Notices of this meeting have been made in accordance with the 1976 Code of Laws of South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

A Special Meeting/Budget Workshop of City Council was held this date in the Council Chambers at City Hall with Mayor Jack M. Scoville, Jr. presiding.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Jack M. Scoville, Jr.
Council Member Jeanette Ard
Council Member Brendon M. Barber, Sr.
Mayor Pro Tem Rudolph A. Bradley
Council Member Paige B. Sawyer, III
Council Member Clarence C. Smalls
Council Member Peggy P. Wayne

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Chris Eldridge, City Administrator
Mrs. Elise Crosby, City Attorney
Ms. Ann Mercer, City Clerk

DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Mr. Glen Dixon, Fleet Maintenance Superintendent
Mr. Paul A. Gardner, Chief of Police
Mr. Sterling Geathers, Public Works Director
Mrs. Cindy Kinder, Kaminski House Director
Mr. Alan Loveless, Electric Utility Manager
Mrs. Jessica Miller, Finance Director
Mr. Lane Mixon, Public Water Utilities Director
Mr. Joey Tanner, Fire Chief
Mr. Keith Wilson, Keep Georgetown Beautiful Executive Director

NEWS MEDIA

Georgetown Times – Mr. Scott Harper
The Sun News – Ms. Aliana Ramos
Mayor Scoville opened the Special Meeting/Budget Workshop of City Council at 3:32 PM. Mayor Pro Tem Bradley rendered the invocation and Mayor Scoville led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Scoville requested all cell phones be turned off or placed on silent with the exception of emergency responders.

Council Member Smalls stated he would like to delete items 5, 6, and 7 from the agenda because this is a budget workshop.

**MAYOR PRO TEM BRADLEY MOVED TO POSTPONE ITEMS 5, 6 AND 7 UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER ARD.** Mayor Scoville asked for discussion. Mayor Scoville called for the question. **MAYOR PRO TEM BRADLEY AND COUNCIL MEMBERS ARD, BARBER, SAWYER, SMALLS AND WAYNE APPROVED. MAYOR SCOVILLE VOTED AGAINST. THE MOTION CARRIED 6-1.**

Mayor Scoville asked to move Item 8, approval of health insurance consultant, next on the agenda. There was no opposition.

Mr. Eldridge provided Council with a memorandum addressing recommendation for health insurance consultant. He stated the idea was to obtain an independent consultant, someone who was not attempting to sell the City insurance. Staff has reviewed the bids received and recommends Benefit Controls Companies to provide the services. This company was not only the lowest bidder, $8,500, but also came highly recommended by the Town of Mount Pleasant. The City expends $2 million a year on health insurance for employees and this needs to be closely evaluated.

**COUNCIL MEMBER SAWYER MOVED TO APPROVE CONTRACT WITH BENEFIT CONTROLS COMPANIES TO PROVIDE HEALTH INSURANCE CONSULTANT SERVICES IN THE AMOUNT OF $8,500, SECONDED BY MAYOR PRO TEM BRADLEY.** Mayor Scoville asked for discussion. Council Member Ard asked if the consultant would be comparing coverage with what the employees currently have. Mr. Eldridge said he would. Mayor Scoville called for the question. **THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 7-0.**

Council Member Smalls stated he did not like the fact that the budgets were not provided in a binder. He also commented on the fact Council was not asked about scheduling for the budget discussions.
Mr. Eldridge reviewed the City of Georgetown funded positions and compared 2004/2005 with 227 positions to the 2010/2011 proposed budget with 191 positions (including the FOI Clerk and the Economic Development Coordinator.) This has been accomplished through attrition; there have been no layoffs or furloughs. The proposed FY 2010/2011 personal services reductions amount to $400,000. This has been through hard work of the Department Heads and Council’s forethought to freeze positions and consider needs one by one. Council Members questioned the manpower in the Public Works Department and proposed eliminations in other departments. Council Member Barber requested a list of the positions filled by working retirees. Council Member Wayne stated she would like for the City to establish a summer program with the younger people cutting the grass and performing maintenance. Council Member Ard spoke about the One Stop Center and said they served thousands of youth in Georgetown County last summer. The stimulus money will be available for youth programs this year. The providers through the One Stop Center have a program which provides all the liability and just needs agencies where the youth can work under supervision. Staff noted several of the summer hires from last year came through the One Stop Center. Mayor Scoville said this could be a good economic development tool and the City should be active in this program.

Mr. Eldridge reviewed the capital request summary for the General Fund which had requests totaling $2,686,199; he trimmed this amount to $681,683. The reductions included police patrol vehicles from five to two; Fire Department from one fire pumper, 50 replacement SCBAs, one training officer vehicle, one new Station 2, one video conferencing system down to one fire pumper and five replacement SCBAs. Requested capital that remained in the proposed budget included Public Works one Ford Focus; Information Technologies computer/phone upgrades and Non-Departmental park improvements.

