

Salisbury, North Carolina

August 5, 2003

REGULAR MEETING

PRESENT: Mayor Susan W. Kluttz, Presiding; Mayor Pro Tem, Paul B. Woodson, Jr.; Councilmen William (Bill) Burgin; William (Pete) Kennedy; Robert (Bob) Martin; City Manager, David W. Treme; City Attorney, F. Rivers Lawther, Jr.; and City Clerk, Myra B. Heard.

ABSENT: None

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kluttz at 4:00 p.m. The invocation was given by Councilman Martin.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Kluttz recognized all visitors present.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Mayor Kluttz noted the following change to the agenda:

(1) Deletion of Item 8 – Council to consider Zoning Map Amendment Z-5S-03, Janice H. Rary, 1340 West Ridge Road. Mayor Kluttz stated that a letter was received from Mr. V. Craig Hiatt withdrawing the request for the zoning change to the Rary property.

Mayor Kluttz indicated that if the applicant should seek rezoning at a later date, he would have to go through the entire rezoning process.

Councilman Burgin said he agreed with redrawing the request as he felt both sides need to be present.

The item was removed by consensus of the Council.

(2) Mayor Kluttz stated there would also be the addition of information concerning the Pillowtex closing, and what United Way is doing to help.

CONSENT AGENDA

(a) Minutes

Approve Minutes of the regular meeting of July 15, 2003.

(b) Right-of-Way Encroachment Agreement - Duke Power

Authorize the Mayor to execute a right-of-way encroachment agreement with Duke Power for the installation of a power line and substation on City owned property located on Hannah Ferry Road, to serve the Yadkin River Raw Water Pump Station.

(c) Acting City Clerk

Appoint Swannetta Fink as Acting City Clerk beginning 12:00 noon August 13 through August 15, 2003.

Thereupon, Councilman Kennedy made a **motion** to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilman Burgin seconded the motion. Messrs. Burgin, Kennedy, Martin, Woodson and Ms. Klutz voted AYE. (5-0).

"GEARED UP 4 SUCCESS"

Mr. Carl Repsher, Chairman of the Rowan Chamber of Commerce's Workforce Development Alliance and Mr. Eric Leazer, Director of Workforce Development with Rowan-Salisbury Schools, spoke to Council concerning the "Geared Up 4 Success" initiative.

Mr. Repsher explained that in the past when a student finished high school he/she went to college or to work. Many jobs then were available in the unskilled labor market. He noted that the labor market has changed and those jobs are not as readily available. Mr. Repsher noted that 60% of college-bound students never complete a four-year degree and that employers are placing a declining interest on academic credentials with a greater emphasis on certifications and technical degrees. In the next five-seven (5-7) years, more than 50% of new jobs in the economy are expected to be in health services, business services, social services, and engineering management and related services.

Mr. Repsher commented on the "skills gap" and noted that workers use more skills in today's jobs than they did in the past. Mr. Repsher reviewed how the Workforce Development Alliance determined the key issues: 1) how to address students coming through the school system; 2) people already in the workforce; and 3) people who lack skills and have language issues; and the "Planned Partnership" approach to addressing them.

Mr. Eric Leazer reviewed the programs currently in place in the Rowan-Salisbury School System, explaining the middle school and high school curriculums. He added that each high school student has a Career Development Plan (CDP). Mr. Leazer commented that students have the opportunity to gain licenses and certifications through many of the courses offered in high school. Mr. Leazer also mentioned the School-to-Career Council, which was established to address education reform and expand opportunities for students.

Mr. Repsher discussed the "Geared Up 4 Success" initiative that was developed to create awareness regarding the increase in local skilled technical job openings and their earning potential. A video was shown to Council that will be used to market the "Geared Up 4 Success" program to students and parents. Mr. Repsher noted that along with the video and interactive CD, a mailer, rack cards, posters & banners, a web site, and a toll free number have also been developed and are in place.

Mr. Repsher told Council that the initiative has been endorsed by the Rowan-Salisbury School Board, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College and the Rowan County Commissioners. He asked Council for their consideration of support for the program.

Mayor Klutz thanked Mr. Repsher and Mr. Leazer for their work and timely presentation, considering the Pillowtex situation.

