.

Councilmember Kuykendall stated that he appreciates what Code Enforcement has accomplished. Councilmember Kuykendall stated that he wanted Code Enforcement to turn their attention to the citizen who lodges a complaint about a neighborhood issue and Mr. Higgs agreed. Mr. Higgs stated that the City is working on streamlining the Code Enforcement procedures and upgrading the process.

Councilmember Walsh stated that she was of the understanding that Council would discuss Rhythm on the Rails at this meeting. Councilmember Walsh stated that since last Friday the COVID-19 numbers have doubled. Councilmember Walsh stated that there are 163 COVID-19 cases in Laurens County. Councilmember Walsh stated that she is very concerned with holding a mass gathering in Clinton and endangering the public health of the citizens.

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Councilmember Walsh stated that she has been contacted by many citizens with the same concerns. Councilmember Walsh stated that if someone is infected at an event then the citizen returns to work and family. Councilmember Jenkins stated that there 55 new cases in Clinton. Councilmember Jenkins stated that she has spoken with several doctors concerning COVID-19 and the doctors emphasis that this virus is real and citizens with underlying medical issues should be very cautious. Councilmember Jenkins stated that she appreciated what the Main Street Director has done but this is a critical time. Councilmember Jenkins stated that she has not discouraged anyone from attending the event but several people have asked her how she feels about the event. Councilmember Jenkins stated that she answers these questions by telling them she would not attend Rhythm on the Rails but she leaves it up to each individual person to make that decision. Mr. Higgs stated that according to DHEC Laurens County have 140 active COVID-19 cases and 4 deaths. Mayor McLean stated that Laurens County has 70,000 citizens. Mr. Higgs stated that the City has not received any negative comments regarding Rhythm on the Rails. Ms. Alducin, Main Street Director, stated that the City has limited the number of vendors so the City could space them far apart. Ms. Alducin stated that DHEC's regulations for COVID-19 would be posted downtown. Ms. Alducin stated that the vendors have to sign a release that they have read the DHEC guidelines and would follow the guidelines. Ms. Alducin stated that the food vendors would be inspected on Friday when they set up and also on Saturday by the City's Fire Department. Ms. Alducin stated that there would be hand sanitizer and hand washing stations downtown. Mayor McLean stated that the YMCA, CrossFit, churches, Lowes and other businesses are now open. Mayor McLean stated that no one knows what the answer is. Mayor McLean stated that he read that the virus would not go away until at least 75% of people have COVID-19. Mayor McLean stated that there are all kinds of information and news regarding COVID-19. Mr. Higgs stated that per Councilmember Cook's request the City did reach out to the City's insurance company for guidance regarding the event. Mr. Higgs stated that the City sent the insurance company a detail list of how the City was preparing for the Rhythm on the Rails. Mr. Higgs stated that the insurance company would not commit to any type of approval but the insurance company did state they would follow the proper procedures if a claim is reported. Mr. Higgs stated that the insurance company did say that the City is putting actions in place to mitigate the COVID-19 risk and the City does not have disease exclusion in our policy. Councilmember Cook asked who would make the call Saturday if citizens or vendors are not practicing social distancing.

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Mr. Higgs stated that the City does not have a mandate that declares who would oversee this event. Mr. Higgs stated that each situation would be treated on a case by case matter. Mr. Higgs stated that a City team who has worked on this event from the beginning would oversee any issues during the event. Mr. Higgs stated that the team consists of senior City staff, Police Department and the Fire Department. Mr. Higgs stated that the City has contacted other agencies for backup support if the need arises. Mr. Wham, City Attorney, stated that the Governor's Executive Order allows Police to disperse a crowd of three or more. Mr. Higgs stated that the City has a Communication Plan as well as a Security Plan in place for the event. Mr. Higgs thanked the citizens for believing in the City and he trusts citizen's judgement on whether or not to attend and follow the rules set up for the event. Mr. Wham stated that the latest Executive Order did delete the restrictions on mass gatherings for a City or a County in regards to hosting an event. Councilmember Walsh stated that she appreciates all of the work put into this event but her concern deals with the public health of the citizens. Councilmember Walsh stated that as businesses have opened up the COVID-19 cases have also gone up. Councilmember Kuykendall stated that many citizens are no longer using precautions against COVID-19. Councilmember Kuykendall stated that Councilmember Walsh's concerns are valid. Councilmember Walsh stated that work place COVID-19 procedures need to be on the agenda for the next Council meeting. Councilmember Walsh stated that an incident happened in her neighborhood Saturday night and she received several comments about the problem. Councilmember Walsh stated that the City's parks are closed after dark and the Police Department needs to patrol City parks.

**ADJOURN**

With there being no further business before Council Councilmember Jenkins made a motion to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Councilmember Cook. The vote was unanimous.

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CITY CLERK

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**MAYOR**