

Springfield Council Meeting  
September 14, 2015  
7:00 PM

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 P. M. with the Mayor and all council members present.

The August minutes were read. Council member Cooper made a motion to accept the minutes and Council member Williams 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. All agreed with a show of hands.

Mayor McCormick asked if any council member had any questions or comments about the financials. Council member Lackey questioned \$2500.00 transferred from the frog jump account and \$1500.00 from the water and sewer account to the general fund to pay expenses. She said at one time funds were not allowed to be transferred from the water department to pay bills in another account. She asked if this had changed and if so why. Mayor McCormick said the funds were transferred to help catch up on the electric bill. Council member Lackey said at one time that could not be done and she looked for the ordinance but could not find it. She said she didn't know if anyone else might have any information on this. Council member Lackey asked if the \$600.00 paid out of the municipal fund to victim's rights would be a set fee for the audit payment. Mayor McCormick said there is no monthly set amount at this time. Council member Lackey asked how the amount of \$29,876.00 listed in the article in the paper would be paid in ninety days. Mayor McCormick said she had spoken with the Times and Democrats as well as the auditors and money has already been collected to go toward that amount and added that whether monthly payments are made or not a percentage is being held by the state which goes toward the bill. She added that when it is paid in full the town will receive a refund of the money that was held. The Mayor said checks are written as well as drafts. Council member Temples said the Times and Democrat blasted all over the paper about the \$29,000.00 that was used out of the victim's advocate fund but only had half an article about Orangeburg county owing \$220,000.00 and he felt that needed to be brought to everyone's attention. He added that Springfield is certainly not the only town that owes money. Mayor McCormick said it can be seen on the website and she also has a list of several small municipalities that are way over \$300,000.00. She said there is a good working relationship with the auditors and that Springfield was in better shape than a lot of the other towns. The Mayor said prior to her coming in as acting Mayor the funds were never sent in but were deposited directly into the general fund. She added over the years this has added up. Council member Lackey said if she recalled correctly the agency was established in 2009 and the Mayor was Mayor McCormick. Council member Temples made a motion to accept the financials and Council member Cooper 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. All agreed with a show of hands with the exception of Council member Williams and Council member Lackey.

Mayor McCormick said there have been some deaths in the area and asked for thoughts and prayers for the families of Ms. Molly Williams, Ms. Cleo Thomas, Betty Gable, Ms. Emma Kelly who lost a brother, Ms. Margarie Patterson and Mr. Jacob Garrick. She also asked that the sick in the area be remembered including Mr. Dickie Phillips and Mr. Strutt Pender. The Mayor said water repairs would be made Tuesday and Wednesday and water would be cut off from noon until around 3 P. M. She said this would affect Festival Trail Road and Surrey Race Road. Mayor McCormick said Mr. Jay Kates with Water Systems, Inc. has come in the past few weeks doing water hydrant flushing and pressure testing.

She said they would be painting the fire hydrants and would roughly cost \$2500.00 and the town always incurs the cost. The Mayor said she did speak with Fire Chief Bubba Toole and he said he would get with the county and see if they would help with this expense. She said after discussion of auctioning some town equipment and property she had contacted a certified auctioneer named Mr. Carter from Wagener who has agreed to come in and donate his time to do this for the town. The Mayor said an ad would have to be run in the newspaper after setting a date. Council member Lackey asked if property is included. Mayor McCormick said the property behind the grocery store is included. The Mayor said she and the town clerk had attended a Municipal Association meeting in North Augusta and went over several things such as law enforcement body cameras and a high topic discussed was business license. She added that business license information has been looked at for a while and it's come to a point of looking at income and expenditures on a more serious basis. The Mayor read a letter to council from Aiken Electric Co-op. inviting them to a celebration Tuesday, September 29 at 7 PM at the Aiken office. She asked that the town clerk be contacted if they were interested in attending. She read another letter from SCANA Corporation to council inviting them to a barbeque dinner Wednesday, October 7 at 6:30 P. M. at Lake Murray to salute area elected officials. The Mayor asked council to contact the town clerk if anyone planned to attend. She then asked Chief Logan to explain the letter received from the Office of the Public Defender concerning representation in municipal court. Chief Logan informed everyone that a law was passed in July 2015 that municipalities must now provide and pay for a defendant's attorney. He said he had checked on this and there is no way around it. The Chief said from the time someone is arrested, taken to jail and has a bond hearing the municipal court will have to start paying. He said he understands some type of agreement can be worked out with the Public Defender's Office and a meeting will have to be set up. The Chief said if there is a \$500.00 fine and \$500.00 has to be paid to an attorney the municipal court gets nothing. Mayor McCormick thanked Chief Logan. She said everyone knows water bills have not gone up, the millage rate has remained the same and the town has not had the income for business licenses like they should. The Mayor said Springfield is growing but income is not. She said a letter was sent to SCE&G requesting the franchise fee be increased from 3% to 5%. The Mayor said the franchise fee has been 3% since 1998. She said if this is done it will not take effect until January 2016. She then introduced Mr. Scott Neeley with SCANA who explained to residents about the fee increase. Council member Lackey asked if the franchise fee increase would increase each resident's bill \$10.00 to \$15.00. Mr. Neeley said it would certainly depend on the amount of the bill. He added that if a monthly bill is \$200.00 with the 2% increase the bill would be \$204.00. Mayor McCormick thanked Mr. Neeley for his time. Council member Temples made a motion to have the first reading of the franchise fee ordinance. Council member Cooper 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. All agreed with a show of hands. Mayor McCormick then read the entire ordinance. Council member Cooper asked if the trail walk lights would be picked up under the agreement. Mr. Neeley said this was just the franchise, not dealing with the particular accounts, but providing service to the town government as well as the citizens. Council member Temples made a motion to adopt the ordinance. Council member Cooper 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. All agreed with a show of hands with the exception of Council member Lackey.