Thereupon, Councilman Burgin made a **motion** for Council to support and endorse the "Geared Up 4 Success" program. Council Kennedy seconded the motion. Messrs. Burgin, Kennedy, Martin, Woodson and Ms. Klutz voted AYE. (5-0)

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

(a) Mr. Dan Mikkelson, Director of Land Management and Development, explained that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a planning document used by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) for their major projects and enhancement projects. The document is a seven (7) year plan and is updated annually.

Mr. Mikkelson stated that his department has gone through a series of local recommendations, and the Planning Board has endorsed the recommendations for the TIP with two minor revisions. Two projects, which were initially presented as funded projects, have not been funded and have been moved to the unfunded list.

Mr. Mikkelson noted that copies of the TIP recommendations were forwarded to the Economic Development Commission, Downtown Salisbury, Incorporated, Historic Salisbury Foundation, Rowan County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Rowan County, the Salisbury Greenway Committee, and the Rowan County Chamber of Commerce for their review.

The Salisbury recommendations will be forwarded to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) by August 20, 2003 and the MPO will then merge them with all the other MPO members, put them in priority order, and forward the recommendations to NCDOT in October. The MPO may see fit to adjust some of our recommendations.

Mr. Mikkelson noted the recommendations have been grouped into Funded and Unfunded projects.

Funded Projects

1. I-85 Widening, Exit 68 to Exit 81, I-2511
2. Innes Street Bridge Replacement, B-3236
3. US 70 Widening, R-2911E
4. TEA 21 Grant, streetscape improvements, E-4551
5. Grants Creek Greenway, Phase 2, E-3308

6. I-85 Widening, Exit 81 to Exit 87, I-2304
7. Ellis Street Bridge Replacement, B-2085
8. Passenger Rail, various statewide studies and improvements
9. US 52 Relocation, R-2903
10. Bicycle Route Mapping and Signing, E-3132
11. Kelsey-Scott Park/YMCA Greenway Connector, E-4403
12. Kelsey-Scott Park/Catawba College Greenway Connector, E-4713
13. Fisher Street Bridge Replacement, B-2086

Unfunded Projects

1. Julian Road Widening
2. Old Concord Road Widening
3. Jake Alexander Boulevard Extension
4. Klumac Road Grade Separation, U-3459.
5. Harrison Road/US 70 Connector
6. Bringle Ferry/Henderson Grade Separation, U-3460
7. Airport Parkway, U-3821
8. NC 150 Widening, U-3623
9. Jake Alexander Boulevard Grade Separation

Mr. Mikkelson elaborated on each of the Unfunded Projects.

(b) Councilman Burgin stated that Council had previously reviewed proposals for the Klumac Road Grade separation, which were presented as Alignments A, B, and C. He explained that after study the Council Committee felt that modification to Alignment C would solve many of the problems.

Councilman Burgin stated they would like to modify Alignment C to follow the property line of Johnson Concrete and the adjacent vacated industrial site across Boundary Street. The alignment would go through an undeveloped area and reconnect to Klumac Road at what was previously a curb on Klumac Road. Councilman Burgin noted that he and Mayor Pro Tem Woodson had met with staff to work on the modification and it seemed to solve many of the problems that were presented.

Mr. Mikkelson noted that there is a raw material hopper near the train track and NCDOT would have to detour the train during the grade separation and construction of the tunnel. He stated they would build two new sets of tracks and a feasibility study will have to be done to confirm that access to the raw material hopper can be maintained. He added that if access is restricted, they will then look into the feasibility of building the tracks in an alternative direction which may encroach onto properties whose access is Old South Main Street. Mr. Mikkelson stated that the properties have access through alleys and NCDOT will get more information concerning the property access.

Councilman Burgin stated the Council Committee would like to present the modification to Alignment C as a recommendation to Council, with the notation of protecting the raw material hopper during construction.

Mayor Klutz applauded staff and the Council Committee of Councilman Burgin and Mayor Pro Tem Woodson for their work on the plan.

Councilman Burgin asked about the significance of the order of the projects in the recommendations. Mr. Mikkelson responded that the order of the unfunded projects is fairly significant as typically the top three are the only ones chosen to receive funding in the near future.

