

GASTONIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 3, 2013 – 6:00 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER – CITY HALL – GASTONIA, NC

Mayor Bridgeman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 3, 2013, in the City Council Chamber at City Hall, Gastonia, North Carolina. Mayor Pro Tem Craig opened the meeting with prayer and Mayor Bridgeman led the audience in the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Ms. Regina W. Phillips, Deputy City Clerk, recorded the minutes.

PRESENT: Mayor John D. Bridgeman
 Mayor Pro Tem Brenda B. Craig
 Council Members: Walter A. Kimble
 David R. Kirlin
 James Gallagher
 Todd Pierceall
 Porter L. McAteer
 City Manager Edward C. Munn
 City Attorney L. Ashley Smith

ABSENT: None

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Councilman Kimble made a motion to adopt the agenda as printed. Councilman Kirlin seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING – AUGUST 6, 2013

Councilman Pierceall made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2013, Regular Council meeting, as printed. Councilman Kimble seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

(1) Ms. Kim Elmore, Cancer Services of Gaston County

Re: Request for In-Kind Services – Pumpkin Pi 5K – November 2, 2013 – Lineberger Park

Ms. Elmore requested in-kind services for the Pumpkin Pi 5K as outlined on the application contained in the exhibit book.

Councilman Kimble requested that this event be posted on the City's website.

Councilman Kimble made a motion to approve the requested in-kind services for the Pumpkin Pi 5K on November 2, 2013. Councilman Kirlin seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 11.)

(2) Ms. Kim George, Gaston Arts Council

Re: Request for In-Kind Services – Gaston Homegrown Music Festival – October 19, 2013 –
 Downtown Gastonia

Ms. George requested in-kind services for the Gaston Homegrown Music Festival, as outlined on the application contained in the exhibit book.

Councilman Kimble made a motion to approve the requested in-kind services for the Gaston Homegrown Music Festival on October 19, 2013. Councilman Pierceall seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 12.)

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(3) Mr. Tony Sherrill, Chairman, Gaston County Veterans Council
Re: Request for In-Kind Services – Veterans Day Parade – November 11, 2013

Mr. Sherrill requested in-kind services for the Veterans Day parade, as outlined on the application contained in the exhibit book.

Councilman Pierceall made a motion to approve the requested in-kind services for the Veterans Day parade on November 11, 2013. Councilman Gallagher seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 13.)

Councilman Gallagher requested that each of the events for which in-kind services were approved tonight be advertised on the Gastonia Conference Center message board.

(4) Ms. Randi Gates, Community and Grants Coordinator for the Carolina Thread Trail
Re: Amendment to Carolina Thread Trail

Ms. Gates advised that the Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan is a plan for a 15-county connected trail system (11 counties in North Carolina and 4 counties in South Carolina). The Gastonia City Council adopted the Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan for Gaston County Communities on March 3, 2009. She displayed the Carolina Thread Trail map of connections for Gaston County, which was adopted by all municipalities within Gaston County and by the Gaston County Commission in 2009. She said this represents 116.3 miles of proposed Carolina Thread Trail, 12 miles of which are complete. With the original adoption of the plan, they knew that it would be a long-term undertaking and that adjustments to the plan may be necessary as they learned more about the conditions on the ground and as they worked with property owners to see if they were willing to work with the Carolina Thread Trail.

She said over the last 3 months she has been working with Crowders Mountain State Park, Kings Mountain State Park, and Kings Mountain National Military Park to see if they could work the Carolina Thread Trail through those parks on the existing Ridgeline Trail. The North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation and Crowders Mountain State Park have signed onto the Carolina Thread Trail and have approved including the Ridgeline Trail as part of the Carolina Thread Trail system. The Carolina Thread Trail staff proposes that the currently adopted route along Sparrow Springs Road, Lewis Road, and Battleground Road be moved to the Ridgeline Trail. This change would remove 7.7 incomplete miles from the adopted plan, with Gaston County approval, and add 5.7 miles of complete trail. She displayed and reviewed the proposed route amendment. She explained that if the proposed amendment is approved the Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan for Gaston County Communities would consist of 114.3 planned miles of Carolina Thread Trail with 18.3 miles complete. She requested that Council approve the map amendment.

