

**CITY OF COLUMBIA
WORK SESSION ACTION REPORT
FEBRUARY 24, 2010 – 9:00 A.M.
CITY HALL - 1737 MAIN STREET
3rd Floor – COUNCIL CHAMBERS**



The Columbia City Council met for a Work Session on Wednesday, February 24, 2010 in the City Hall Council Chambers at 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Mayor Robert D. Coble called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. The following members of Council were present: The Honorable E.W. Cromartie, II, The Honorable Sam Davis, The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, The Honorable Kirkman Finlay III and The Honorable Belinda F. Gergel. The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine arrived at 10:35 a.m. Also present were Mr. Steven A. Gantt, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Salley, City Clerk.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION / ACTION

1. **Salvation Army Update - Mr. Marc Mylott, Director of Planning and Development Services

Mr. Marc Mylott, Director of Planning and Development Services reported that at the end of August they received a telephone call from a member of the Salvation Army's Property Board who was inquiring about the necessary zoning for them to evaluate properties for a new location. At that time, we advised them that they needed to be in at least C-2 or greater. They described their intended efforts as the provision of social services, vocational rehabilitation services, religious activities and their desire to do feeding. We said that there is no singular, comprehensive use classification for all of those; however, taken individually they needed to be in C-2 or more. At that time, the only building they suggested was possibly on their radar was further down Farrow Road, but because of the split zoning, which is C-3 in the front and C-1 on the back, I supposed they looked elsewhere. That was the last that staff heard about it. About a week and half ago, Mr. Gantt called me and asked if I had heard anything about the Salvation Army's efforts to move to the former Easter Seals Building, which is zoned C-2. All of the uses as described in their intent to use the building are permitted in the C-2 district. We know that they have signed a three-year lease with an option to purchase.

Mr. Steve Anastasion, Chairman of the Salvation Army of the Midlands Advisory Board affirmed that everything that Marc Mylott said in his status update is correct. The Salvation Army is now out of its location at Main Street and Elmwood Avenue; that property was purchased a month ago by the Midlands Housing Alliance; and it's being demolished. We are in our office headquarters, but over the last few months we have been looking for a substitute location for social services and feeding. There will be no housing component to this at all. He explained that Major Richard Jones went looking for a facility that would fit our programmatic needs. The Easter Seals Building is akin to a small elementary school; it's a block building with large rooms, small rooms and a working kitchen facility. It is 1.9 acres and it does have land in the back. The Salvation Army doesn't have any plans to expand. We would have bought the site without that acreage in the back. We have looked at some day expanding our religious services, because the Salvation Army is a Protestant denomination church that provides social services. We picked that location simply because we went to zoning and planning and asked where we could be located and that location was C-2, it's on a major city thoroughfare, it's on a bus line to downtown with constant bus service; and it's within a few blocks of our current location. All of the homeless shelters are in Council District Two, because that's where employment is; it's near areas of the river and other areas where the homeless find shelter; it's where the problem is; and we want to be a part of the homeless solution.

The following individuals appeared before the City Council in opposition to the relocation of the Salvation Army to Farrow Road:

Dr. Isaiah Davis, Davis and Dingle Family Dentistry
Ms. Katheryn Bellfield, President of the Booker Washington Heights Organization
Ms. Ella Ruth Moultrie, Resident of the Booker Washington Heights Organization
Ms. Floretta Sutton, Practice Administrator for Davis and Dingle Family Dentistry
Dr. John Dingle, Davis and Dingle Family Dentistry
Rev. Dr. Jamey O. Graham, Sr., Pastor of St. John Baptist Church
Mr. Charles Christie, Chairman of the Trustee Board / St. John Baptist Church
Mr. Ben Duncan, Chairman of the Deacon Board / St. John Baptist Church

Council closed the public comment session at 11:14 a.m.

There was a consensus of Council to direct staff to schedule a meeting with the members of Council, the leadership of the Salvation Army and the community.