Councilman Burgin stated that the last project on the unfunded list, Jake Alexander Boulevard Grade Separation, should be given a higher consideration. He noted that there are many problems with the train crossing at Jake Alexander Boulevard that cause traffic delays. He expressed that this is far more important than some of the others and asked Council to consider moving the project up on the list.

Councilman Kennedy noted that he has received many citizens' complaints about the crossing.

Mayor Pro Tem Woodson asked Mr. Mikkelson what could be done to alleviate the problem with the grade separation.

Mr. Mikkelson answered that there will have to be a feasibility study prepared but the only reasonable alignment he could foresee will be to take the highway over the railroad. Mr. Mikkelson added that the feasibility study will be brought to Council for their consideration of the impact of the project and its value. Mr. Mikkelson told Council that the two crossings on Jake Alexander

Boulevard are not main line tracks and traffic is not as high.

Councilman Burgin noted that the trains crossing are not the problem but the trains that stop to unload and delay traffic.

Mr. Mikkelson noted that the rail service is regulated by a federal agency as interstate commerce and, as a local entity, the City could not regulate the railroad.

(c) Mayor Kluttz convened a public hearing, after due notice and advertisement thereof, regarding the Transportation Improvement Program.

Those speaking regarding the Transportation Improvement Project were:

Mr. Rodney Queen, 101 Polo Drive, stated that the crossing at Jake Alexander Boulevard was most likely the one used by the greatest number of citizens going back and forth to the mall. Mr. Queen stated his main concern was the Klumac Road separation and stated he strongly agreed with the approach set forth. He stated this was the most logical and practical approach to the problem. Mr. Queen stated he felt the modification could be an inconvenience to Johnson Concrete for a period of time and he encouraged Johnson Concrete to support the City during this time, as the rewards after the project would be worthwhile.

No one else was present to speak regarding the proposed TIP recommendations. Therefore, Mayor Kluttz closed the public hearing.

(d) Councilman Burgin stated he would like to move the Jake Alexander Boulevard Grade Separation higher on the list. He felt it should be located between items 2 -Old Concord Road Widening and 3- Jake Alexander Boulevard Extension. He added that if Jake Alexander Boulevard were to be extended, it would create more load to the problem and it should be solved before more load is added.

Mayor Pro Tem Woodson expressed concern over the time necessary to complete the project and the businesses that would be affected. Councilman Burgin indicated he felt the project will be handled in a way not to stop traffic and that the project was probably ten years away.

Councilman Martin asked how long the traffic is actually stopped during the train stops. Councilman Burgin stated the trains usually stop for ten (10) minutes in both the morning and afternoons.

Thereupon Councilman Burgin **moved** to approve the Transportation Improvement Plan with the modification to the unfunded list of moving item 9 – Jake Alexander Boulevard Grade Separation to item 3 on the list. Mayor Pro Tem Woodson seconded the motion. Messrs. Burgin, Kennedy, Martin, Woodson and Ms. Kluttz voted AYE. (5-0).

ZONING MAP AMENDMENT - Z-07-03 - SALISBURY PLANNING BOARD

Z-07-03 - Salisbury Planning Board

Properties located off West Innes Street near the Southern Railroad

The request is to rezone properties located off West Innes Street near the Southern Railroad from M-2 Heavy Industrial District to B-6 General Business District and B-1 Office Institutional District.

(a) Mr. Patrick Kennerly, Planner II, stated that the rezoning request was initiated by the Planning Board Committee reviewing property zoned M-2 Heavy Industrial, to possibly down-zone some of this property without having too much of an impact to the businesses in the area.

Mr. Kennerly told Council that the first area consists of the rear portion of four (4) properties with frontage along the 900 and 1000 blocks of West Innes Street. The property is currently zoned M-2 Heavy Industrial and the Committee recommends rezoning to B-6 General Business. Inlet Point Fresh Seafood, Italy Café, Dairy Queen, and Carolane Propane are located on the properties in question.

