

**Minutes
Town Council Meeting
May 16, 2006
PROSPERITY, SC 29127
7:00 PM**

Council Attendance: Mayor Larry Spotts, Councilmen: G.W. Dawkins
Allen Gallman, Chad Hawkins, & Derek Underwood

Administrative Attendance: Karen Livingston, Clerk Treasurer; Sgt. Scott
Wilson, Prosperity Officer; Fred Sexton, Utility
Director; Sabrina Manning, Recreation Director

Mayor Spotts called the meeting to order. Mayor Spotts welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for attending. Councilman Gallman opened the meeting with prayer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Spotts stated that there is one set of minutes that need to be approved. He presented the minutes from the April 18, 2006 meeting for approval.

A MOTION by Councilman Gallman to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2006 meeting; Seconded by Councilman Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

OPEN SESSION

Mayor Spotts asked if anyone was signed up to speak. Karen Livingston presented the sign in sheet to Mayor Spotts. Mayor Spotts stated that there two people to speak, Casey McCarty and Daniel Hare.

Casey McCarty stated he was here tonight on behalf of the Prosperity Rescue Squad. He wanted to thank the Town of Prosperity for their financial support and noted that any future help would be appreciated.

Daniel Hare was here tonight to ask what the projected plans were for the gymnasium; Mayor Spotts stated that no plans have been made at this time for the gymnasium and auditorium. Mayor Spotts stated that a new basketball court has been completed at Town Center and plans are made to add a basketball court at Langford Street. Mr. Hare stated that he was asking for the community.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Electrical, Fire Dept., Parade Comm. & Rescue Squad: Councilman Underwood stated that power has been supplied to the Piggly Wiggly beginning May 5, 2006. He also informed the council that were several line items that were in the red on department budget due in part to the new business needs (wires, transformers, poles, etc.), however,

Councilman Underwood stated that next month he would have a better grasp on several line items coming in under budget and hopes that the electrical budget will wash itself out. Mr. Underwood other departments are being discussed under old and new business.

Sanitation, Streets, Buildings & Parks Departments: Councilman Dawkins stated that the sidewalk work was halfway to three quarter ways done. Councilman Dawkins also stated that there have complaints about the red light in front of Mark Bowers store, people coming from below the town have a hard time making a left turn with the build up of on coming traffic. Councilman Dawkins asked Councilman Hawkins if a left turn arrow could be installed. Councilman Hawkins is going to check with the SCDOT to see if a light could be installed. Fred Sexton was asked by Mayor Spotts to check with the Newberry SCDOT Maintenance office to see what can be done with the light situation. Councilman Dawkins has gotten some bids on repairing the ditch between Gina Mays and Anderson Drive. Henry Bufkin and Mr. Dawkins are going to send letters out to owners of abandoned and run down property.

Water and Sewer: Councilman Gallman stated that there were minor leaks and one minor stoppage but nothing to report on at this time.

Police Department: Chief Sease was absent and Officer Wilson had no report at this time. Mayor Spotts verified that Officers were checking on local businesses and Officer Wilson stated that they were.

Recreation: Councilman Hawkins stated that the Town was applying for grant money to do the Langford Street basketball court, and to fix up the roadside park in an effort to get people to stop. Councilman Hawkins stated that in the process of looking into the basketball court grant, that we were made aware of some money left over from a previous grant. The left over grant money has been used to repair the Town Center basketball court, the dugouts at Town Center and Langford Street have had concrete poured into them, a slope was poured around the picnic shelter to ensure safety when stepping off the edge, and the handicap ramp was repaired. Councilman Hawkins stated the lights on the pony league field were being repaired and hopefully with grant money we will be able to replace the lights. Mayor Spotts thanked John Dawkins for the County's financial help with this project. Councilman Hawkins stated that last meeting it was brought up that the needed adult recreation. Councilman Hawkins called Mrs. Dillingham with the Wellness Center at Newberry County Memorial Hospital to see if they would be interested in helping the town with a Wellness Program. Ms. Dillingham agreed to help by working with our recreation department to begin a stretching class on Tuesday and Friday beginning June 6, 2006 Councilman Hawkins read a letter sent by Mrs. Dillingham. (Attached)

Utility Department: Mr. Sexton had no report at this time. Mayor Spotts asked Mr. Sexton if he had the fuel tanks moved. Mr. Sexton has received bids to move the tanks.

Town Attorney: Mr. Bufkin was absent and had no report.

Clerk/Treasurer: Ms. Livingston had no report at this time since the budget will be introduced under new business.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Underwood brought up the fact that during the budget workshop he asked that the Town pay for the Rescue Squad utilities. The Council and Clerk-Treasurer took the request for information until a vote could be taken during Council.

A MOTION by Councilman Underwood for the Town to pay the Prosperity Rescue Squad utilities beginning with the July 1, 2006 billing. This motion also includes that the utilities will be a separate line item on the budget beginning with the 2006-2007 budget. Seconded by Councilman Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Spotts asked Ms. Livingston to comment on the dead trees in the parking lot. Ms. Livingston stated that the property including the parking lot is owned by the Newberry County School District; however, some of the dead trees are on our property as well as the school district. Ms. Livingston asked Council what their thoughts were on removing all the trees on the parcel that the Town owns. Councilman Underwood stated that he would rather just remove the dead trees. Councilman Hawkins asked if there were enough trees to make any money off of them. Ms. Livingston stated that she had not gotten any bids to remove the trees. Councilman Dawkins stated if the School District would deed all the property to us we would take care of all the dead trees. Council agreed that we might want to look into acquiring that piece of land. Council agreed to remove the dead trees only at this time.