Ms. Gates then addressed questions of Council.

Councilman Pierceall made a motion to approve the Carolina Thread Trail route amendment as presented. Councilman Kirlin seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 14.)

CONSENT AGENDA

ITEM 1: BUDGET AMENDMENT #FY14-008 – \$5,895,000
(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 15.)

ITEM 2: BUDGET AMENDMENT #FY14-009 – \$5,000
(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 16.)

ITEM 3: BUDGET AMENDMENT #FY14-010 – \$72,566
(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 17.)

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- ITEM 4: ORDINANCE TO DEMOLISH – 627-1 NORTH WELDON STREET – BEVERLY METCALF
(Reference and Ordinance as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 18.)
- ITEM 5: ORDINANCE TO DEMOLISH – 2340 PINEHAVEN DRIVE – WILLIAM JOSEPH WATTS
(Reference and Ordinance as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 19.)
- ITEM 6: ORDINANCE TO DEMOLISH – 710 HENRY AVENUE – JAMES M. SPAINHOUR
(Reference and Ordinance as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 20.)
- ITEM 7: ORDINANCE TO DEMOLISH – 1622 GUM STREET – RANDALL JOHNSON
(Reference and Ordinance as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 21.)
- ITEM 8: ORDINANCE TO DEMOLISH – 2971 BEATY ROAD – HEIRS OF HAROLD GIBBY, KNOWN AND UNKNOWN
(Reference and Ordinance as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 22.)
- ITEM 9: APPROVAL OF CONTRACT WITH SOUTHEASTERN ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS, INC., FOR THE DESIGN OF NEW 100KV/12.47KV, 66MVA TECH PARK SUBSTATION / RESOLUTION EXEMPTING CERTAIN PROJECTS FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 143-64.31 OF THE NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTES
(Reference and Resolution as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 23. Contract on file through City Clerk's office.)
- ITEM 10: SECTION 5307 CAPITAL GRANT BETWEEN THE CITY OF GASTONIA AND THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – PROJECT 13-09-500 – GASTONIA MULTI-MODAL FACILITY AND ROUTINE CAPITAL MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENTS / RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY OF GASTONIA TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
(Reference and Resolution as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 24. Agreement on file through City Clerk's office.)
- ITEM 11: ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 14, UTILITIES, OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GASTONIA
(To amend Chapter 14, Article II, Division 2, Water and Sewer Extensions, to provide for enforcement and appeal mechanisms.)
(Reference and Ordinance as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 25.)
- ITEM 12: TRAFFIC ORDINANCE – PROHIBITING PARKING ON HIGHLAND STREET
(Reference and Ordinance as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 26.)
- ITEM 13: TRAFFIC ORDINANCE – ALL-WAY STOP AT INTERSECTION OF JACKSON STREET AND SIXTH AVENUE
(Reference and Ordinance as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 27.)

Council inquired with regard to the following:

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- ITEM 1: BUDGET AMENDMENT #FY14-008 – \$5,895,000 – At the request of Councilman Gallagher, Ms. Melody Utery, Director of Financial Services, and Mr. Edward C. Munn, City Manager, provided additional information on this budget amendment recognizing partial refunding of the 2005 Revenue Bonds.
- ITEM 5: ORDINANCE TO DEMOLISH – 2340 PINEHAVEN DRIVE – WILLIAM JOSEPH WATTS – Councilman Gallagher asked if demolishing this house would affect the property owner’s ability to deal with the insurance company. Mr. Brian Pruett, Building Code Administrator, stated that Mr. Watts attended the hearing and indicated that he did not intend to repair the home because of the substantial fire damage. He said the insurance company has paid off the mortgage company, but there is some type of dispute over the investigation and the insurance company will not release the rest of the funds for demolition. The City will put a lien against the property and then at some point in time, when the insurance company releases those funds, the owner has indicated that he would give that money to the City to reimburse for that expense.
- ITEM 9: APPROVAL OF CONTRACT WITH SOUTHEASTERN ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS, INC., FOR THE DESIGN OF NEW 100KV/12.47KV, 66MVA TECH PARK SUBSTATION / RESOLUTION EXEMPTING CERTAIN PROJECTS FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 143-64.31 OF THE NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTES – Mayor Pro Tem Craig noted that one memorandum in the agenda states that staff recommends the approval of the resolution and contract with Southeastern Consulting Engineers for \$123,350 for the design work as outlined in their contract, and another memorandum in the agenda states that it is estimated that the engineering design cost would be approximately \$150,000. She asked why there were two different figures. Mr. Edward C. Munn, City Manager, said the date on the second memorandum is June 12, 2013. At that time, staff thought the cost would be about \$150,000. The other memorandum, dated August 23, 2013, contains the hard number of \$123,350. He thinks there was another issue regarding whether this would be paid in one lump sum. He noted that the contract states that the engineer shall submit monthly invoices commensurate with the progress of the engineering services described in Article I.
- ITEM 10: SECTION 5307 CAPITAL GRANT BETWEEN THE CITY OF GASTONIA AND THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – PROJECT 13-09-500 – GASTONIA MULTI-MODAL FACILITY AND ROUTINE CAPITAL MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENTS / RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY OF GASTONIA TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – Councilman McAteer requested additional information on this item. Mr. J. Philip Bombardier, Assistant City Manager, advised that Council had authorized staff to move forward with the environmental assessment and preliminary engineering for the multi-modal facility. They have already started the study. That will come back to Council at a later date to determine whether to move forward with building the project. This is 80/10/10 funding, so we are already spending the City’s local share for this environmental assessment and preliminary design. This is actually the State funding their share of that. The State is way behind in getting us a contract for their share.

Considerable discussion ensued.

Councilman Pierceall made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Craig seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING – AMENDMENT TO UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Subject hearing involves considering an ordinance amending Section 8.2.16 of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to amend the maximum square footage and the method of computation for square footage calculations relative to private clubs in the Central Business

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District. (The Gastonia Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve the Ordinance Amendment.) (This public hearing is continued from the August 20, 2013, City Council meeting.)

Mayor Bridgeman declared the public hearing to be open and recognized Mr. Jason Thompson, City Planning Manager, for the purpose of making the presentation.

Mr. Thompson said at the August 20, 2013, City Council meeting, there were concerns voiced about some of the language proposed under the ordinance amendment. At that time, Council directed staff to take a closer look at that language and to come back with something to clarify those concerns. He believes the concern was about item C and item E under Section 1 of the amendment. The concern was that there may be some confusion because the language used in item E seemed to be a little contradictory to the language used in item C. As a proposal, staff has mirrored the exact language. Item E basically requires that a floor plan be drawn and submitted to staff for its review at the time of considering a permit. With this amended language, it would ensure that the floor plan shows exactly all those items that would not count toward the square footage threshold. Staff feels that this very much clarifies the language and would make it clearer for both applicants and staff at the time of permit application.

Councilman Pierceall expressed concern that in a conversation he had with the Gastonia Alcohol Law Enforcement (ALE) officer, the officer raised a lot of concern and indicated that he was opposed to this amendment.

After considerable discussion, Councilman Kimble made a motion to continue this public hearing to the September 17, 2013, City Council meeting, in order to allow for input from the ALE officer. Mayor Pro Tem Craig seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 28.)

PUBLIC HEARING FOR SANITARY SEWER LINE EXTENSION FOR OAKHILL LANE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 14-144(B)(1) OF THE GASTONIA CODE OF ORDINANCES – INSIDE CORPORATE LIMITS

Mayor Bridgeman declared the public hearing to be open and recognized Mr. Rusty Bost, City Engineer, for the purpose of making the presentation.