Mr. Kennerly indicated the only issue in downzoning the property is with the Carolane Propane property. They store bulk flammable materials, which is not a permitted use within the B-6 General Business district. Mr. Kennerly stated staff has spoken with representatives for the business and they have no opposition to the downzoning because there are other regulations that would keep them from expanding. He added that they indicated that as long as they could continue to operate as they are now, and are grandfathered in, they have no opposition to the rezoning. Mr. Kennerly told Council that the other three (3) businesses will be conforming uses in B-6.

The second area to be rezoned is currently zoned M-2 Heavy Industrial and the Committee recommends rezoning to B-1 Office Institutional, as the larger part of Memorial Cemetery already is zoned. The area consists of the back corner of the Memorial Park Cemetery and a portion of the Southern Railroad right-of-way.

(b) Mayor Kluttz convened a public hearing, after due notice and advertisement thereof, regarding the Zoning Map Amendment Z-07-03.

No one was present to speak **in favor** or **in opposition** to the rezoning. Therefore, Mayor Kluttz closed the public hearing.

(c) Thereupon Mayor Pro Tem Woodson made a **motion** to rezone the first area from M-1 Heavy Industrial to B-6 General Business. Councilman Burgin seconded the motion. Messrs. Burgin, Kennedy, Martin, Woodson and Ms. Kluttz voted AYE. (5-0)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA, BY REZONING APPROXIMATELY 1.5 ACRES OFF OF WEST INNES STREET NEAR THE SOUTHERN RAILROAD TRACKS, IDENTIFIED AS A PORTION OF PARCELS 52-A, 52, 167, AND 168 ON SALISBURY TWP. TAX MAP 20, FROM M-2 HEAVY INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT TO B-6 GENERAL BUSINESS DISTRICT.

(The above ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book No. 19, under Chapter XI - Zoning & Planning, at Page No. 34, and is known as Ordinance No. 2003-51.)

(d) Thereupon, Mayor Pro Tem Woodson made a **motion** to rezone the second area from M-1 Heavy Industrial to B-1 Office Industrial. Councilman Burgin seconded the motion. Messrs. Burgin, Kennedy, Martin, Woodson and Ms. Klutz voted AYE. (5-0)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA, BY REZONING APPROXIMATELY 1.1 ACRES OFF OF WEST INNES STREET NEAR THE SOUTHERN RAILROAD TRACKS, IDENTIFIED AS A PORTION OF PARCEL 51 ON SALISBURY TWP. TAX MAP 20, FROM M-2 HEAVY INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT TO B-1 OFFICE INSTITUTIONAL DISTRICT.

(The above ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book No. 19, under Chapter XI - Zoning & Planning, at Page No. 35, and is known as Ordinance No. 2003-52.)

REQUEST TO RESTRICT PARKING - WEST SIDE OF 1400 BLOCK OF PARKVIEW CIRCLE

Ms. Wendy Brindle, Traffic Engineer, informed Council that a petition was received from residents in the 1400 block of Parkview Circle, between Hillcrest Place and Valleyview Place to restrict parking on the West side of the block. Ms. Brindle noted that parking is already restricted on the West side between Hillcrest Place and Mahaley Avenue and this would extend the restriction.

Ms. Brindle indicated that the petition was signed by 71% of the property owners and is consistent with requests approved by Council in the past.

Thereupon, Councilman Kennedy **moved** to adopt an ordinance amending section 13-338 of the City Code relating to parking prohibited at all times. Councilman Burgin seconded the motion. Messrs. Burgin, Kennedy, Martin, Woodson and Mayor Klutz voted AYE. (5-0)

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 13-338, ARTICLE X, CHAPTER 13, OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, RELATING TO PARKING PROHIBITED AT ALL TIMES.

(The above ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book, No. 19, under Chapter X - Traffic, at Page No. 9, and is known as Ordinance No. 2003-53.)

GRANT AGREEMENT WITH NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, AND NATURAL RESOURCES - VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT OF CITY OF SALISBURY UTILITY

Mr. Jeff Jones, Utility Engineer, informed Council that in wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) is requiring all water utilities serving three thousand three hundred (3,300) people or more to conduct a vulnerability assessment. The City of Salisbury's assessment is due to the EPA by June 30, 2004.

Mr. Jones informed Council USEPA has established a grant program, which will be a pass through grant from the State of North Carolina to help offset the costs of the assessment. He noted that the assessment will be done in-house with support from the Police and Fire Departments as part of the core team.

