CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD VIA ZOOM
MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2020 – 5:30 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Barbara Blain-Bellamy, Shane Hubbard, Mayor Pro Tem, and Council Members: William Goldfinch, Shane Hubbard, Alex Hyman, Justin Jordan, Jean Timbes, and Larry White

STAFF: Adam Emrick, City Administrator; Le Hendrick, Fire Chief; Dale Long, Police Chief; Mary Catherine Hyman, Deputy Administrator/Planning & Development Director; John Rogers, Deputy Administrator/ Grants & Special Projects Director; David Crotts, Assistant Finance Director; Taylor Newell, Public Information Officer; Jeff Leveille, IT Director; Kevin Chestnut, Public Works Director; Lynn Smith, Human Resource Director; and Barbara Tessier, City Clerk

OTHERS: Citizens and media were able to watch as meeting was streamed via the City’s website and City Access channel as well as via Youtube. The public was invited to make public comments via voice mail or email to the City Clerk.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Blain-Bellamy called the meeting to order and gave the invocation and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Blain-Bellamy asked the clerk for a roll call for quorum purposes. The clerk did, and all Council members were present.

The requirements for posting notice of this meeting under South Carolina’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) were met.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion: Mayor Blain-Bellamy made a motion, seconded by Hubbard, to approve the agenda with the removal of Item VI, the Public Hearing and First Reading of Ordinance ZA# 2020-04-20 (A) as it was not an emergency. Vote: Unanimous. The motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

A. An amendment to Ordinance #2020-03-14, Ordinance #2020-03-14 (A) temporarily suspending rules for City Council Meetings to provide for virtual City meetings.

B. Resolution authorizing Mungo Homes Coastal Division Properties LLC to secure a Letter of Credit guaranteeing the installation of infrastructure at Coastal Point West Phase 1 Subdivision.

C. Resolution authorizing Gerald Landholdings LLC to secure a Letter of Credit guaranteeing the installation of infrastructure at Elmhurst Phase IVB Subdivision.
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D. Selection of a contractor to perform the Woodcreek subdivision pipe replacement and abandonment project.

E. Resolution accepting dedication of roadways and drainage system in Woodland Lakes Subdivision Phase II (Merganser Drive, Red Head Court, Iron Court, and Blue Wing Teal Drive)

F. Approval of Minutes –, February 17, 2020 Workshop and Council minutes and March 5-6, 2020 Budget Workshop minutes, March 14, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes

Motion: Timbes made a motion, seconded by Hyman, to approve the Consent Agenda. Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Via Voice Mail: William, last name not distinguishable, voiced his support for Council for their measures to take steps not taken by the Governor in regard to the pandemic.

Via Email:

David Sellers does not believe the City should enforce anything more than the CDC or the Governor have put in place.

Bryan Lemon is in favor of a stay at home order for Conway.

Karla Lemon is in favor of a stay at home order for the State, and would like the City to put a stay in place order in effect.

Motion: Hyman made a motion, seconded by Goldfinch, to close Public Hearing. Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARING and FIRST READING: (removed by vote of Council)


FIRST READING:
First reading of Ordinance #ZA2020-04-06 (D) An Ordinance to annex approximately 2 acres of property located at 3954 Long Avenue Ext (TMS 111-00-02-016 | PIN 295-16-04-0018) and request to rezone from Horry County Commercial Forest Agriculture (CFA) to City of Conway Low/Medium Density Residential District (R-1). M. Hyman informed Council that the request is being made to allow a single family residence that recently changed ownership to continue to tie into City services and to rezone the property from Horry County Commercial Forest Agriculture (CFA) to City of Conway Low/Medium Residential District (R-1). Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Hyman, to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2020-04-06 (D). Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION:

A. Discussion concerning the donation of a decommissioned extrication tool to the Academy of Arts and Technology for use with their Fire Rescue. Hendrick informed Council that a new extrication tool has been purchased and the older tool had been decommissioned. The Fire Rescue Program at the Horry County ATA is in need of a similar tool, but does not have the funds to purchase one. Staff recommends donating this tool, valued at approximately $4,500 to Horry County ATA. White asked about any liability and Emrick noted that once the City donated the tool, the liability would not be the City’s. Motion: Hyman made a motion, seconded by Goldfinch to approve the donation of the decommissioned extrication tool on the recommendation of staff. Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