Mr. Eldridge stated he reviewed the vehicle/equipment report and tabbed numerous items he felt should be sold. He asked the Department Heads to evaluate those items and provide justifications for keeping the equipment. Some of the equipment has been for sale on Gov Deals. Mayor Pro Tem Bradley stated he realizes the necessity and need for capital improvements but emphasized he could not in clear conscious approve of anything that is going to
financially burden the taxpayers. Mr. Eldridge said he does not plan
to ask for the debt millage or millage increase of any kind. Mrs.
Jessica Miller answered Council Member Ard’s question by stating
when equipment is sold the revenues are applied to a Sale of Assets
line item in the General Fund. If the asset belonged to another fund,
the revenue is moved to the appropriate department. Council
Member Ard asked to receive the amount of revenues Gov Deals is
generating. Council Member Sawyer expressed concerns on the
maintenance costs on certain pieces of equipment. Mayor Pro Tem
Bradley stated if operation and usage of the equipment improves,
that will reduce the wear and tear. Lengthy discussions continued.
Mayor Pro Tem Bradley questioned the savings if the City does not
purchase a new pumper for the Fire Department versus the ISO
ratings. Residential insurance rates would increase and the real
impact would be commercial insurance rates, increasing possibly
tens of thousands of dollars, i.e. Wal Mart, church sanctuaries,
apartment complexes. New businesses certainly take notice of ISO
ratings. Council Member Wayne asked if the City could use the
county fire trucks located at the county fire departments that border
the City. Chief Tanner said they assist the City now because of the
staffing levels but ISO states the county trucks cannot be counted as
our fire protection. Mayor Scoville said the City Fire Department
saves structures. He stated for the public record that the City has a
good Fire Department and that is an excellent reason to live in the
City as opposed to the County. When asked by Council Member
Wayne, Mr. Eldridge said he felt the new fire station is outside of the
annual budget. There are financing options available which he felt
Council needs to study before committing to this expense.

Mr. Eldridge said Kevin Rapps needs to present the request for
computers and phone upgrades. Mrs. Miller stated we are
experiencing major issues with the phone system which is
antiquated. It cannot work for all our needs and should be
addressed. We have to purchase phones off of EBay because there
are no new ones to be found. Mr. Walt Ackerman said the items
requested are to keep us operating, not to move into the new age.
Mayor Scoville asked that Mr. Rapps discuss these issues at the
next meeting. Council Member Barber said a ten year old phone
system is way out of date and instead of investing money to make us
operable, we need to make sure we get a system that will put us
where we need to be for the next ten years. Council Member Ard
asked that the City have a person answer the phone. She said we
are a small City and need to give personal service to our citizens.
Council Member Sawyer said the biggest improvement to the phone
system would be to have a person answer the phone. Discussions continued. The consensus of Council was to replace the phone system.

Council Member Wayne asked that funding be increased for the park improvements. Mr. Eldridge said one line item not included on the summary is $100,000 for sidewalk improvements with a focus in the West End. This is not a capital expense.

Council Member Smalls stated Council has not been asked to submit a list of concerns for this budget. It was noted a few dirt streets still remain inside the City. Mayor Scoville asked the Council Members to submit any issues they may have to the City Administrator.

Mr. Eldridge reviewed the capital request summaries for the Utility Funds. Items requested and recommended included: Electric Department - building improvements, distribution improvements, fiber optic recertification and two backhoes, $730,000; Water Department – distribution improvements, backhoe, water plant improvements, $1,601,000; Wastewater Department – line replacement and rehab, plant improvements, $351,000 and Stormwater Department – side cutter bush hog tractor and drainage project, $2,076,000. When questioned by Council, Mr. Eldridge said backhoes are shared among City departments. When new ones are purchased the older models will be sold. Discussion continued.

Mr. Eldridge asked Council to submit their ideas on the budget to him. There is no debt millage included in the proposed budget. Council Member Barber questioned if the guidelines for GFOA are being followed. Mrs. Miller said a budget document would not be submitted this year because the Department Heads did not provide performance measures, which is a required element. Mr. Eldridge said he cut out the performance measures in order to streamline costs. Mrs. Miller said the accreditation is part of the distinguished budget presentation. Mr. Eldridge said if performance measures are to be outlined, he would recommend they are done a lot differently. Council Member Barber said he doesn’t want the City to take any steps backwards. More discussion followed.
MAYOR PRO TEM BRADLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN THE SPECIAL MEETING/BUDGET WORKSHOP OF CITY COUNCIL, SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER SMALLS AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 7-0.

The Special Meeting/Budget Workshop was adjourned at 5:47 PM.

Ann U. Mercer
City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: 5/20/10
VERIFYING INITIALS: _______