Mr. Jones told Council that there is legislation currently in Congress to require similar action for wastewater utilities. He added that since staff is undertaking the process now they will cover the waster water as well so that it will be in place when the legislation is adopted.

Thereupon, Mayor Pro Tem Woodson made a **motion** to authorize the Mayor to execute a grant agreement for \$9,300.00 with North Carolina Department of Environment an Natural Resources (NCDENR) to conduct a vulnerability assessment of the utilities. Councilman Kennedy seconded the motion. Messrs. Burgin, Kennedy, Martin, Woodson and Ms. Klutz voted AYE. (5-0)

Councilman Burgin indicated there was no more important issue than protecting the water supply and he applauded staff for taking the initiative to handle both the water and sewer assessments.

Mayor Pro Tem Woodson asked if the water reservoir is fenced in. Mr. Jones responded that the raw water reservoir is fenced in and physical protection is part of the assessment. He indicated the end result of the assessment will be to update the emergency response plan in areas where vulnerabilities are indicated.

AWARD CONTRACT FOR INFORMATION SYSTEMS NETWORK

Mr. Dewey Peck, Purchasing Manager, informed Council that each year one-third of the computers used in the City's Information Systems Network are replaced. He indicated that the reason for this is that the computers are on a three (3) year warranty. Mr. Peck indicated that three (3) bids had been received for the computer replacement. Staff is recommending that the contract be awarded to the low bidder, Fortress Systems, in the amount of \$93,526.00 to purchase one hundred one (101) personnel computers for the City's Information Systems Network.

Mayor Pro Tem Woodson asked what was done with the old computers. Mr. Peck replied that the computers are donated to the school system. Councilman Burgin asked if staff is happy with the product. Mr. Peck responded that they are very happy.

Thereupon, Councilman Burgin made a **motion** to accept the bid from Fortress Systems for \$93,526.00. Councilman Kennedy seconded the motion. Messrs. Burgin, Kennedy, Martin, Woodson and Ms. Kluttz voted AYE. (5-0)

City Manager David Treme indicated that when the transaction takes place staff will return to Council seeking the donation of the old computers to the school system.

Mayor Pro Tem Woodson asked about a request that was received from Ms. Kay Wright Norman during the budget hearing. Mr. Treme stated that the center Ms. Norman spoke of was a non-profit organization and the City is only allowed to donate to other governmental units.

Councilman Martin asked about the average life of the computers. Mr. Treme indicated staff has found it in the City's best interest to trade the computers after the life of the warranties, which is three (3) years. He added that once the computer enters the fourth (4th) and fifth (5th) year outside of the warranty it is as cheap to replace the computer as to repair it.

Councilman Martin asked if the City has always followed this policy. Mr. Treme stated staff has followed this since they started the purchase of the computers. He indicated that he felt it was a good strategy and was the standard practice for cities of this size. Mr. Mike Crowell, Information Technology Manager concurred with Mr. Treme.

Councilman Burgin stated that, in his experience, the software becomes so advanced the older machines cannot keep up.

Councilman Kennedy asked how many employees did not have access to a computer. Mr. Treme identified that approximately 100 employees were without computer access.

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AWARD CONTRACT TO THE LAWRENCE GROUP TO REWRITE CITY DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCES

Mr. Joe Morris, Planning & Community Development Manager, indicated that Council has allocated resources in the current fiscal year budget to address one of Council's top priorities, which is to rewrite the Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances. Mr. Morris indicated that this came as a proposal to Council by the 2020 Implementation Task Force.

Mr. Morris stated the re-write will simplify an Ordinance that has been repeatedly amended over about a forty (40) year period. Members of the development community have expressed concern as to the complicated nature of the current ordinance and the difficulty working through multiple cross references in the existing text.

Mr. Morris indicated that the new code will be form-based and will use graphics and a more legible format. He added that the new code will help streamline the permitting process and improve staff efficiency. Mr. Morris stated the goal is to create a more business-friendly document while expressing the community's expectations for quality development.

Mr. Morris indicated that The Lawrence Group from Davidson, North Carolina is considered to be a national leader in the development of form-based codes. He requested Council to fund the first year for \$50,000 as part of a two-year process to ultimately cost \$85,000.

