

Salisbury, North Carolina  
December 15, 2015

## **REGULAR MEETING**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Karen Kirks Alexander, Presiding; Mayor Pro Tem Maggie A. Blackwell; Council Members Kenneth L. Hardin, William Brian Miller, and David B. Post; City Manager W. Lane Bailey; City Clerk Myra B. Heard, and City Attorney F. Rivers Lawther, Jr.

**ABSENT:** None.

Salisbury City Council met in Council Chambers in City Hall located at 217 South Main Street. The invocation was given by Mayor Pro Tem Blackwell. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Alexander at 4:00 p.m.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Alexander led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

## **RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

Mayor Alexander welcomed all visitors present.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **(a) Approval of Minutes**

Approve Minutes of the Regular Meetings of November 17, 2015 and December 1, 2015.

(b) Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for Taxi Owners

Approve the second reading for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for Taxi Owners for Mr. Abdullah Hasan, DBA as Essential Taxi Service.

(c) Street Closure

Receive a petition to close a portion of Highland Avenue and adopt a Resolution setting a public hearing for January 19, 2016.

RESOLUTION PERTAINING TO THE PROPOSED CLOSING OF A PORTION OF HIGHLAND AVENUE, AND SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING FOR JANUARY 19, 2016.

(The above Resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book No. 15 at Page No. 29, and is known as Resolution 2015-25)

Thereupon, Mr. Blackwell made a **motion** to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Mr. Hardin seconded the motion.

Councilmember Post asked how many readings are required for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity for Taxi Owners. City Attorney Rivers Lawther stated the Certificate requires two readings because it is considered a franchise.

Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Meses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

**VOLUNTARY ANNEXATION – CORBIN ACRES PHASE 2**

City Engineer Wendy Brindle explained Corbin Acres is a residential neighborhood located outside of the primary City limits. She reviewed an annexation map, and she pointed out Corbin Acres and its proximity to Bringle Ferry and Newsome Roads.

Ms. Brindle explained the developer is requesting Phase 2 of Corbin Acres be annexed. She indicated the total acreage is 18.42 acres. She noted staff found the voluntary annexation meets North Carolina General Statute requirements for satellite annexation. She noted the annexation will be effective December 31, 2015.

(b) Mayor Alexander convened a public hearing, after due notice thereof, to receive comments regarding the voluntary annexation of Corbin Acres Phase 2.

There being no one to speak, Mayor Alexander closed the public hearing.

Thereupon, Mr. Hardin made a **motion** to adopt an Ordinance to extend the corporate limits of the City of Salisbury, North Carolina, to include 18.42 acres, Tax Map 58 Parcel 91, Corbin Acres Phase 2. Mr. Miller seconded the motion. Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Meses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

ORDINANCE TO EXTEND THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA, TO INCLUDE 18.42 ACRES, TAX MAP 58 PARCEL 91, CORBIN ACRES PHASE 2.

(The above Ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book No. 25 at Page Nos. 88-89, and is known as Ordinance 2015-44)

**POOL HALL APPLICATION – MR. CHRIS T. EARNHARDT**

Salisbury Police Captain Melonie Thompson addressed Council regarding an application for a pool hall permit for Mr. Chris T. Earnhardt, owner of South Gate Barber and Billiards located at 113 and 115 Mooresville Road.

Capt. Thompson noted a site inspection was conducted November 24, 2015, and the property was found to be clean, sanitary, and facing a public street. She stated a limited review of Mr. Earnhardt's background was conducted, and the establishment and Mr. Earnhardt meet the criteria required by City Code.

Capt. Thompson stated the establishment is for-profit and will be open seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 midnight. She added alcohol will not be served at this location. She noted the business will operate five pool tables, and the regulations for operating a pool hall have been explained to Mr. Earnhardt. She pointed out the property is zoned Corridor Mixed-Use (CMX) which allows a pool hall.

Councilmember Hardin asked if staff received any calls from area citizens regarding the pool hall permit. Capt. Thompson noted staff has not received any calls from the community regarding the application. She noted an ad was placed in the *Salisbury Post* to make the public aware of the application.

(b) Mayor Alexander convened a public hearing, after due notice thereof, to receive comments regarding the issuance of a pool hall permit for Mr. Chris T. Earnhardt.

There being no one to address Council, Mayor Alexander closed the public hearing.

Mr. Hardin asked if the proposed pool hall would create traffic delays or bring an influx of people to the area. Capt. Thompson stated she did not think the pool hall would substantially increase area traffic. She pointed out the establishment will close by 10:00 p.m. most days.

