



Richland County Council  
ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE  
**MINUTES**  
June 25, 2024 – 6:00 PM  
Council Chambers  
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

COMMITTEE COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Derrek Pugh, Yvonne McBride, Paul Livingston, and Don Weaver

NOT PRESENT: Overture Walker

OTHERS PRESENT: Allison Terracio, Chakisse Newton, Cheryl English, Gretchen Barron, Jason Branham, Ashiya Myers, Michelle Onley, Angela Weathersby, Anette Kirylo, Patrick Wright, Ashley Fullerton, Tamar Black, Jennifer Wladischkin, Kyle Holsclaw, Jackie Hancock, Leonardo Brown, Dale Welch, Michael Maloney, Shirani Fuller, Michael Byrd, John Thompson, Callison Richardson, John McKenzie, Stacey Hamm, Kate Bugby, Pamela Green, Geo Price, Thomas Gilbert, Sarah Harris, Aric Jensen, and Quinton Epps

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Councilman Paul Livingston called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 PM.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

a. May 21, 2024 – Mr. Pugh moved to approve the minutes as distributed, seconded by Mr. Weaver.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, and Weaver

Not Present: Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Ms. McBride moved to adopt the agenda as published, seconded by Mr. Pugh.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, and Weaver

Not Present: Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

4. **ITEMS FOR ACTION**

a. Department of Public Works – Engineering – Greenhill Parish and Spring Park Sidewalk – Award of Construction – Ms. Shirani Fuller, the County Engineer, stated the County requested bids from qualified contractors for the installation of a 5-ft. sidewalk along sections of Greenhill Parish and Spring Park. On Greenhill Parish, they are putting in approximately 0.27 miles of sidewalk from the traffic circle at Upland Hill Lane to the existing infrastructure near the driveway for Catawba Trail Elementary School. Improvements are to the existing stormwater infrastructure, and include the installation of two school zone speed flashing light systems. Along Spring Park, they are putting in approximately 1.044 miles of new sidewalk from the intersection of Longreen Parkway to the existing sidewalk at Hobart Way. Improvements to the existing stormwater infrastructure and the replacement of an existing speed hump with a raised crosswalk will be included in this project. Corley Construction, a registered SLBE and minority-owned business, was the lowest responsive bidder. Staff recommended awarding the contract to Corley Construction.

Mr. Weaver inquired if the funding was coming from the Transportation Penny Tax.

Ms. Fuller responded that the funding is coming from the County Transportation Committee (“CTC”) and the Road Maintenance Fee, collected through the State’s gas tax and the County’s vehicle tax bill, respectively.

Ms. McBride asked if the County recommended the sidewalk project to the CTC or did they choose the project.

Ms. Fuller replied that the project predated her, but it is her understanding that it was County staff-initiated.

Mr. Weaver moved to forward this item to Council with a recommendation to award the contract to Corley Construction for the Greenhill Parish and Spring Park sidewalk construction for the bid price of \$1,560,831, seconded by Mr. Pugh.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, and Weaver

Not Present: Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- b. Economic Development—Lease Renewal – Assistant Economic Development Director Kate Bugby stated staff recommends signing a three-lease extension at 1201 Main Street. The current lease expires on August 31, 2024. They did explore other office space locations but could not find anything that did not require major upfits or costly moving expenses. There will not be a rent increase in the first year, but there will be a 3% annual escalation for the two subsequent years. She noted their current location allows them to communicate with their partners (i.e., Department of Commerce, CentralSC Alliance, etc.). The space also provides space for additional staff.

Ms. McBride moved to forward to Council with a recommendation to renew the Economic Development Office's office lease for the current space at 1201 Main Street, Suite 1100, seconded by Mr. Pugh.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, and Weaver

Not Present: Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- c. Grants & Community Development – 2024 Annual Action Plan – Assistant County Administrator Aric Jensen indicated this is the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan, which comes before Council each year.

Ms. Callison Richardson, Grants and Community Outreach Division Manager, pointed out the activities include the development of affordable rental housing, which is an allocation of funds we have set aside. There will be a process for eligible non-profits to apply for the funds. She noted that some projects are identified and others are more just funding allocations.

Ms. McBride inquired if a mechanism is in place that allows for adjustments or modifications of the projects.