Mayor Pro Tem Woodson stated he received comments concerning the cost to re-write the ordinances and the fact that the contract was with an out-of-county firm. He indicated he has also received comments from developers concerning the need for the ordinances to be rewritten.

Mr. Morris stated the cost was very reasonable as compared to other communities. He noted that the City has worked with The Lawrence Group on the Vision 2020 plan and they were able to lower their original estimate of \$100,000 to \$85,000 from this work. Mr. Morris stated that, to the best of his knowledge, there was not anyone locally that could do this work. He reiterated that The Lawrence Group is nationally recognized for the development of form-based documents.

City Manager Treme indicated that staff works with the consultants to determine those tasks involved in the process that City staff can perform in order to compliment the work of the consultant. Mr. Treme stated he felt the City has a good price for the work for communities of this size, as others are paying as much as 50% more. He added that the re-written ordinance would be one of the best in the State of North Carolina. He added that he felt Council was responding to the business and development community who challenged Council to improve the process.

Councilman Martin asked about the \$50,000 allocation. Mr. Treme stated that the money was included in the budget as a special project.

Mayor Kluttz stated she felt there was some public confusion about what is being done and the cost. She added that the ordinances needed to be updated, that it is extremely complex to change the ordinances, and she does not think there is anyone

locally who specializes in this complex work.

Councilman Burgin indicated when he first came to service in the City he had worked on the Planning Committee to re-write the ordinance and it was a huge task that could not be completed.

Thereupon, Councilman Burgin made a **motion** to accept the contract as presented for \$50,000 in this fiscal year and meet the obligation of completing it next year. Councilman Kennedy seconded the motion. Messrs. Burgin, Kennedy, Martin, Woodson and Ms. Kluttz voted AYE. (5-0)

WATER AND SEWER EXTENSION AGREEMENT - ATHENS WEST, INC.

Mr. John Vest, Deputy Utilities Director, stated that Phase I of Athens West is a proposed thirty-one (31) lot subdivision located West of town on US 70. He indicated the developers have been working on this project for some time; that a water line was installed several years ago and they are now ready to extend sewer and another section of water line.

Mr. Vest stated that the owner will pay 100% of the cost and the agreement will be to ensure that the work is to the City's standards and procedures. All of the plans and permits have been reviewed and approved.

Thereupon Councilman Kennedy **moved** to approve the water and sewer extension agreement with Athens West, Inc. Mayor Pro Tem Woodson seconded the motion. Messrs. Burgin, Kennedy, Martin, Woodson and Ms. Kluttz voted AYE. (5-0)

COMMENTS FROM CITY MANAGER

(a) Planning Board Recommendations

Council received the Planning Board recommendations and comments from their July 22, 2003 meeting.

(b) Update on Sale of Refunding Bonds

Mr. John Sofley, Finance Director, noted that Council received a news release from the North Carolina Department of State Treasurer concerning the issue of \$12.100 million in general obligation refunding bonds.

Mr. Sofley told Council that the average savings over the life of the bonds will be approximately \$29,500 per year. He noted this is a little less than had been hoped but was still where he thought they would be and he is happy with the figure.

Mr. Sofley informed Council that the City has received its updated bond rating from the Moody's and Standard and Poors rating agencies. Mr. Sofley commented on the financial pressure the City has been under during the last few years due to the economy and withholding of funds by the Governor so he was concerned when the information was presented to the agencies. However, both agencies were very pleased with the City's financial position and how the economic issues were handled. One of the positive areas identified by the agencies was that the overall economy has continued to diversify and they commented favorably on this continued diversification.

Mr. Sofley told Council that both agencies left their rates exactly the same. He commented that the agencies were extremely satisfied with the goals set by Council this year, as well the fact that this year is a revaluation and the fact that the County Commissioners approved a half (1/2) cent sales tax.

Mayor Pro Tem asked Mr. Sofley how often the County performs revaluation. Mr. Sofley replied that Rowan County reevaluates every four (4) years but is required statutorily to do so every eight (8) years. He added that the County switched to a four (4) year schedule approximately twelve (12) years ago because inequities were created as property developed during that eight year period.

