

MINUTES

The Lexington City Council held its regular meeting in the courtroom of the Lexington -Rockbridge Joint Facility on March 17, 2005.

PRESIDING: J.W. Knapp, Mayor

OFFICERS: T.J. Ellestad, City Manager
L.A. Mann, City Attorney
C. Irby, Asst. City Clerk

MEMBERS: T. P. Golden
J. H. Page
J. E. Gianniny
L. W. Broomall
R. W. Smith
M.M. Elrod

There were 8 people present.

REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Knapp called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. and delivered the invocation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilwoman Elrod moved that the minutes be approved as presented. Councilman Gianniny seconded the motion and the following vote was recorded:

T.P. Golden	Aye	R.W. Smith	Aye
J.H. Page	Aye	J.E. Gianniny	Aye
L.W. Broomall	Aye	M.M. Elrod	Aye

The motion carried.

CITIZENS' REMARKS AND COMMENTS ON MATTERS NOT ON AGENDA

Leslie Giles, of 6 Houston Street, appeared before council to discuss the ultimate fate of the buildings around Courthouse Square. She asked that council consider the idea of acquiring the old courthouse and making it the Lexington City Hall. She recommended that the building which now serves as City Hall could possibly be refurbished as public housing.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

City Council Committees

FINANCE COMMITTEE - No report

PHYSICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE - No report

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councilwoman Elrod reported that the committee had previously met to discuss changes to the RAEDC bylaws. Specifically, the committee was concerned with wording in Article 1 and Article 3. They supported the changes in Article 1, but had concerns with Article 3. RAEDC has changed Article 3 to reflect what the committee had hoped, specifically in regard to supporting and complementing the efforts of LDDA. Given the change, Councilwoman Elrod moved that the bylaws be accepted as changed. Councilman Gianniny seconded and the following vote was recorded:

T.P. Golden	Aye	R.W. Smith	Aye
J.H. Page	Aye	J.E. Gianniny	Aye
L.W. Broomall	Aye	M.M. Elrod	Aye

The motion carried.

Boards and Commissions

PLANNING COMMISSION

Councilman Smith reported that the commission met on March 10, 2005. They had a public hearing and approved the site plan for the duplexes that Red Hammer LLC is building at the corner of Thornhill and Birdfield Roads. The subdivision will come before the council on April 7, 2005. Councilman Smith suggested that, upon hearing from the principle from Red Hammer LLC that he would make every effort to address and support the visitability concept by enlarging bathrooms and doorways, that a letter of recognition be sent to Joan Manley for her recommendation as well as to the principle for his cooperation. Mayor Knapp asked the city manager to draft a letter. A correction was noted that Red Hammer LLC has changed its name in regard to the duplex project. It is now operating as Weatherburn LLC. The remainder of the Planning Commission meeting was spent addressing the Comprehensive Plan.

RAEDC

Councilman Golden reported that RAEDC met Tuesday, March 8, 2005. They received an industry update from its executive director. He also reviewed General Assembly actions; money was made available for the manufacturing center at Dabney Lancaster and also for the Virginia Horse Center. Councilman Golden noted the commission's appreciation for the efforts of the state elected officials for the funding. RAEDC is currently redoing its strategic plan.

City Manager Ellestad added that he received a copy of the current unemployment figures, explaining that they have changed the methodology in which the rates are being calculated. They will also go back and change the figures historically for comparative purposes. The January rate was 4.7%. He is researching the dramatic jump in the unemployment figure.

CENTRAL SHENANDOAH PLANNING DISTRICT - No report

ROCKBRIDGE REGIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD

City Manager Ellestad reported that they will meet next week in the new facility on Greenhouse Road.

MAYOR

Mayor Knapp thanked everyone for covering during his absence.

CITY MANAGER

Consideration of closing Main Street on August 27, 2005 for the Annual Rockbridge Community Festival

Councilman Gianniny moved that Main Street be closed for the festival. Councilwoman Elrod seconded the motion and the following vote was recorded:

T.P. Golden	Aye	R.W. Smith	Aye
J.H. Page	Aye	J.E. Gianniny	Aye
L.W. Broomall	Aye	M.M. Elrod	Aye

The motion carried.

Consideration of approval of the new Courthouse Consent Order

Councilman Gianniny moved that the consent order be approved. Councilwoman Elrod seconded the motion. Councilman Golden noted that, in regards to the county’s parking concerns, it states clearly on page 5, number 3 that all parking spaces in the parking deck shall be available when needed by the courts. The following vote was recorded:

T.P. Golden	Aye	R.W. Smith	Aye
J.H. Page	Aye	J.E. Gianniny	Aye
L.W. Broomall	Aye	M.M. Elrod	Aye

The motion carried.

Consideration of approval for the City/County Courthouse financing agreement

The City Manager requested that this issue be postponed until the next meeting due to concerns about parking fees as well as minor errors in the agreement.

Approval of the Courthouse Peer Review Committee

City Manager Ellestad reported that the recommendations for the peer review committee include Pam Simpson, Tom Contos, Skip Ravenhorst, Arthur Bartenstein, and Lee Merrill. That has been approved by the Board of Supervisors. Fred Kirchner will be an ex officio member and Tom Higgins will be an ex officio and chair the meetings. Councilman Gianniny moved that council approve the peer review committee as submitted. Councilman Broomall seconded that motion and the following vote was recorded:

T.P. Golden	Aye	R.W. Smith	Aye
J.H. Page	Aye	J.E. Gianniny	Aye
L.W. Broomall	Aye	M.M. Elrod	Aye

The motion carried.

Approval of the parking deck architectural contract

Councilman Golden moved that the convening authority be allowed to decide, on behalf of the city, the architectural contract. City Attorney Mann added that the consensus of the board was to move a number of things under 12.1 Additional Services, Attachment B into 12.2 Additional Services, allowing for further review in the future. Mann added that, in terms of endorsing the contract, it should be spelled out that council confirm the city's commitment with regard to the cost of the parking deck, less the county's share. Councilman Gianniny seconded the motion as amended. The following vote was recorded:

T.P. Golden	Aye	R.W. Smith	Aye
J.H. Page	Aye	J.E. Gianniny	Aye
L.W. Broomall	Aye	M.M. Elrod	Aye

The motion carried.

Consideration to hold annual Hull's Drive-In Opening Weekend Parade on Saturday, April 2, 2005

Councilman Gianniny moved to approve the request. Councilman Smith seconded and the following vote was recorded:

T.P. Golden	Aye	R.W. Smith	Aye
J.H. Page	Aye	J.E. Gianniny	Aye
L.W. Broomall	Aye	M.M. Elrod	Aye

The motion carried.

City Manager Ellestad noted that April 1, 2005 is Budget Day, on which budget documents will be delivered to council members. A meeting will be scheduled to discuss the budget. April 7, 2005 will be a public hearing to consider agency requests.

CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney Mann reported that with the entry of the decree we will begin moving forward rapidly on a number of fronts, one of which will be the acquisition of the property. Mr. Mann will be contacting Leanne Shank of Washington and Lee to begin negotiations. Negotiations have already begun with Mr. Bowen. City Manager Ellestad addressed the question of whether or not it will be desirable to keep Varner Lane open. Additional expenses will be a consideration. Councilman Smith questioned if core drilling had been done for the property. Mr. Higgins reported that it should happen soon.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS - None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.