

**MINUTES OF
CITY OF LORIS REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

**PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
3909 WALNUT STREET
LORIS, SC 29569
JANUARY 3, 2017 - 7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT	MAYOR	HENRY L. NICHOLS
PRESENT	COUNCIL	MICHAEL DOZIER JOAN S. GAUSE LEWIS C. HARDEE, JR. MICHAEL E. SUGGS JAN P. VESCOVI

NEWS MEDIA present were Mrs. Joyce Graham, writer for Tabor-Loris Tribune, and Ms. Jen Boyd, writer for The Loris Times, and Mr. Scott Harper writer for The Loris Scene.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Nichols.

INVOCATION:

The invocation was given by Councilman Hardee.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Dennis Bellamy.

ROLL CALL:

The roll was called by Clerk Kenya Wright.

COMMUNICATIONS:

MAYOR'S REPORT

- 1. Introduced Mr. Dennis Bellamy as a possible member to join the Public Works Committee.**
- 2. Reminded the public about the Candidate Forum scheduled for January 23rd, 2017 at 7 P.M. at the Public Safety building. Forum will be hosted by the Women's League of Voters in conjunction with the Women's Coalition.**
- 3. Introduced Mr. Scotty Jacobs as one of the candidates for the open council seat. A Special Election will be held on January 31st, 2017. Everyone was encouraged to attend.**
- 4. Mayor Nichols explained that a sign in sheet for citizen names and contact information will be placed on the podium before and during the meeting. Citizens are asked to write down any questions or concerns for council to help speed up the meeting process. If the question or concern cannot be addressed the City Administrator will be in contact with everyone to address the issue.**
- 5. ADP will be in the office this week to begin the process of transitioning payroll. Employees who have elected to do so, will begin receiving their paychecks via direct deposit starting on Friday.**
- 6. All employees will receive a W2 for the 2016 year within the next 2 weeks. These W2's will be printed through our current payroll company, Nicholson.**

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

- 1. Two Administrative clerks being employed with the City for a year, were transitioned from part time to full time. One clerk will assist with water and sewer billing and the other clerk will assist as a day to day administrative assistant.**
- 2. Ads have been placed for the following open positions; Recreation Laborer, Public Works Laborer, Clerk/Treasurer, Accounts Payable Clerk and City Administrator. Ads were also placed seeking bids for uniforms and concessions for the Recreation Department's upcoming season.**
- 3. The Watson Park upgrade project is now complete. Mike Haggie conducted an inspection to make sure all upgrades were up to code. Watson Park will reopen for business in the upcoming weeks. Mr. Kempski will report back to council in the February meeting as to the remaining balance of funds after upgrades.**

4. **Mr. Kempski announced that Mr. Richard Black passed away today. Mr. Black was a part of the Loris Recreation Department, Blue Pride and many other community organizations for several years.**

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

The department head reports were received as information.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT:

The information to be submitted to FEMA for the first 30 days of debris removal caused by Hurricane Matthew this past October has been gathered and is now ready to be submitted. All necessary permits have been applied for and are awaiting a response. Private contractor Ervin Alford will begin the removal of debris too large to be removed by City equipment. This work will begin as soon as weather permits. Stumps left by fallen trees will also be ground up and removed.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Chief Jerry Hardee reports that in September of 2016 the ISO inspection was conducted on the Fire and Water Departments. This inspection allowed for a possible total score of 105.5. Positive results of our inspection lowered the City to a class 3 to take affect April 1st, 2017. Residents and businesses may contact their insurance companies to see if a lower rate is available due to the new classification.

The new estimate is \$345,756 for the fire truck currently being built by Rosenbauer Fire. This estimate is under budget. An estimated completion date will be early Fall of 2017. As part of the awarded Grant, the City must get rid of the 1978 CA1000 Fire Apparatus. This apparatus cannot be sold to any existing fire department in the United States. The Awarded Grant requires that it be auctioned off to an individual. Chief Hardee request that the dollar amount received from the auction be placed towards the fire impact fee account.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Chief Shepherd reports that a homicide occurred within the City of Loris on Christmas Day. The City being short on resources, the investigation was turned over to the Horry County Police Department. The suspect has been apprehended and charged.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