Mayor Spotts stated that the date for the second quarter Town Talk needed to be set. The date was set for June 14, 2006 at 6:00-7:30

A MOTION by Councilman Gallman to set June 14, 2006 as the date for the second quarter Town Talk. Seconded by Councilman Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Spotts asked Mr. Underwood to explain the Fire Rebate Insurance to Council. Mr Underwood stated that each year the Town receives from the County a rebate that has been used to upkeep the town's fire protection. The County has asked us to rescind the fire rebate for the next two years to help off set cost of tearing down the old town hall and rebuilding the new fire station. The Mayor stated that over the two year period the amount put back into our fire station would be \$24,000.00. Chief Bowers added that the fire department has committed to \$10,000 out of their treasury to go toward the new fire station. He went on to say that when they went before the 1-cent committee they asked for \$375,000 and at the time they thought that was all they would need however, now with the architectural fees price of steel going up it is now \$500,000 so we are going to

be \$75,000 – \$80,000 short so with the money from those two checks and the money we are putting in along with the county moving money from one project to another, we will not have to change the size or design of our building and we are getting a half million dollar building for \$35,000. Mayor Spotts stated that we wanted to see the fire department get the building they want without having to cut down the size just to make the cost where you can pay for it.

A MOTION by Councilman Underwood to rescind rebates back to the county Seconded by Councilman Dawkins and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Spotts stated that he had talked to John David Dawkins and he wants the Town to deed the property of the old town hall to Newberry County and they will take care of the demolition. Mr. Bufkin was contacted and stated that that was proper procedure. Mark Bowers asked if this included the current firehouse building. Mayor Spotts responded that it did.

A MOTION by Councilman Dawkins to transfer by deed the property including the old Town Hall and firehouse to Newberry County. Seconded by Councilman Underwood and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Spotts asked for the First Reading of the 06- 07 Budget. Mayor Spotts stated that this is the first time in four years that we have a budget that everyone agrees on. This budget includes raises for employees, money going into reserves, and there is money going into capital gains to purchase new computers and a server. With this budget there would be no increase in any services: electric rates, water rates, sewer rates, or nothing for the citizens, the rates stay the same and yet we are able to do these extra things because we cut corners in different places. Mayor Spotts asked Ms. Livingston to give the figures for the 06-07 budget. Our budget is balanced at \$428,190.00 for the general fund and \$1,310,595.00 for the utility budget. Our total operating budget is \$1,738,785.00, which includes the \$1500.00 for the rescue squad utilities. Councilman Underwood stated that the increase in revenue was due to the opening of the new Piggly Wiggly store.

A MOTION by Councilman Underwood to approve the first reading of the budget. Seconded by Councilman Hawkins and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Spotts introduced Ms. Linda Spence with the Christmas Parade Committee. Ms. Spence stated that she has served on the Parade Committee for 11 years and has been the acting secretary for the past 10. Ms Spence asked that council consider building a cover for the Town float. Ms. Spence reminded Council that the previous administration had promised a cover for the float but then was unable to find money in the budget to erect the cover. Ms. Spence stated that this float represents the town and it's volunteers. It is the last entry that is seen by everyone and therefore holds the lasting impression. We need to continue to make it a good one. Ms. Spence had gotten some bids ranging in price from \$2300 to \$2500. Mayor Spotts asked that Council take Ms. Spence's

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presentation for information and take a look around and see where we could put a shelter for the float and add the shelter for the float to the June Agenda.

Councilman Hawkins stated that since he was elected to Council he had to resign from the Planning and Zoning Commission and has asked Council to appoint Trey Duncan to the planning commission

A MOTION by Councilman Hawkins to appoint Trey Duncan as Prosperity representative for the Newberry Planning Commission. Seconded by Councilman Underwood and so approved unanimously.

Mayor Spotts asked Ms. Livingston to notify Mr. Duncan of his appointment.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Mayor Spotts stated that Prosperity was the third cheapest city on electricity in the SCAMPS System in South Carolina.

Mayor Spotts stated that we did not have as many people as he would have liked to see participate in the Prosperity clean up. He stated that there were plenty of bags and gloves in Fred's Office if anyone would like to clean up.

Mayor Spotts stated that Prosperity would host the Governmental dinner on May 30, 2006.

Mayor Spotts stated that Newberry County was possibly going to initiate a hospitality tax for the entire county, however, the county council decided not to implement the tax. Prosperity was looking at the option of putting the hospitality tax on the town our self to keep the money in Prosperity, however, now that Newberry County declined the tax, Prosperity decided not to pursue the tax as well. If Newberry County decides to go back and put the hospitality tax in place they have decided to leave the towns alone and just implement the tax in the unincorporated areas of the county.

Mayor Spotts recognized Poppy Weekend as May 27 – 29 and he has asked everyone to wear a poppy to show support for all our military veterans in the county, state, and in the whole country.

A MOTION by Councilman Dawkins to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 pm; Seconded by Councilman Underwood and so approved unanimously.

Karen L. Livingston/Clerk Treasurer