Mr. Bost said on May 30, 2013, the City received a petition for a sewer line extension project on Oakhill Lane. The original project would have consisted of about 360 feet of sewer, serving 6 parcels. Four property owners had signed the petition. Since that time, the property owner at 3414 Oakhill Lane has submitted in writing a request to be removed from the petition. The petition then fell to 50%, making it an insufficient petition. Staff has worked with the property owner who is having issues with his septic tank. They are pretty confident that they can reduce the service area to include the 4 parcels downstream of that property owner, making this a petition that has been signed by the owners of 3 of the 4 parcels. It leaves open some opportunities to work with the other 2 residents, if they decide in the future that they want sewer service extended to them. The estimated cost to extend the sewer went from \$40,000 to about \$30,000, with the reduced service area. This project was not budgeted for in the current fiscal year's capital budget. Staff will try to identify available funds within the CIP or will try to program funding for this project in next year's budget. Staff recommends approval of the amended Resolution Directing that the Project be Undertaken, with the assessment roll containing 4 parcels.

Mr. Bost then addressed questions of Council.

No one had signed up to speak to this matter.

After considerable discussion, Councilman Kirlin made a motion to close the public hearing and to adopt the amended Resolution Directing that the Project be Undertaken. Councilman Gallagher seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

(Reference and Resolution as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 29.)

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PUBLIC HEARING ON FISCAL YEAR 2014 FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION SECTION 5307 TRANSPORTATION GRANT AND RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING AND EXECUTION OF APPLICATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR GRANTS UNDER THE URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 1964, AS AMENDED

Mayor Bridgeman declared the public hearing to be open and recognized Mr. James H. Graham, Principal Transportation Planner, for the purpose of making the presentation.

Mr. Graham advised that each year the City is required to conduct a public hearing in order to apply for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant funds to operate the Gastonia Transit System. This public hearing has been properly advertised and the Resolution before Council authorizes the City to apply for these grant funds for the upcoming fiscal year.

Considerable discussion ensued on the lack of contributions made by Gaston County and the municipalities within Gaston County for the operation of the transit system. It was noted that Belmont is the only other municipality that contributes.

Councilman Gallagher requested that the number of people riding on each of the 85X buses to and from Charlotte be included on the next survey that is done.

No one had signed up to speak to this matter.

Councilman Pierceall made a motion to close the public hearing and to adopt the Resolution Authorizing the Filing and Execution of Applications with the United States Department of Transportation and the North Carolina Department of Transportation for Grants Under the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, as Amended. Councilman Kimble seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

(Reference and Resolution as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 30.)

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION REPORT

Mayor Bridgeman recognized Councilman Kirlin, Chairman of the Recreation Advisory Commission, for the purpose of making the presentation.

Councilman Kirlin noted that the Recreation Advisory Commission (RAC) met on August 13, 2013, and discussed the following:

- 1) Downtown to Lineberger Park Trail Connector Update – He said Mr. Jason Thompson, City Planning Manager, presented to the RAC information regarding the City's plans for connecting the Greenway and Lineberger Park Trail to Downtown through a system of sidewalks, adding some bike lanes where possible, doing crosswalk markings, etc., to make it as pedestrian friendly as possible. This will continue from the terminus at Lineberger Park, through Downtown, and connect to the Highland Greenway Trail at the Police Station.

Several Council Members noted the need for a sidewalk on Modena Street near Bradley Park, and questioned whether the \$71,000 allocated for this connector project could be reallocated for the Modena Street sidewalk project. Mr. Edward C. Munn, City Manager, noted that this connector was a part of the bond issue approved by the voters, and was specifically mentioned in all of the literature regarding that bond issue.

Considerable discussion ensued.

Mr. Munn stated that he would get Council a preliminary cost estimate for the Modena Street sidewalk project. Mr. J. Philip Bombardier, Assistant City Manager, noted that at a prior Transportation Committee meeting, there was some discussion regarding the list of sidewalk needs, many of which had been on that list for a number of years. Modena Street is one of those projects. He said at that meeting, staff advised that they would come up with a prioritization process for those projects and would work in conjunction with a master plan, and would bring all of those projects back to Council. Staff would recommend that Council look at all of those in their entirety before they look at one single project.

