

**MINUTES**  
**FACILITIES/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**OCTOBER 19, 2011 —5:45 PM**  
**CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM—2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR, CITY HALL**

The Facilities/Management Committee met on Wednesday, October 19, 2011, at 5:45 p.m. The following members were present:

**Council Members Present:**     **Chairman John Howren**  
  **Councilwoman Brenda Craig**  
  **Councilman Dave Kirlin**

Chairman Howren welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. Chairman Howren then recognized Ms. Melody Usery, Director of Finance, for staff's presentation.

**ITEM 1: Resolution Making Certain Findings and Determinations, Authorizing the Filing of an Application with the Local Government Commission Requesting the Local Government Commission to Sell Bonds at Private Sale and Authorizing and Approving the Selection of the Financing Team in Connection With the Issuance and Sale of Revenue Bonds of the City:**

Ms. Usery stated that in 2001, the City of Gastonia issued \$9,745,000 in Combined Utilities Revenue Bonds. These bonds were issued for the renovation and expansion of the Crowders Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant and extensions of water/sewer lines. Through refunding of all or part of the outstanding Series 2001 Bonds (not to exceed \$5,000,000 including issuance costs), the City can realize debt service savings of approximately 14.05% or \$594,300. City staff recommended that the City of Gastonia, by formal action of its Council on November 1, 2011, hereby adopt and approve the **Resolution Making Certain Findings and Determinations, Authorizing the Filing of an Application with the Local Government Commission Requesting the Local Government Commission to Sell Bonds at Private Sale and Authorizing and Approving the Selection of the Financing Team in Connection With the Issuance and Sale of Revenue Bonds of the City.**

**Committee Recommendation:**

The Committee accepted this item for informational purposes. The Resolution will be presented at the November 1, 2011, Council meeting.

**ITEM 2: Proposed Farmer's Market Master Plan/Building Expansion and Parking Lot Improvements:**

Chairman Howren recognized Mr. Flip Bombardier, Assistant City Manager/Public Infrastructure, for staff's presentation. Mr. Bombardier stated that due to the success of the of the Gastonia Farmer's Market, the Farmer's Market Advisory Board has expressed a need for additional vendor space and parking lot improvements. Mr. Bombardier then recognized Mr. Joe Carpenter, Chairman, Farmer's Market Advisory Board. Mr. Carpenter introduced Mr. Jerry Simpson, Chairman, Farmer's Market Association; Ms. Carol Schrum, Manager of the Farmer's Market; and Mr. Ron Boyd, Farmer's Market Advisory Board. Mr. Carpenter then expressed his thanks to the City for the ongoing support of the market over the years. The market continues to grow to the point of not having enough room for vendors. Also, there is much need for improvements to the parking area. The Gastonia Farmer's Market is quickly becoming a destination for people from all over the county and beyond. Mr. Carpenter then recognized Mr. Joe Bieker, Civil Engineer. Mr. Bieker stated that engineering has conducted a traffic study and has confirmed that on average, 100-120 cars are present every half hour during market hours. The Advisory Board has also requested expansion of the existing building, and conceptual work has begun. The revised plan would allow for 14 additional bays and would create 20-22 additional parking spaces. The new conceptual plan and cost estimate will be presented at the November Farmer's Market Advisory Board meeting. Mr. Simpson stated the Farmer's Market Association has committed \$10,000 for market renovations and has requested approval to begin fundraising for this project. No City funds would be used in this proposal. The Farmers Market Advisory Board and Association is requesting approval to move forward with the revised concept plan as presented and to begin fundraising initiatives for a possible Spring 2012 construction. Staff recommends that this proposal be approved.

**Committee Recommendation:**

The Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to recommend that full Council accept the Farmers' Market Master Plan/Building Expansion and Parking Lot Improvements proposal as presented.

**Necessary Council Action:**

Accept or reject the Committee recommendation.