Thereupon, Mr. Miller made a **motion** to issue a permit for Mr. Chris T. Earnhardt to operate a pool hall located at 113 and 115 Mooresville Road. Mr. Post seconded the motion. Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Mses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE GRANT – WALLACE DRY GOODS**

Downtown Salisbury, Inc. Executive Director Paula Bohland and Salisbury-Rowan Economic Development Commission Executive Director Robert Van Geons addressed Council regarding Economic Development Incentive Grants for a building renovation and business expansion project for the Wallace Dry Goods Building, located at 114-118 East Fisher Street. Ms. Bohland reviewed the request:

- \$2.3 million potential investment in the City
- Approximately \$192,280 in new tax revenue will be generated for the City over the next 10 years
  - Based upon \$.66 tax rate
- Creation of 4 full time and 8 part time jobs
- 14 upper level apartment units impacting the downtown economy by approximately \$262,000 per year
- An opportunity to restore and improve the value of a historic building
- Add commercial/retail businesses to downtown

Ms. Bohland noted the request is from Wallace Properties which is owned by Lee and Lane Wallace. She added Wallace Properties has been involved in real estate in the City since 1867.

Ms. Bohland reviewed the potential project:

- The project will renovate and repurpose two upper level floors, creating 14 apartments
- A new restaurant and commercial space will be added to the street level commercial space
- Wallace Properties intends to renovate, expand, and repurpose the building creating approximately 26,447 square feet of mixed-use space positively impacting the economic viability of Fisher Street and the downtown
- The investment will directly and indirectly increase the City's tax base

Ms. Bohland explained Wallace Properties is requesting \$200,000 in grant funding from the City:

- \$50,000 from the Building Renovation Grant Program to assist in the renovation, expansion, and repurposing of the building
- \$100,000 from the Residential Production Grant to assist with creation of residential units
- \$25,000 from the Residential Utilities Grant to assist with upgrades to the water and sewer infrastructure
- \$25,000 from the Fire Suppression Grant for sprinkler system installation

Mr. Van Geons reviewed potential improvements to the property. He pointed out the first floor will house a restaurant and two commercial spaces, and the second and third floors will include 16,710 square feet of residential space.

Mr. Van Geons reviewed the fiscal and economic impact of the proposed project. He commented the project will be cash flow positive and generate more revenue than the initial expense. He pointed out the project must increase the existing tax base to be considered for a grant, and he added grants are performance-based which limits the risk to the City.

Mr. Van Geons explained the project will create \$19,228 in revenue annually for the City and the Municipal Service District (MSD), based upon the City's current tax rate of \$.66, a projected investment of \$2,300,000, and a completion date of December 31, 2016.

Ms. Bohland then reviewed the economic impact the additional residential units will create for the City. She pointed out:

- Wallace Properties agrees to create at least 12 new jobs in the restaurant by December 31, 2016
- Wallace Properties will provide 14 upper-level downtown housing units by December 31, 2016
- The City will award \$200,000 in incentive grant funds to Wallace Properties through the Downtown Salisbury Incentives Grant Program

Councilmember Hardin asked for clarification regarding the \$2.3 million investment. Mr. Van Geons noted \$2.3 million will be invested in physical improvements to the property. Mr. Hardin asked if the City's investment could be a catalyst for other projects. Mr. Bohland referenced the Bernhardt Building on North Main Street, and she pointed out high-end shops followed the development and additional development is planned for the area. She commented people living in upper stories of downtown buildings help stabilize the local economy.

Councilmember Post asked if the development would take away from public parking. Ms. Bohland stated she does not anticipate a loss of parking spaces since the Wallace's own a large parking lot near the building. Mr. Post asked if the residential units will be condos or rentals. Ms. Bohland noted the residential units will be rentals.

Mr. Post pointed out East Fisher (Brick) Street has an active night life. He asked if there has been discussion regarding how the active night life would affect the residents living along Fisher Street. Mr. Van Geons noted people who live along Brick Street are buying into the Brick Street night life. Ms. Bohland pointed out the residential units are being marketed to those who enjoy an active lifestyle.

Mr. Post asked when the grants will be disbursed. Ms. Bohland noted the owner will be reimbursed for the work after a Certificate of Occupancy (COA) is issued. Mr. Post asked if the company would forfeit the grants if the project is not completed by December 31, 2016. Ms. Bohland commented that is part of the agreement. Mr. Van Geons added Wallace Properties could request an extension from Council.