B. Consideration of priority lists for street resurfacing. Chestnut informed Council the City had budgeted $350,000 for road and drainage projects and will request matching funds from the Horry County Transportation Committee (CTC). Staff conducted an annual street survey of all City, State, and County roads, prioritizing the list according to those with the greatest need. Staff requests Council to approve the proposed list of City and State roads, which include Lakeside Drive to County Club Drive, Lakeland Drive to Country Club Drive, Sherwood Drive to Lakeland Drive, and Kirkland Drive to Elkford Drive. Motion: Timbes made a motion, seconded by White, to approve the list of streets proposed by staff for resurfacing. Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

C. Consideration of an amendment to Ordinance #2020-03-14, Ordinance #2020-03-14 (B), to issue a mandatory Stay at Home Order. Emrick informed Council that the proposed ordinance was no longer required as the Governor had made a State Stay at Home Order. Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Timbes to remove this item from the agenda. Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:

The administrators report was comprised of a timeline of events that detail our internal and external responses and events related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
2/25/2020 First email sent to procurement asking them to stock up on hand sanitizer, Lysol wipes, and Lysol. Response also indicated that we would stock up on PPE supplies.
2/27/2020 First Department Head Staff meeting where COVID-19 was discussed. Early thoughts were offered if this became a major concern.
3/11/2020 Staff meeting to go over the potential impact of COVID-19. This would be the last in person staff meeting for a while and we started social distancing procedures.
3/13/2020 SC Governor McMaster declared a state of emergency
3/14/2020 Horry County declared state of emergency
3/14/2020 City of Conway declared Local State of Emergency, closing all City buildings to the public
3/15/2020 First reported COVID-19 case in Horry County. Reduced workforce, offering to send anyone determined to be at high risk home with pay for two weeks, shifted to work from home with as much staff as possible, started varying schedules to avoid overlap and social distancing, cancelled all youth sports following the lead of Horry County Schools. City also placed a COVID-19 tab on its website with information that is updated daily with the latest information from the school district, Conway Medical Center, DHEC, and the CDC.
3/16/2020 Requested DHEC provide additional location information to assist the City in response and protection of first responders and other departments that may come into contact with contamination
3/18/2020 Closed all playgrounds to limit close contact with public and asked the public to bag all garbage to help limit solid waste employees’ contact with trash
3/21/2020 Began letting restaurants block parking spaces off to offer curbside pickup of food
3/23/2020 Mayor begins weekly video updates on City’s response to COVID-19. These are posted to the City’s website, access channel and social media
3/24/2020 First reported death in Horry County. Parks and Recreation Staff begin offering “At Home” fitness classes posted to YouTube and linked from City’s social media accounts
3/27/2020 DHEC releases the only day of zip code information before stopping this process
3/30/2020 Governor ordered the closure of all public boat ramps, including the City’s
3/31/2020 Governor ordered non-essential businesses to close including theaters, bingo parlors, gyms and other athletic facilities
April 6, 2020

4/1/2020 First known death in the City

4/2/2020 Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order of 3/31/2020, all tennis courts and basketball courts are closed

4/3/2020 Governor issued additional Executive Orders closing additional non-essential businesses to take effect on 4/6/2020 at 5:00 PM

4/3/2020 Staff is asked to look at adding a mandatory stay at home order to Council Meeting scheduled for 4/6/2020

• No one on City Staff has tested positive for the coronavirus. However, we are having some major impacts from the virus on staffing. There are three individuals that are in self-quarantine and are showing symptoms of the virus. There are 6 individuals on self-quarantine that have come into contact with someone who either has the virus or has been tested for the virus and the results have not yet come back. There are 15 other employees who are out as high risk or due to child care or other medical issues. There are 25 employees, mostly at the Recreation Department, who are on voluntary temporary leave. We are down 39 total employees with 6 of these from the Solid Waste Department. His going to start having an impact on the services that we offer to our citizens. Operations have been shifted around to keep things afloat for now, but as this continues to progress, we know that we will have to change the way that we are doing things across the board.

• There are 16 people working from home continuing to do the same level of work as before.

• Some additional changes will be implemented starting tomorrow. The drive-thru window at the Finance Department will have shortened hours. The Finance Department is down 7 employees, and there is a number of operational items that need to be addressed before and after the drive-thru opens. There is a line at the drive-thru from open to close. Therefore, the hours of the drive-thru will be from 9-4. Staff will still work 8-5, allowing for them to handle the before and after operations required.