1. Work will soon begin between the Administrator and Department Heads on the 2017/2018 budget.
2. Interviews for the open positions advertised will begin shortly.
3. The Municipal Association in Georgetown will assist the City with a temporary Clerk/Treasurer until the position can be filled due to current staff not being knowledgeable of Clerk/Treasurer operations.
4. Council will be involved with the review of applications and the interview process for the open positions during a Special Meeting. Three finalists will be selected to be interviewed in front of Council. The positions of Clerk/Treasurer and City Administrator are to be appointed by Council. All other positions may be filled by the City Administrator.
5. Committee Chairs are asked to notify Council members of upcoming scheduled Committee Meetings.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

The Public Works Committee met with Hanna Engineering on December 1st, 2016. Hanna Engineering has provided a report and overview for the Bayboro Pump Station. The City is no longer being fined by DHEC in the amount of \$4,600 per day. A Public Works meeting will be held in January and easement forms will be distributed to citizens to move forward with upgrading drainage issues within the city.

BUSINESS:

A. Completion of Audit (6-month trial balance)

A trial balance has been sent in to the Auditing Firm. We are awaiting a response as to the next step to be taken.

B. Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority Easement

Councilwoman Vescovi made a motion to table the Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority Easement until City Attorney Mr. Battle presents the written document to Council at the February meeting. Councilwoman Vescovi's motion was seconded by Councilwoman Gause to table the Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority Easement until City Attorney Mr. Battle presents the written document to council at the February meeting. Mayor and All Members voted favorably.

C. Enforcement of Ordinance regarding individual pump stations

An ordinance is in place that requires property owners to maintain individual pump stations located on their property. A time frame needs to be determined to begin enforcing this ordinance.

Councilman Dozier requested that Acting City Administrator make a recommendation as to a time frame to allow property owners to begin maintaining the pump stations. A recommendation was made by Acting City Administrator to allow property owners 60 days to begin maintaining the pump stations located on their property. Councilwoman Vescovi made a motion to allow Mr. Kempski to notify the citizens of their responsibility to maintain these individual pump stations as stated in the ordinance within 60 days. Councilwoman Vescovi's motion was, seconded by Councilman Dozier to allow Mr. Kempski to notify the citizens of their responsibility in maintain these individual pump stations as stated in the ordinance within 60 days. Mayor and all Members voted favorably.

D. 2017-2018 Budget timeline

Work on the 2017-2018 Budget will begin with Council and the City Administrator. Department Heads will submit a requested budget to be reviewed by the Finance Committee. By early April, a packet will be submitted to Council for review and approval.

E. Spring Street School Contract

Due to a misunderstanding, the Spring Street property purchase is on hold until new terms can be completed.

F. Salary increase for City Employees

Administrator Kempski recommends that employees being employed over 1 year, having no salary increase within 1 year, receiving an outstanding evaluation and receiving no write ups within 1 year would receive a merit increase. These merit increases awarded total \$15,000 annually and will include 9 employees totaling \$15,000 annually.

Mayor Nichols requested that these pay increases become effective January 1, 2017. A cost of living will be discussed in the next budget cycle. Mayor Nichols also advised that each employee received a \$200 Christmas bonus along with a \$100 safety incentive in December.

A recommendation was made by Acting City Administrator to issue a merit increase to 9 employees totaling \$15,000 annually to become affective January 1st, 2017. A motion was made by Councilman Dozier, seconded by Councilwoman Gause to allow Mr. Kempski to move forward with the merit increase to 9 employees totaling \$15,000 annually to become affective January 1st, 2017. Mayor Nichols and all members voted favorably.

G. Future of Water and Sewer (study by Hanna Engineering)

Mayor advises that Hanna Engineering can perform a study for the City on the Water and Sewer System to access how much the system is worth. They will also project an estimated future income of the system if the City keeps the water and sewer system. This study will cost between \$5,000 to \$15,000.

H. City drainage issues

Attorney Mike Battle will draft an easement for the City to be presented to residents allowing the City access to manage drainage issues.

I. Surveying for City ditches and drainage

Councilwoman Vescovi made a motion to allow Mr. Kempski to research the availability of funds and present information to Council in regards to Hanna Engineering performing a study on the water and sewer system along with surveying the drainage and ditches and present that information to Council for review. Councilwoman Vescovi's motion was seconded by Councilman Hardee to allow Mr. Kempski to research the availability of funds and present information to council in regards to Hanna Engineering performing a study on the water and sewer system along with surveying the drainage and ditches and present that information to Council for review. Mayor and All Members voted favorably.

J. City Grant Writer

Mayor advises that the City is in need of 2 grant writers. Hanna Engineering recommends that the City obtain a grant writer for future purchases by the Public Works Department. Mayor also advises that the City needs a contracted grant writer to write grants for all other departments. Mayor advises that money to cover both grant writers is in the budget.