Mr. Post asked about the size of the restaurant. Ms. Lane Wallace indicated the restaurant would be approximately 3,000 square feet.

(b) Mayor Alexander convened a public hearing, after due notice thereof, to receive comments regarding proposed Economic Development Incentive Grants for the Wallace Dry Goods Building.

Clyde, East Bank Street, thanked the Wallace family for giving back to the community.

Mr. Lee Wallace thanked Council for its consideration. He added a thriving downtown is important to the community. Mr. Post asked how long the Wallace family has owned the Wallace Dry Goods Building. Mr. Wallace noted his family has owned the property for most of the 20th century.

There being no one else to address Council, Mayor Alexander closed the public hearing.

Councilmember Hardin stated the City needs diverse projects to attract more people to downtown, and he noted he appreciates the proposed project.

Councilmember Miller pointed out the project will create market-based housing. He added the Wallace Dry Goods project is exactly what the incentive grants were created for, and he supports the project.

Mayor Pro Tem Blackwell stated she also supports the project. She also thanked the Wallace family for helping purchase body cameras for the Police Department.

Mayor Alexander thanked the Wallace family for its leadership, and she pointed out the project could be a catalyst for future development at the Empire Hotel.

Thereupon, Mr. Miller made a **motion** to approve a Downtown Salisbury Revitalization Incentive Grant totaling \$200,000 for the Wallace Dry Goods project located at 114-118 East Fisher Street. Ms. Blackwell seconded the motion. Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Meses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

## **2015 COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT (CAFR)**

Ms. Cassie Wilson, Audit Manager for Martin, Starnes and Associates CPA's, P.A., addressed Council regarding the 2015 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015.

Ms. Wilson thanked Council for allowing Martin, Starnes to work with the City on its annual audit. She reviewed the highlights of the audit:

- Unmodified (clean) opinion
- New Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Standard
  - GASB 68 regarding the State Retirement Plan

Ms. Wilson noted a \$2,065,608 increase in the General Fund for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015.

Fund Balance Position – General Fund

Total Fund Balance	\$17,933,379
Non spendable	- 488,254
Stabilization by State Statute	- 3,822,731
Available Fund Balance	\$13,622,394
Available Fund Balance 2014	\$11,188,856
Increase in available Fund Balance	\$2,433,538

Ms. Wilson explained the Fund Balance has increased approximately 10 percent from 2014. She explained in 2014 the City's available Fund Balance was at 33.52 percent and it has risen to 43.64 percent.

Ms. Wilson reviewed a summary of the General Fund, and she pointed out revenues of \$33,279,915 and expenditures of \$30,759,967. She stated revenues decreased by approximately \$285,000 and expenditures decreased by approximately \$2.2 million.

Mayor Alexander asked if the loss of Privilege Licenses contributed to the decrease in the General Fund. Ms. Wilson explained the decrease was caused by several factors. She noted Finance Manager Teresa Harris can review the decrease in the General Fund with Council.

City Manager Lane Bailey noted the loss of Privilege License revenue will take place in the current fiscal year.

Ms. Wilson indicated property tax revenue increased by \$20,000 in FY2015. She noted property tax revenue has increased annually since FY2013. Mr. Bailey pointed out FY2016 is the first year of the current tax revaluation. Ms. Wilson noted a \$443,000 increase in sales tax revenue in FY2015.

Ms. Wilson pointed out the top three expenditures from the General Fund which totaled \$30.7 million:

- General Government – 28 percent or \$8,658,635
- Public Safety – 37 percent or \$11,514,936
- Transportation – 10 percent or \$3,073,246
- Other Expenditures – 25 percent
  - Education
  - Debt Service
  - Environmental Protection
  - Culture and Recreation
  - Community and Economic Development

Ms. Wilson reviewed the Enterprise Funds Summary of Operating Results:

	<u>Water and Sewer</u>	<u>Broadband Services</u>	<u>Stormwater Fund</u>	<u>Transit</u>
Operating Revenues	\$24,327,901	\$6,092,903	\$1,153,178	\$97,193
Operating Expenses	<u>\$14,457,861</u>	<u>\$2,934,728</u>	<u>\$919,963</u>	<u>\$932,421</u>
Operating Revenues over Operating Expenditures	\$9,870,040	\$3,158,175	\$233,215	(\$835,228)
Non-operating Revenue	(\$6,710,651)	(\$3,074,907)	(\$50,313)	\$458,591
Transfers to/from other funds	-	-	-	\$454,340
Revenues Over Expenditures	<u>\$3,159,389</u>	<u>\$83,168</u>	<u>\$182,902</u>	<u>\$77,703</u>