• Water meter reading will continue; however, there will be no disconnect of any services for non-payment at this time. All customers are urged to use the online bill pay for their water bills, the convenience charge will be credited to the bill as well. Flushable wipes are not really flushable and urge people not to do so. The wipes will flush, but they are likely to jam the lift stations and pumps, which will cause larger issues.

• All trash should be placed in bags and then into the green trash cans to limit contact with our solid waste employees and lower the risk of potential harm. If you are in quarantine or are known to be positive, please do not recycle during this time. Place all refuse in bags in the green cans. Please make sure that all items are in either the green can or the blue recycling can to limit the amount of handling is required. We are struggling to keep up with yard debris and bulk item pickup. Please be patient and we will continue these services for as long as possible. A new roll-off truck and 10 new roll-off containers have been purchased. If the virus continues
to spread and collection is no longer safe, residents will be asked to bring their bagged garbage to convenience areas and place their garbage directly into dumpsters.

- All playgrounds and tennis courts are closed. Basketball rims have been removed from the backboards. Our parks are open for walking, biking or hiking, so long as social distancing is practiced. All sports leagues are cancelled.

- The Planning and Building Departments are open and fully staffed, although they are closed for public access. Currently all building permits are being accepted; however, we do have the right to refuse an inspection if there are multiple people occupying the dwelling to be inspected.

- Calls are being screened differently at dispatch. If they are a suspected COVID-19 patient, dispatch will only call for an ambulance crew unless it is life threatening such as cardiac arrest. Upon arrival, fire department personnel will not enter the residence or building unless the patient is in a life threatening condition. They will stay outside and wait or EMS. Even once EMS arrives, every attempt will be made to limit the number of personnel that come into contact with the patient. If personnel are to come into contact, they must use full PPE. On ALL medical responses, the highest ranking medical person on scene will go inside to make contact using full PPE. They will ask the standard CDC questions and determine if they may be a suspected COVID-19 patient. If they are confirmed, it defaults to the process above. On all medical incidents, the assumption will be that the patient is infected, unless there is definitive proof otherwise.

- City Hall is skeleton staffed. At most, four people are in the building at any one time. Mary Catherine, John and I are taking turns being in the building to reduce the chance of any one of us contaminating the other. Tasha is here every day answering phone calls.

- Normally, the budget is on the May calendar for consideration; however, given the impacts from the Coronavirus are still unknown, the budget hearings will not be on the agenda until the June calendar to allow for a better picture of where we are and what changes might need to be considered from the Budget Retreat. Council will be kept updated.

- DHEC puts out daily updates and is now updating with Zip Code data for each confirmed case. As of today at 3 PM, there are 2,049 positive cases in SC, with 44 statewide deaths. Horry County has 76 confirmed positive cases with 7 deaths, including at least one in the City of Conway. Two of these deaths were reported to us this afternoon at 4 PM, as well as 12 additional cases. Yesterday, the last Zip Code update showed 29526 as having 6 cases and 29527 has 9 cases. DHEC now projects 8,053 cases by May 5th.

- Someone delivered this framed quote to me last week, “This too shall pass.” I think those are fitting words to end my report.

COUNCIL INPUT:
Goldfinch hopes that everyone may stay safe, and to be thankful for what we do have. Other municipalities have construction crews leave whatever structure and then the inspectors go in alone.

Hubbard mentioned South Carolina House Calls would make house calls eliminating a trip to the doctor’s office. Asked Newell to put this information on City website.

Hyman noted that a power outage had set off his neighbor’s house alarm when the owner was away and Officers Manemiet, Fassbender, and Reed showed up quickly and were very professional. The Executive Order by the Governor now gives municipalities the tools to enforce the new order that they did not have before.

Jordan asked people to practice social distancing and be sure to wash your hands. He works in the healthcare field and the industry is seeing PPE issues.

Timbes is pleased with the Governor’s Stay in Place Order. Encouraged people to help elders. Asked if Conway Hospital was giving reports to the City on cases they have.

White asked that when possible wear masks and gloves and to be washing your hands.

Mayor Blain-Bellamy wanted to thank healthcare professionals for what they do. Saw a parade of teachers in her neighborhood and it filled her with pride and hope. She hoped people would stay at home and stressed washing of hands. Because there is the lack of testing in the area, the numbers of people infected with COVID-19 is probably higher than known. This is another opportunity to show how resilient Conway is. Conway Strong!

ADJOURNMENT: Motion: White made a motion, seconded by Hubbard, to adjourn the meeting. 
Vote: Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes approved by City Council this 20th day of April, 2020.

Barbara A. Tessier, City Clerk