City Manager Treme reiterated that the savings of \$29,000 - \$30,000 per year is for a fifteen (15) year period. He commented that the last time he and Mr. Sofley were in New York City to visit the rating agencies, representatives of the agencies were interested in the decision making of the governing bodies. Mr. Treme commented that it would have been a real blow had the City's rate been lowered since it affects the rate at which the City can borrow money to finance infrastructure and debt. He added that the agencies were very complimentary of Council, management, and the financial management.

Mr. Sofley stated that the agencies were pleased that the City has annexed a large area as this helps not only to diversify the economy, but shows how the City expands its borders and has an annexation plan in place.

(c) Civic Center Feasibility Schedule

City Manager Treme informed Council that the City did not have the money this year to build a new civic center but this would be a good time to begin planning for one. He asked Council to form a committee or task force to look into the feasibility of a civic center and offered a tentative planning schedule for Council to consider. Mr. Treme told Council that many communities around Salisbury have civic centers. The civic center is an economic development project and a benefit to the tourism industry.

Mayor Pro Tem Woodson added that while attending the National League of Cities in Washington, D.C. many mayors and city managers commented that civic centers are the best economic tools for a town.

Mr. Treme said the civic center is a goal of the City and he wants Council to have this matter before them to proceed as Council sees fit.

(d) Correspondence from Mr. Robert Boone

City Manager Treme provided Council with a letter from Mr. Robert Boone, candidate for City Council. Mr. Boone suggests lowering the tax rate from fifty-eight (58) cents to twenty (20) cents. Mr. Treme passed the letter to Council for their consideration.

(e) City Council Candidate Information Session

City Manager Treme noted that each election year the City holds an information session for candidates for City Council and asked Council for a date to hold the session this year.

By consensus Council agreed to hold the information session on Monday, August 25, 2003, from 5:00 - 6:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers.

(f) Pillowtex Forum

City Manager Treme informed Council that Senator John Edwards office has invited Council to attend a forum on Thursday August 7, 2003 at 2:30 p.m. in Kannapolis. This forum is to meet with government officials and others concerning the Pillowtex closing situation. The meeting will be held at the Kannapolis Chamber of Commerce Building.

Mr. Treme told Council that he had participated in a conference call with Senator Edwards office and will give them information and notes from the meeting, which addressed the Pillowtex situation.

(g) Innes Street Bridge Replacement

Mr. Dan Mikkelson, Director of Land Management & Development, informed Council that he has spoken with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and they need to award the contract for the Innes Street Bridge Replacement this fall in order to meet their funding equity formula. He noted that NCDOT was having problems with their environmental documentation because the project will impact the Eastern Gateway Park. Mr. Mikkelson informed Council that the NCDOT needs a three hundred fifty (350) square foot construction easement from the City. The land parallels the right-of-way and is less than ten (10) feet wide. The easement will be used to build a retaining wall along the property line. Mr. Mikkelson noted that the City has been hesitant to approve the easement until staff could review the plans for the retaining wall. The state has decided to allow the contractor to submit a design and construction method based on the field conditions and so the design will not be prepared in advance of awarding the contract. NCDOT has specified that the City can review and approve the contractor's design.

Mr. Mikkelson told Council that NCDOT has requested a letter approving the use of the easement and, in return, they will delay the beginning of construction until March 1, 2004. This will allow ample time for the work on Innes Street at I-85 to be completed. Mr. Mikkelson recommended approval and noted that the City will have minor exposure over the appearance of the wall, but the wall is only two (2) feet high.

Mr. Mikkelson commented that on this project NCDOT has already agreed to put in decorative hand rails, ornamental concrete pedestals that will support decorative lighting, ornamental parapet walls with architectural reveals, and wider sidewalks than standard, and relocation of a water line suspended from the bridge. This will be done at no cost to the City. Mr. Mikkelson stated there has been a lot of negotiation with NCDOT and he would not want to jeopardize the working relationship.

Mr. Mikkelson recommended Council authorize the Mayor release a letter supporting the use of the three hundred fifty (350) easement in accordance with the project specifications. He added that it would be beneficial to delineate the easement with orange snow fencing. Mr. Mikkelson stated he would draft the letter for the Mayor's signature.