Chief Logan gave the Police Department report. He said the first Our Town Our Kids' trip was to Adventure in Columbia. The Chief said it was a good trip and the next one has been scheduled for September 26 to the Charleston Aquarium.

Mrs. Sylvia Hiers thanked Chief Logan for what they are doing for the community but asked if his staff has been fully apprised of the victims advocates procedure. Chief Logan said he is the certified victims advocate and he will sit down with anyone and show them what paper work he went by to use the victims advocate money. He said he is responsible for every penny that comes out of the victims advocate money. Mrs. Rita Brown said she disagreed somewhat with him because it also falls on the municipal judge because as a past judge it was her responsibility to write that check to make sure her forms were correct that went to the state , county and wherever they had to go. Chief Logan said the municipal judge has nothing to do with any money coming out of the victims rights fund. He said the auditors educated him and he does have a contact at the victims advocates office if any questions arise.

Council member Cooper said contractors have come out to look at the senior citizens center's roof due to it needing replacing. He said some of the doors are in bad shape and some electrical work needs to be done. He also said someone has looked at the gym to replace the windows and entry doors. Council member Cooper recommended security cameras be installed in the senior citizens center as a precaution. He asked Mrs. Sylvia Hiers if the door in the men's restroom at the school has been repaired. Mrs. Hiers said it was broken and repaired two different times. Council member Cooper said he hasn't talked to Chief Logan yet but he had looked at the video cameras at the school and there were a couple of people who were in the building who had gone in the direction of the damage. He said they would like to talk to them to see if they noticed the damage. He added that one of them had access to the upstairs so they had to get a key from somewhere. Mrs. Hiers said the building should be checked before and after when it is rented by whoever rents it. Chief Logan stated that the police department will do a daily walk through at the school and with a renter before and after it is rented through the town. The Chief asked if anyone had a problem with the police department controlling the keys to the school. Mayor McCormick said she would prefer that come from the school board. Mrs. Rita Brown said the board would need to discuss that. Council member Cooper said a fire department training session was held August 29. He asked everyone to thank firefighters and police officers.

Council member Lackey informed residents of a Blue Light Campaign to honor fallen police officers. She said she plans to attend the Municipal Association advanced classes on different subjects. Council member Lackey said in the last council meeting a resident asked about the balance in the one cents sales tax project account and she looked it up and it is the balance left from the walking trail.

Mrs. Sylvia Hiers said on September 5 about twenty five to thirty Patriot Guard Riders came to the school and brought three special awards. She said they promised they would come back and agreed to work with the school board to design an upgraded exhibit headquarters. She said this will be done as part of the expansion of the military museum. Mrs. Hiers said two gospel events have been scheduled and the money has been secured to pay for the roof repair. She said Springfield Defends Fruitcake will be November 7.

Mrs. Stutts thanked everyone for their kindness during her recovering from an accident. She said the summer reading program was not well attended. She said Gracie Williams was the winner of the goody bag. Mrs. Stutts said she appreciated Mrs. Susie Hare filling in for her at the library.

Public Comments:

A resident said she worked at the school before and damage was done before rentals started. She added that with the library being open things go wrong and it is not always the rental part.

Mrs. Sylvia Hiers said Jack On The Track would be October 31 as always.

Lloyd Morgan said a frog jump meeting would be held in October and anyone that wants to help to please contact him. He added that the sound system was stolen and asked council to think about purchasing another one.

With no other business the meeting adjourned at 8:35 P. M.