Councilman Post asked a number of questions regarding various items and accounting principles contained in the CAFR; whereupon, Councilmember Miller explained Council just received the CAFR report, and he suggested Council review the information and then meet with Mr. Bailey and Ms. Harris to discuss in detail if needed. Ms. Wilson noted she would also be willing to meet with Council. She pointed out staff was waiting for approval from the Local Government Commission (LGC) to release the information, and noted the LGC has reviewed and approved the 2015 CAFR.

Ms. Wilson referenced key operating indicators from each service provided by the City:

	<u>Water and Sewer</u>	<u>Broadband Services</u>	<u>Stormwater Fund</u>	<u>Transit</u>
Operating Income (loss)	\$4,492,684	\$2,417,351	\$225,779	(\$915,817)
Net Cash from Operating Activities	\$9,490,138	\$2,793,382	\$207,743	(\$839,109)
Required Debt Service	\$6,292,092	\$3,088,764	-	-
Unrestricted Net Position	\$21,057,659	(\$5,800,397)	\$555,982	\$263,496
Cash/Cash Equivalents	\$12,217,446	\$3,082,736	\$535,048	\$395,682

Ms. Wilson pointed out the unrestricted net position for Fibrant has improved since 2014. Mayor Alexander noted the unrestricted net position included a \$1,743,000 debt service principal payment.

Councilman Post pointed out that the narrative describing the City of Salisbury at the beginning of the CAFR is outdated in some respects and asked the City Manager, who agreed, to update it for the website and future reports.

Mayor Alexander thanked Ms. Wilson for the presentation.



## **MAIN STREET SOLUTIONS GRANT**

Downtown Salisbury, Inc. Executive Director Paula Bohland and Community Planning Services Director Janet Gapen addressed Council regarding an application for a Main Street Solutions Grant to redevelop downtown property located at 421 North Lee Street. Ms. Bohland explained a brewery is considering the historic building owned by Rowan Investment Company. She added Morgan Ridge Vineyards is planning to renovate the 1930s building to include a brewery, outdoor seating, music venue, and restaurant. She stated the potential project would provide a significant economic impact in the area including 13 high-paying full-time jobs, in addition to restaurant jobs.

Ms. Gapen explained the Main Street Solutions Grant is offered through the North Carolina Department of Commerce to promote investment, re-development, and job creation within central business districts. She stated the local governing body must apply for the grant, and if approved, the grant is administered to the property owner. She added the grant is based upon job creation, and if approved will be administered through Community Planning Services. She stated the Resolution before Council is a requirement of the application process.

Councilmember Miller asked if the grant has a matching requirement. Ms. Gapen stated the grant does not require a local match. Ms. Gapen noted Main Street Solutions Grants were also awarded for Emma's restaurant and the Perfect Smoke which are located on South Lee Street.

Mayor Pro Tem Blackwell noted the City also offers grants for older industrial buildings that are being renovated. She asked if the proposed project would qualify for a grant from the City. Ms. Bohland noted the project will qualify for a grant from the City.

Councilmember Post asked about the likelihood of receiving a Main Street Solutions Grant. Ms. Bohland noted there is significant competition for the grants which are awarded on a first come, first served basis. She stated \$200,000 is the maximum grant amount, and breweries typically create the type of impact the grant is designed to achieve. She noted the proposed application will be the first proposal of the year and will be considered first. Mr. Post asked if the Ketners are committed to the project if a grant is not awarded. Ms. Bohland noted the Ketners are committed to the \$1.3 million project.

Councilmember Hardin questioned the atmosphere an additional brewery would create in the area. Ms. Bohland pointed out the craft brewery will produce a high-end product that has a cross country following. She noted the project is supported by the Rowan Convention and Visitors Bureau because of the potential tourist draw. Ms. Gapen stated the project also includes a restaurant, and she noted Asheville craft breweries have been a big part of the urban resurgence in Asheville.

Ms. Bohland pointed out the proposed project is outside the Municipal Service District (MSD). Mayor Alexander added the property owners have indicated a desire to be included in the MSD which would increase the tax base.

Thereupon, Mr. Miller made a **motion** to adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for a Main Street Solutions Grant in the amount of \$200,000 for a new brewery and restaurant project. Mr. Post seconded the motion. Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Meses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

#### RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR A MAIN STREET SOLUTIONS GRANT.

(The above Resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book No. 15 at Pages No. 30, and is known as Resolution 2015-26.)