Councilman Dozier inquires as to what department in the budget would the City draw funds from to pay for both grant writers.

Councilwoman Vescovi made a motion to allow Mr. Kempski to research the availability of funds and present information to Council in regards to water and sewer studies to be completed by Hanna Engineering and to research the cost for the City to contract 2 grant writers and present that information to Council for review. Councilwoman Vescovi's motion was seconded by Councilman Hardee to allow Mr. Kempski to research the availability of funds and present information to council in regards to water and sewer studies to be completed by Hanna Engineering. Mayor voted no. All other Members voted favorably.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Councilwoman Gause, seconded by Mayor Nichols to go into executive session to discuss contractual matters. Mayor Nichols and all members voted favorably.

After the executive session, Council reconvened to open session upon a motion by Councilman Suggs, seconded by Councilwoman Vescovi. Mayor Nichols and all members voted favorably.

Mayor Nichols announced that contractual matters were discussed and that no action and no votes were taken.

PUBLIC AND PRESS COMENTS:

Mrs. Veda Nichols of 4010 Church Street announced that the Loris Women's Coalition would be meeting on January 31st at 6 P.M at City Hall due to the holiday.

Mr. Alton Ewing of 557 Longleaf Drive expresses his concern of the condition of the business store fronts and old high school. The high school is an eyesore as an entrance into the City. Councilwoman Vescovi will investigate the issue and discuss with the property owners as to what their intentions are with the property. A Quick Claim deed was signed and the property was returned to the Hardwick Family Trust.

Ken Cannon of 3748 Maple Street expresses his concern of burning illegal substances by neighbors. He thanked Chief Shepherd for her help in trying to solve this issue. Chief Jerry Hardee suggests that Mr. Cannon report the fire as it is going on and the fire department will go out and handle the situation. A statement will be added to the City website as to illegal burning.

Mr. Alan Levinson of 5020 Forest Drive expresses his concern to Council about the upcoming hurricane season.

Mrs. Joyce Graham, writer for the Tabor-Loris Tribune, inquired about the 3 million dollars and questions the plans of a forensic audit. She also questions the location of a \$400,000 account and verifies that the City does know the location of those funds.

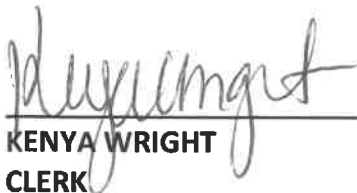
Mr. Scott Harper, writer for the Loris Scene, questions if the public has been notified of Committee Meetings taking place.

Mayor advises that all meetings will be posted and available to the public. Mr. Harper suggests that public comments be held at the beginning of the meeting to allow the public to exit the meeting earlier.

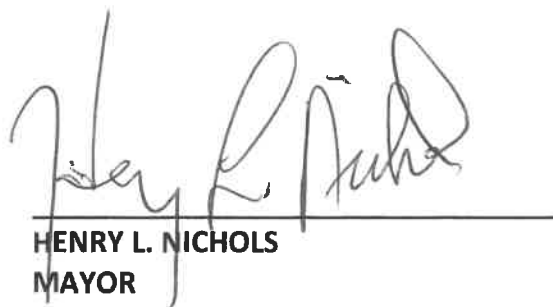
ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Councilwoman Gause, seconded by Councilman Hardee to adjourn. Mayor Nichols and all Members voted favorably. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:46 P.M.

ATTEST:



KENYA WRIGHT
CLERK

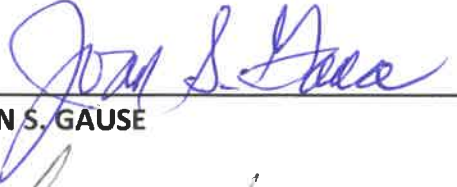


HENRY L. NICHOLS
MAYOR

LORIS COUNCIL MEMBERS



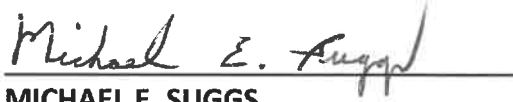
MICHAEL DOZIER



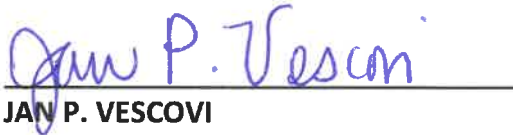
JOAN S. GAUSE



LEWIS C. HARDEE, JR.



MICHAEL E. SUGGS



JAN P. VESCOVI