Ms. Richardson replied there are tight parameters with HUD. First, they give us the allocation amount. Then, there are these identified caps, and within those parameters, we will make a notice of funding availability. We have information sessions for anyone who might be eligible for these funds. Then, we do a two-step application process so they can pitch their idea without investing much time. We can make changes to prior plans. For example, when we had the staffing turnover, projects were not moving forward, and funding was building up, so plans had to be amended to get the funds out more quickly.

Ms. Terracio expressed that she hopes they are making progress with hiring so we can use the available funds.

Ms. Richardson acknowledged she and her team are funded through the HUD grants. She noted the Community Development Coordinator position that runs the CDBG Project is vacant. They are in the hiring process and hope to have someone on board soon.

Mr. Livingston requested Ms. Richardson to explain how they came up with the projects and engage the stakeholders and the community.

Ms. Richardson stated they have a needs assessment public hearing in June. They have a master list of community partners, including the school districts and the Department of Social Services, who assist with identifying the needs. Affordable housing, seniors, and childcare were the most commented on needs this year. The public input informs their scoring rubric, and then they seek proposals to select the projects. She pointed out they utilize citizens in the scoring process.

Mr. Weaver asked if the housing being rehabilitated is privately owned or county-owned.

Ms. Richardson responded that we have set aside \$427,000 for the Affordable Rental Housing Development and will open it up to eligible entities. These entities are responsible for developing and maintaining the property. The County assists them with acquiring the property and then gives them additional funds to rehabilitate it. The entity is required to keep it as a low-income rental for a period of 20 years. The County will monitor it for that period. It is not our property, but it is not private sector either. Often, these are houses on the market that a non-profit identifies. We can also do the same thing on the homeownership side. In addition, we can do new build by acquiring the land for the non-profit to build on.

Ms. Newton indicated she was under the impression the policy had been modified to allow the funds to be utilized in other municipalities.

Ms. Richardson responded there was an attempt to do so, but they did not make it all the way through. The only place we can use our funding is in the homeless space because we do not have a Transitions, an

Olive Gospel Mission, or a Homeless No More in the county's unincorporated areas. She noted Forest Acre, Blythewood, and Eastover are currently part of the State CDBG program.

Ms. Terracio inquired if we could include land trust in this program.

Ms. Richardson replied she had not found a model that made sense for us yet. She indicated there may be more hoops than we are willing to jump through. She noted we have \$616,000 of down payment assistance funding built up. Right now, the maximum amount of support is \$10,000. We have talked to some of our "sister" communities, and they are considering increasing the amount to \$15,000.

Ms. McBride inquired if we are working with banks or lending agencies and if it affects mortgage rates to participate in the program.

Ms. Richardson stated the Richland County Homeowner Assistance Program has not been open for the last couple of years due to the market and the staffing levels. They are working to open it back up by October 1, 2024. In the meantime, they have been meeting with lenders and conducting credit and housing counseling.

Mr. Pugh moved to forward to Council a recommendation to approve the draft 2024 Annual Action Plan for submission to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for the purposes of administering the County's awarded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership, and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds from October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025, seconded by Ms. McBride.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, and Weaver

Not Present: Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- d. Community Planning & Development – Conservation – Historic Preservation Plan – Mr. Jensen stated one of the Conservation Commission's duties is historical preservation. The item before the committee is the approval of Ethos Preservation, LLC of Savannah, GA, to prepare the Historic Preservation Plan.

Mr. John McKenzie, the Conservation Program Analyst, indicated that the Conservation Commission requested approval to develop the County's first Historic Preservation Plan, born out of the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Livingston asked if the funding is coming for the ½ mill.

Mr. McKenzie replied in the affirmative.

Ms. McBride moved to forward to Council a recommendation to approve Ethos Preservation, LLC of Savannah, GA, developing the Richland County Historic Preservation Plan, which will be incorporated into the 2025 Comprehensive Plan to guide the County in preserving and enhancing its historic and cultural resources, seconded by Mr. Weaver.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, and Weaver

Not Present: Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- e. Community Planning & Development—Planning Services—2025 Comprehensive Plan Update – Mr. Jensen stated that Community Planning & Development put out an RFP for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan. Staff recommends that the proposal from Nealon Planning be approved for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Mr. Pugh moved to forward a recommendation to Council to approve the proposal from Nealon Planning for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update in the amount not to exceed \$245,462.50, seconded by Ms. McBride.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, and Weaver

Not Present: Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

5. **ADJOURNMENT** – Mr. Pugh moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Weaver.

In Favor: Pugh, McBride, Livingston, and Weaver

Not Present: Walker

The vote in favor was unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:35 PM.