**ITEM 3: Proposed Increase to Taxi Cab Fare Regulations:**

Chairman Howren recognized Mr. Jim Palenick, City Manager, for the introduction of the presentation. Mr. Palenick stated he wished to clarify that the proposed rates are a ceiling so people cannot be abused. The cab companies have the option to set rates as they wish, just not above the maximum. Mr. Palenick recognized Sergeant Jeff Dobbins for staff's presentation. Sgt Dobbins stated a petition has been received from two of the six cab companies currently operating in Gastonia requesting an increase to the maximum rates allowed as established by Council Resolution. The cab companies have requested a change in the actual fee structure as well as an increase to the overall charges allowed, stating the changes will be consistent with neighboring jurisdictions. Police Department records reveal that there has been no adjustment to the fee maximums charged by taxi operators since a resolution dated September 20, 2005, where taxi operators were granted the ability to assess a temporary fuel surcharge. Three of the cab companies: AAA Taxi, Cook Cab, and City Cab are opposed to an increase in the fee structure, and believe that a rate increase would decrease ridership. The other three cab companies, Blue Cab, Yellow Cab, and Metro Cab, are in favor of a rate increase. These owners would like to have the option for rates comparable to surrounding cities. The owners also stress that a per-mile increase is preferable to an increase in the drop charge. All agree that they would be in favor of eliminating the current fuel surcharge in exchange for the fare ceiling increase. Chairman Howren recognized representatives from Metro Cab, Yellow Cab and Blue Cab who were in attendance at the meeting and gave the representatives an opportunity to speak. Mr. Subhan Chaudhry, owner of Metro Cab, spoke to the committee in support of the proposed increase. Mr. Chaudhry also requested a review of taxi cab ordinances be held every two or three years.

Staff recommends that the Committee approve a resolution to set maximum taxi cab fares, allowable in the City of Gastonia consistent with the "proposed taxi rates," and that a policy be established to review the maximum taxi fee schedule for possible amendment every two or three years following initial adoption.

**Committee Recommendation:**

The Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to recommend that full Council:

- 1) Adopt a resolution to set maximum taxi cab fares, allowable in the City of Gastonia consistent with the "proposed taxi rates" schedule;
- 2) Establish a policy to review the maximum taxi fee schedule for possible amendment not less than every two years following initial adoption; and
- 3) Direct staff to proceed with a review of current cab ordinance.

**Necessary Council Action:**

Accept or reject the Committee recommendation.

**ITEM 4: Contingency Contract for Possible Expense Reduction and/or Revenue Enhancement:**

**Robert S. Segal, CPA.:**

Chairman Howren recognized Mr. Palenick for staff's presentation. Mr. Palenick stated that in an effort to be more efficient, utilize public resources more effectively, enhance revenues, and decrease expenditures, some local governments have turned to "contingency contracts" with private sector consultants. Robert S. Segal, a CPA firm in High Point, works with local governments and is devoted exclusively to non-personnel expense reduction and revenue enhancement for services performed on a contingency fee basis. The consultants are paid 50% of the audited savings achieved or revenues generated. A "Letter of Agreement" from Robert S. Segal, CPA, would allow the firm to examine and analyze any and all City revenues and expenses, in order that a written report of recommendations be provided to the City at no cost or risk to the City. If savings/revenue enhancement recommendations are implemented, the City would pay Robert S. Segal, CPA, \$.50 for every dollar saved, credited, refunded, or generated for a 24-month period thereafter.

Staff recommends that the Committee approve the Letter of Agreement by and between Robert S. Segal, CPA, PA and the City of Gastonia for contingent-fee consulting services associated with the recommendation for, and production of expense reductions and/or revenue enhancements. Further, that the City Manager be authorized and directed to execute such agreement on behalf of the City.

**Committee Recommendation:**

The Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to recommend that full Council approve the Letter of Agreement and that the City Manager be authorized to execute the agreement on behalf of the City.

**Necessary Council Action:**

Accept or reject the Committee recommendation.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.