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- 2) Master Plan Discussion – Councilman Kirlin said the Parks and Recreation Master Plan under which they are currently operating was first initiated in 2005. The 3 primary projects prioritized in that Master Plan were Lineberger Park, Rankin Lake Park, and the greenway extension. Parks and Recreation staff feels that there is a need to update that Plan. The RAC agreed that it was important to go ahead and update the Master Plan at this point in time to see what will be the next priorities going forward. Staff and the RAC will be looking to update that with new projects and other large maintenance capital issues, and will be bringing that back to Council at a later point in time.
- 3) Optimist Park Update – Councilman Kirlin reported that the construction of the Optimist Park is ongoing, and that the Optimists and local citizens have raised more than \$170,000 for the Park. He said Mayor Pro Tem Craig will come back to Council if or when there is a need for additional funds.
- 4) Greenway Water Fountain Request – Councilman Kirlin said there have been several citizen requests for a water fountain somewhere on the Avon/Catawba Creek Greenway. A variety of estimates have been given for this project. It is too expensive to consider putting a water fountain on that greenway, if it is not associated with a restroom facility. A freestanding water fountain is generally not a practical option. The RAC has respectfully responded to staff and asked that they encourage people to carry their water bottles. If at some point in time it makes sense to construct a full restroom facility somewhere along the greenway, a water fountain would be included in that.

Councilman Kimble questioned whether they would be able to move forward with a water fountain on the greenway if corporate donors were identified. Mr. Chuck Dellinger, Director of Parks and Cultural Services, said he would not recommend it. A stand-alone water fountain on a section of the greenway will not last. Vandalism is a problem. He noted several fountains that had to be taken out of service for that reason. He said also, stand-alone fountains are used less frequently than fountains attached to buildings due to sanitary concerns.

- 5) Open Discussion / Issues – Councilman Kirlin said Mayor Bridgeman has been approached by some individuals who want to get involved with a permanent skate park. At one time, the City had a pilot skate park at Lineberger Park. When Lineberger Park was redeveloped, the pilot skate park was moved to Phillips Center and it remained there until it fell into disrepair. It has now been completely removed. This group of individuals have asked if they could purchase the salvageable pieces of the pilot skate park. It is the recommendation of staff and the RAC to declare this unusable skate park equipment as surplus and then see if there is a means by which this group might have access to purchasing this equipment.

Councilman Kirlin made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Recreation Advisory Commission. Councilman Pierceall seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

Councilman Kirlin advised that staff received another request from a group of young adults who wanted to use the playground at Martha Rivers Park after the park closes, from 12:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. for games of hide and seek and tag. He said the RAC felt that the liabilities were too great to have a group of individuals in the park at that time of night. They felt that it was in the best interest of everyone to deny that request. The RAC voted unanimously to recommend that the City deny the request to play hide and seek and tag at Martha Rivers Park between 12:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m.

Councilman Kirlin made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Recreation Advisory Commission. Councilman Pierceall seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

(Reference as contained in Exhibit Book 2 to Minute Book 103 at Page 31.)

APPOINTMENT TO THE GASTONIA PLANNING COMMISSION – WARD 4

Councilman Pierceall advised that he did not have an appointment to announce at this time.

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Mr. L. Ashley Smith, City Attorney, had no report.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Edward C. Munn, City Manager, reported the following:

- The Chamber is sponsoring meetings of municipalities' representative mayors or council members. This is an opportunity to talk about joint issues among all the municipalities. Mayor Pro Tem Craig represented the City last week in Cherryville. The next meeting will be held in Gastonia on November 21, 2013. That meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m., but the location is yet to be determined.
- Last year the City Council was invited to meet with the Gaston County Commissioners. At that time, there was interest in trying to meet periodically. Since the Commissioners invited the Council last time, he thought it would be good for the City to extend an invitation to them. This is an opportunity to discuss ways to work together, potential opportunities, and challenges that they jointly face. He suggested that they consider a date in the October or November timeframe. He asked that Council let him know of any specific issues that they would like to discuss and the dates on which they would be available to meet. Mayor Pro Tem Craig said one issue she would like to discuss is how to collaborate with the County on using the buses.
- Potentially in October, there will be a Council work session to discuss floodplain issues. When the AAA building had to be closed due to the failing retaining wall, he talked with staff regarding development within floodplains. Staff contacted some individuals outside of Gastonia to take a look at what Gastonia does and to try to learn from the best practices of other communities regarding development in floodways. Mr. Milton Carpenter and others with FEMA have indicated that they would be willing to come to Gastonia at their expense to review what the City does, compare that to other communities, and see if some changes need to be made to our ordinance. Staff will be contacting Council about possible dates. Councilman Kirlin noted that he would be out of town October 1-8.
- The Gastonia Rotary Club is doing a community garden on Franklin Boulevard between Tony's Ice Cream and the location of the old bonded warehouse. He said that project began on Saturday. They plan to involve various organizations within the community. The food grown will be provided to homeless shelters.
- The Gastonia Tourism Development Authority will be meeting tomorrow to talk about whether or not to participate with the County in funding an advertising initiative with Time-Warner Cable.
- The City Clerk is not present tonight, due to her father being in the hospital.

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Pro Tem Craig – She said she attended an Economic Development Commission meeting on August 20. It was reported that the Technology Park is about complete as far as the acreage goes. They are reserving some acreage for expansion of the existing businesses. She is sure that they will be hearing more from the County as to what they are going to do as far as expansion, whether it will be Southridge in Bessemer City or somewhere else.

She commended staff on the progress of the Myrtle School Road widening project. She said it seems that the residents on Myrtle School Road are very pleased with the way that is going.

She encouraged anyone who has not already done so, to take a tour of Loray. She said what they have accomplished is phenomenal. They have about 150 workers, many of which are through a temporary employment service in Gastonia. They anticipate having 300 to 400 employees in the next 30 to 60 days.

Councilman Pierceall – He said they will soon be dedicating the 100th Habitat for Humanity house. He explained that there is asphalt that circles behind where this and other Habitat houses are being built, and a homeless camp has set up back there. He said since that is not a road and is never going to be a road, representatives of Habitat are asking if that area can be unclaimed and deeded to those who are moving into the these Habitat homes. Mr. L. Ashley Smith, City

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Attorney, advised that there is a petition process to close streets. He said the property is then divided down the middle and deeded to the property owners on each side. The only expense is to run an advertisement. The resolution has to be published in the newspaper four times.

Councilman Pierceall commended employees of the Electric Department and Fire Department for their handling of a situation in his neighborhood, after a limb fell on a power line causing several residents to lose power. He said they were all very professional and the power was restored in about 30 minutes.

Councilman Gallagher – He asked for an update on the meetings that the Two Rivers Utilities Advisory Board is having with other communities. Mr. Munn advised that those meetings had not yet occurred.

Councilman Gallagher thanked the Police Department for the opportunity to ride with Officer Meeks on Friday night.

He advised that there are a lot of homeless people sleeping behind the Rotary Pavilion and some of the low level lights behind the water fountain there have been broken. He said staff may want to do something about that.

Councilman Kimble – He said he and Councilman Gallagher attended the 50th anniversary march in honor of Dr. King. There was a great turnout and he really enjoyed it.

A resident called Engineering with a complaint about grass dumping in storm drains. A letter went out right away to the residents of that area to try to get them to desist from doing that, and reminding them what to do with their grass clippings. He appreciates staff's quick response.

Mayor Bridgeman – He thanked everyone who participated in the Mayors' Regional Conference last Thursday at the Gastonia Conference Center. He commended the Conference Center on the job they did with that event.

MEETING ADJOURNED

At 8:00 p.m., Councilman Pierceall made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Kimble seconded the motion and Council approved it unanimously.

Mayor John D. Bridgeman

L. Ashley Smith, City Attorney

Virginia L. Creighton, City Clerk

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