#### COUNCIL MEETING TIMES AND PUBLIC COMMENT SESSIONS

Councilmember Post stated the most important thing Council does is listen to its citizens. He noted councils in neighboring communities meet at later times. He commented meetings should take place when the majority of citizens are not at work, and he added public comment should be at the beginning of each meeting.

Councilmember Hardin agreed with Mr. Post. He commented he has spoken to downtown business owners who cannot attend Council meetings unless they close their businesses. He suggested having one meeting at 4:00 p.m. and the other meeting at 6:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. with public comments to be held at the beginning of the meeting. He noted he wants to hear from citizens and respond to their concerns. He added Council and staff should consider all City meetings to determine the times that best meet the needs of citizens.

Councilmember Miller noted when an item affects citizens they will attend the meeting. He added alternating the meeting times could confuse some citizens. He commented he does not want to change the meeting times but will support Council's decision. He explained public comment is near the end of the meeting and it typically occurs after 5:00 p.m. when most people are off of work. He pointed out technology gives citizens increased access to Council meetings.

Mayor Pro Tem Blackwell referenced Minutes from the February 9-10, 2012 Council meeting. She explained at that time Council asked citizens if they wanted the meeting times changed and no one came forward. She added some meetings can be very long, and she is not sure decision making abilities are as sharp late into the night. She stated the advantage to having public comment at the end of the meeting, is many times it occurs after 5:00 p.m. when people can attend. She added with technology there are many ways for citizens to participate in the meetings.

Mr. Hardin agreed with Ms. Blackwell, and he noted he wants to make sure Council is doing what is best for its citizens. He added he would like to discuss this further.

Mr. Post pointed out the Charlotte City Council meetings begin at 5:00 p.m. and they also have long meetings.

Mr. Hardin asked if the meetings can be agenda driven. He noted if an item is of great interest then public comment could it be placed at the front of the agenda. Mr. Miller stated it is reasonable to reorder the agenda when an item may have in-depth discussion.

Mayor Alexander stated 4:00 p.m. meetings may be easier for some citizens since it gets dark earlier in the winter. She noted she likes Mr. Hardin's idea to move the public comment to the front of the meeting when there is topic of public interest. She asked if Council would like to meet with their constituents before a decision is made.

Mr. Miller suggested Council consider its options and continue the discussion at a later date.

Ms. Blackwell encouraged citizens to contact Council to share their thoughts.

Mayor Alexander stated citizens can contact customer service at (704) 638-5300 regarding issues with their water, sewer, sanitation, stormwater, recycling, or Fibrant bills. She added citizens can contact public services at (704) 638-5260 regarding issues with streets, pot holes, limb and leaf pickup, garbage, recycling, stormwater and street signs. She noted calls will be answered in the order they are received, and if citizens are still not satisfied they can contact Council. She noted Council cares about the public and will do all it can to serve the citizens of Salisbury.

## **BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

### **Housing Advocacy Commission**

Upon a motion by Ms. Blackwell, seconded by Mr. Miller and with Messrs. Hardin and Post and Ms. Alexander voting AYE, the following appointment was made to the Housing Advocacy Commission to fill an unexpired term.

Mr. Victor Wallace

Term Expires 03/31/16

### **Economic Development Commission**

Upon a motion by Ms. Alexander, seconded by Mr. Miller and with Messrs. Hardin and Post and Ms. Blackwell voting AYE, the following appointment was made to the Economic Development Commission.

Mr. Dyke Messinger

Term Expires 12/31/18

Councilmember Hardin stated he would like to ensure there is balance on all the City's Boards and Commissions. Ms. Blackwell stated she has chaired the search for Board and Commission members for the last four years and Council has worked to ensure diversity on its Boards and Commissions.

Mayor Alexander encouraged Council to take the initiative to identify people who wish to serve.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mayor Alexander opened the floor to receive public comments.

Mr. William Peoples, 522 North Fulton Street, asked about street lights under the Old Concord Road Bridge. He noted diversity and inclusion is needed on the City's Boards and Commissions. He requested transparency from the new Council.

Clyde, Bank Street, presented photographs of areas around town, and he noted a picture is worth a thousand words.