Mayor Pro Tem Woodson asked if the construction work on Innes Street at the interstate would be completed by March. Mr. Mikkelson stated that they are scheduled to be back to four (4) lanes or more by December 2003. He stated the only thing they could not do during winter was apply the final asphalt.

Councilman Kennedy stated he was confident that the Mayor and staff will do what is best to protect the park and citizens.

Thereupon Councilman Kennedy made a **motion** to authorize the Mayor to send a letter supporting the use of the construction easement with NC Department of Transportation. Councilman Burgin seconded the motion. Messrs. Burgin, Kennedy, Martin, Woodson and Ms. Klutz voted AYE. (5-0)

(h) Summit Industrial Park

City Manager Treme informed Council that he received a call from County Manager Mr. Tim Russell requesting that he and Mayor Klutz meet with him and Steve Blount, Chairman of the County Commissioners. Mr. Treme noted that the County has received a recommendation from the Economic Development Commission to keep the property in Summit Corporate Center as an industrial property. Alternative sites for retail development were identified, Mr. Treme told Council.

Mr. Treme stated that the meeting was to discuss the zoning of industrial land within the extraterritorial jurisdiction area. He added that there was concern about the possible loss of potential clients because of the way the County and City ordinances are

set up. Mr. Treme stated they have particular concern with the industrial parks and the airport property.

Councilman Burgin and Councilman Woodson indicated an interest to participate in the meeting. Therefore, Mayor Kluttz appointed Councilman Burgin and Mayor Pro Tem Woodson, along with City Manager Treme, to meet with the County representatives and report information back to Council.

Councilman Burgin identified that there are fundamental differences between the processes the County goes through versus the City in zoning issues. Mr. Treme stated he felt the County was concerned with issues such as slow downs, the type of zoning, perhaps conditional use matters, adding that they felt a quicker response could be made to get something from start to finish.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) National Night Out

Mayor Kluttz announced that the Police and Fire Departments will host National Night Out tonight, August 4, 2003, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., at Livingstone College and the Westcliff Development on Highway 70.

(b) The Crescent Development

Councilman Burgin informed Council that he has received two requests from the owners of The Crescent, the first concerning the sign ordinance.

Councilman Burgin noted that in the present sign ordinance each property advertised for sale has to use a single sign. In other communities a unified sign is used at the entrance of the development but the City's current ordinance does not allow this. He requested that Council send the request to the Planning Board for review. Council agreed by consensus.

The second request was for a clarification for the City's policy on exterior street lighting. He noted that the city provides street lighting, which is a cyclops arm and wooden pole. He indicated that developers can upgrade the lighting by paying the difference for the cost of the improvement. Councilman Burgin noted that the difference is required to be paid up front. The owners of The Crescent have requested a method to pay for the upgrade through the monthly Duke Power bill or some other format. Councilman Burgin stated he felt that if a developer was willing to upgrade lights he would like to facilitate this process. He added he felt the City will benefit and asked for a study by staff to determine what could be done.

(c) Report from United Way

Councilman Burgin informed Council that the Rowan County United Way has many agencies that will work to help those workers affected by the Pillowtex closing. He noted that they have allotted approximately \$80,000 to aid those Pillowtex workers. \$50,000 has been given to the Salvation Army to help people with food, utilities and medical supplies. Staff will be hired at the Salvation Army to disburse the money in an organized way, as well as helping with some staff at the Information and Referral Service.

Councilman Burgin stated that the United Way will attempt to increase the time for a pharmacist at the Community Care Clinic in order to disburse medicine as needed. Mr. Burgin commented that an intake center has been established at the South Rowan YMCA where agencies will be available to help people. The United Way will also give money to the Rowan Business Alliance to provide credit counseling for the displaced Pillowtex workers. There are still some dollars United Way may be giving Rowan Helping Ministries to assist with the needs.

Mayor Kluttz stated she was proud of the lead the United Way has taken, adding that many of these workers never thought they would have to ask for help. Mayor Kluttz stated she was also proud of the other community groups and churches that have been supportive of the Pillowtex workers.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Woodson, seconded by Mr. Burgin. All Council members agreed unanimously to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Mayor

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City Clerk