



Locust City Council Meeting Minutes

Joel Huneycutt Community Room

7:30 AM

March 11, 2023

Mayor
Council Members

Mayor Steve Huber
Mayor Pro-Tem Larry Baucom, Mandy Watson, Roger Hypes, Harry Fletcher, Mike Haigler, Barry Sims, and Rusty Efird

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:55 am

2. Presentation of Colors, Prayer

Mayor Pro-tem Larry Baucom led in the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the invocation

3. Opening Remarks

M/S/A Council Members Barry Sims and Michael Haigler (7-0)
Motion to excuse Mayor Huber

M/S/A Council Members Harry Fletcher and Larry Baucom (7-0)
Motion to adopt agenda as amended

M/S/A Council Members Michael Haigler and Roger Hypes (7-0)
Motion to set public hearing for conditional rezoning request for Riley's Retreat for April 13th meeting

M/S/A Council Members Michael Haigler and Roger Hypes (7-0)
Motion to set public hearing for conditional rezoning request for S&S Esthetics for April 13th meeting

City Administrator Cesar Correa gave a welcome to the 2023/2024 budget retreat. He also gave opening remarks and explained how the flow of the meeting would go. Both the general fund and wastewater fund will have a healthy surplus and this has been the best fiscal year to date.

4. Finance Department Review

Finance Director Stephania Morton gave an introduction and presented an overview of the ABC income over the last 5 years and the growth in monthly distributions. Distribution amounts are based on their sales versus expenses. Sales tax revenue overview was presented over the last 5 years. Looking to have the best year yet this fiscal year 2022/2023. Property tax was reviewed from distributions over the last 5 years. Return on investments was presented from 2022/2023 fiscal year to date and a 5 year comparison was given. General Fund investment summary was reviewed and total valuation for the general fund with investments included totaled 8,465,130.81. Wastewater fund investment summary was reviewed. 2022/2023 revenue versus expenditure reports were presented with surpluses in both the general fund and wastewater fund.

5. Budget Strategies for FY 2023-2024

City Administrator Cesar Correa gave an overview of the assessed valuations of Locust, projected expenditures, personnel needs, 5 year capital improvement plan, some discussion items and his evaluation. 2023 City Administrator estimated assessed valuations for Cabarrus County \$93,759,709, and for Stanly County \$618,841,957. Revaluation takes place for Cabarrus County in 2024 and for Stanly County it will be 2025. Tax levy projected for 2023 will be 2,565,365. Tax rate is currently .36 cent per \$100. Compared to other municipalities, Locust is about middle of the pack. Projected revenues for the 2023/2024 fiscal year looks to be \$4,168,800. Recommending that tax rate and other fees stay flat for the 2023/2024 fiscal year. Budget includes all requests from department heads during their budget presentations, 3% COLA increase across the board for staff and their merit increases. Personnel needs include the 2 new patrol officer positions, incentives for night shift and SRO position and salary adjustment for Parks and Recreation Director Emily Jones to bring her in line within the salary range for municipalities our size. Incentive proposed \$2 per hour for permanent night shift and SRO position. 5 year capital project plan was reviewed. Projects included in the 2023/2024 budget to include, infield groomer and utility vehicle for parks, 2 new chargers for the police department, Christmas decorations, city beautification and mower for public works and paving, sidewalk repairs, street sweeper and brush cutter for the Powell and streets department. Land Use Plan will look to be updated 2024/2025. Wastewater capital improvement plan includes the North Basin improvements and a vacuum system remote monitoring system. Stanly County is still interested in consolidating services and are still waiting for them to complete their feasibility study. Review of proposed traffic improvement in Town Center from the traffic triangle and making it a round-a-bout. Trees in Town Center are damaging the sidewalks, repairs will be completed on those sidewalks and remove the trees and replace them with something more conducive to the sidewalks. Ardsley Drive extension update. Senior Center expansion was discussed. A partnership with the County to share the capital on this project is expected. It is proposed adjacent to the library and an estimated cost of about 1,207,500. Utilities are already available. Council is in favor of a larger space and the partnership with the county. Retail Strategies, retail recruitment plan would cost \$45,000, that would allow them to market Locust, currently not factored in the budget. Finally, City Administrator Cesar Correa spoke about the changing the form of government. We currently operate under the Mayor-Council form of government and want to change to Council-Manager. Council consensus is to proceed with the change along with a change to the charter allowing the council to still have a vote in hiring the police chief.

M/S/A Council Members Harry Fletcher and Roger Hypes (7-0)
Motion to approve change to Council-Manager form of government.

6. City Administrator's Performance Evaluation

M/S/A Council Members Harry Fletcher and Larry Baucom (7-0)
Motion to enter into executive session at 12:00 pm GS 143:318.11 Personnel

Out of executive session at 12:30pm

7. Administrator Closing Comments

Great retreat. Thank you all for your time and willingness to serve.

8. Board Closing Comments

Great retreat. The upcoming year looks very promising. Thanks to everyone.

9. Adjourn

M/S/A Council Members Harry Fletcher and Larry Baucom (7-0)

Motion to adjourn at 12:36pm

Amy Curr, City Clerk

Stephen Huber, Mayor