There was a consensus of Council to direct staff to schedule a meeting with the members of Council and the leadership of all organizations that feed the homeless population to discuss the issues and to develop solutions.

2. Response to a Zoning Matter – Mr. Marc Mylott, Director of Planning and Development Services – *This item was deferred.*
3. Hospitality Tax Collections – Mr. Bill Ellis, Deputy Finance Director

Mr. Bill Ellis, Deputy Finance Director reported that if we hit expenditures as budgeted, we will have a fund balance available at the end of the year of approximately \$1.4 million. The expenditures that were on the docket last year are fine.

4. Requests for Funding from the Hospitality Tax Fund:
 - Palmetto Open Source Software Conference - \$10,000
 - Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, SC Chapter Military Parade - \$12,000
 - Allen University / The Gathering - \$10,000

A motion made by Mr. Cromartie to approve funding for Allen University in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 was not seconded.

- **Mr. Finlay left the meeting at 12:12 p.m.**

A motion made by Mr. Cromartie and seconded by Mayor Coble to fund the three (3) organizations as requested, was withdrawn.

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Mr. Cromartie, Council voted five (5) to one (1) to allocate up to \$10,000 to the Columbia Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau from the Hospitality Tax Fund to assist with eligible expenditures related to transportation arrangements for The Gathering during March 1-3, 2010. Ms. Libby Gober, City Council Liaison, Mr. Ken Gaines, City Attorney and representatives of the CVB will determine which expenditures are eligible for reimbursement. Voting aye were Mr. Cromartie, Mr. Davis, Ms. Devine, Mr. Rickenmann and Mayor Coble. Dr. Gergel voted nay.

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Mr. Cromartie, Council voted five (5) to one (1) to allocate up to \$10,000 to the Columbia Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau from the Hospitality Tax Fund to assist with eligible marketing expenditures for the Palmetto Open Source Software Conference (POSSCON) scheduled for April 15, 16 and 17, 2010. Ms. Libby Gober, City Council Liaison, Mr. Ken Gaines, City Attorney and representatives of the CVB will determine which expenditures are eligible for reimbursement. Voting aye were Mr. Cromartie, Mr. Davis, Ms. Devine, Mr. Rickenmann and Mayor Coble. Dr. Gergel voted nay.

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Mr. Cromartie, Council voted unanimously to direct staff to draft a letter outlining the City's support of the sponsorship request for the Military Parade as part of the National Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Conference scheduled for September 1-6, 2010.

5. Report from the Internal Auditors – Ms. Jackie Breland, Jackie Breland and Associates – *This item was deferred.*
6. Fiscal Year 2008 / 2009 Revenue and Expenditure Report - Mr. Bill Ellis, Deputy Finance Director – *This item was deferred.*
7. Financial Discussion / Eau Claire Development Corporation – Mr. S. Allison Baker, Senior Assistant City Manager

Mr. S. Allison Baker, Senior Assistant City Manager explained that he met with the City's Auditor last week and he suggested that there were some technical changes to be made to the actions of Council taken on February 17, 2010.

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Mr. Davis, Council voted unanimously to reaffirm the promissory note between the Eau Claire Development Corporation and the Columbia Empowerment Zone; to accept an assignment of the note of \$477,169.46 from the Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. and reduce the indebtedness of the Eau Claire Corporation in a like amount; and forgive the assigned note of the Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. in the amount of \$ 477,169.46 simultaneously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion by Mayor Coble, seconded by Mr. Cromartie, Council voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 12:34 p.m. for the discussion of **Items 8.** through **10.** as outlined.

8. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements
 - Blue Cross Blue Shield*This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.*
9. Receipt of legal advice, which relates to a pending, threatened or potential claim - *This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.*
10. **Receipt of legal advice, which relates to matters covered by attorney-client privilege
 - Salvation Army - *This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.*
10. **Discussion of appointment of employee - *This item was discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken.*

- **Mayor Coble left the meeting at 12:43 p.m.**
- **Council adjourned the meeting at 2:02 p.m.**