Ms. Tamara Sheffield, 301 Maupin Avenue, welcomed the new Council to office. She stated public accessibility was discussed during the campaign, and she asked Council to consider public comments at each meeting. She asked Council to consider changing the meeting times so more citizens can attend. She requested Council consider seat limits, and staggering terms, but noted the selection of Mayor should continue as it has in the past.

Mr. James White, stated he has lived in the Jersey City neighborhood for four years. He added he has trouble sleeping because of dogs barking at night, and he noted buildings should be sound proof.

Councilmember Hardin asked Mr. White if he has spoken to Code Enforcement. Mr. White stated he called Code Enforcement but has not heard back from them.

There being no one else to address Council, Mayor Alexander closed the public comment session.

## **FIBRANT**

Councilmember Miller referenced the 2015 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). He noted the Fibrant Fund had an \$83,000 net positive operating cash flow in FY2015. He pointed out the City has consolidated two functions which share expenses, but those expenses are not included in Fibrant's positive cash flow. Ms. Harris agreed and noted staff is working through all of the costs to determine an accurate amount and will present the consolidated information to Council during the second quarter financial review. Mr. Miller noted most of the other cities who have taken on broadband are ElectraCities. He indicated Council should get to a point where shared expenses are acceptable for the utility in the smallest amount possible. He stated he looks forward to additional information and transparency.

## **CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

### **(a) 2015 CAFR**

City Manager Lane Bailey noted the 2015 CAFR will be online for citizen's review. He referenced Councilman Miller's comments and stated he hopes to have the Fibrant numbers

available by January 2016. Mr. Bailey pointed out the General Fund contribution is not an insignificant number. He thanked Finance Manager Teresa Harris, Assistant City Manager John Sofley, Finance staff and the Management Team for their work to increase the Fund Balance.

(b) Selection of Professional Architectural Services

City Manager Lane Bailey stated the City is looking to replace Fire Station 3 and add a Fire Station 6. He added staff sent out a Request for Proposal and received 10 responses. He noted four firms were interviewed and staff recommends Council authorize Ramsay, Burgin, Smith Architects to help select a site for Station 3 and Station 6. He added Council would have to approve the land purchase, and Ramsey, Burgin and Smith Architects would design the two fire stations.

Thereupon, Ms. Blackwell made a **motion** to engage Ramsey, Burgin, Smith to consult with staff regarding site identification and fire station design. Mr. Miller seconded the motion.

Councilmember Hardin asked about the location of Fire Station 3. Mr. Bailey noted it is across from the Palms restaurant on West Innes Street, and he added it is over 50 years old.

Mayor Alexander pointed out Council will have an opportunity to determine the best locations for the fire stations to serve the greatest number of citizens.

Mr. Bailey noted the Fire Department will determine a location that will enhance the Fire Department's response time. He added the Fire Department will also consider issues with the Shober Bridge.

Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Meses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

**MAYOR 'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(a) New Year's Eve at the Bell Tower

Mayor Alexander announced the New Year's Eve at the Bell Tower celebration will be held Thursday, December 31, 2015 in Bell Tower Park. Festivities begin at 8:00 p.m. and will include light refreshments, live entertainment, live video feed from Times Square, and ringing of the bell at Midnight. The event is free and open to the public.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Mayor Alexander requested Council go into a closed session to consult with an attorney as allowed by NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3).

Thereupon, Ms. Blackwell made a **motion** to go into closed session. Mr. Miller seconded the motion. Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Meses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

*\* Mayor Alexander left the meeting at 6:16 p.m. No formal vote was taken excusing Mayor Alexander, therefore her vote shall be recorded as affirmative hereinafter per State Statute 160A-75.*

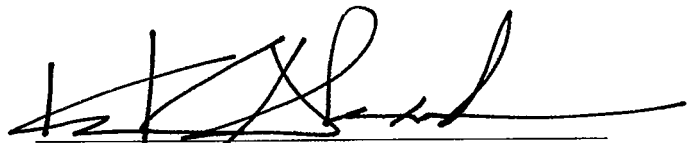
### **RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

Thereupon, Mr. Miller made a **motion** for Council to return to open session. Mr. Post seconded the motion. Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Mses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

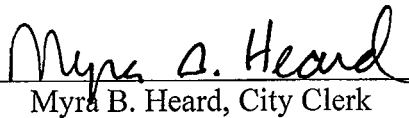
Mayor Pro Tem Blackwell announced there was nothing to report from closed session.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Hardin seconded by Mr. Miller. All council members in attendance agreed unanimously to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.



Karen Kirks Alexander, Mayor



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Myra B. Heard, City Clerk