



COUNCIL MEETING
117 E. BROADWAY STREET, COUNCIL CHAMBERS
TUESDAY MARCH 7, 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Hanna

The invocation was given by Council Member Poston

The Pledge of Allegiance was given to the flag.

Council present: Mayor Hanna, Gary Arthurs, Frankie Poston, Dipen Khambhaita and April Collins

City personnel present: Holly Swann, Marlene Rollins, Ron Douglas, Joey Miles, Kem Poston

Guest Present: Mallory Feagin, Tamala Owens, Jackie Stasney, Renee Harrell, David Mace, Steve Dukes, Kenneth Ard, Jared McDonald, Joan Lentz, Sammy Jones, Wayne Douglas.

Motion was made by Council Member Arthurs and received a second by Council Member Poston to approve the agenda. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Motion was made by Council Member Arthurs and received a second by Council Member Poston to approve the minutes from the February 7, 2023 Council Meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

PUBLIC REQUEST/PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS.

Ms. Tamala Owens stated on January the 25th she filed a FOIA request for a line itemed budget sheet for all monies received and expenditures paid thus far on the golf course to include any grants bonds loans land or building purchases contracts fees supplies et., and was told she could have this information but it was going to be \$24.34 an hour, and she then asked for a waiver because she felt like that it was public information and the citizens of Johnsonville have the right to know where their money's going and to what extent, she even offered to come in and look the up information. Ms. Owens stated that Ms. Swann told her she'd get back in touch with her, and on February the 21st she was told that all the information she could give me was the revenues and expenditures for the construction of the golf course but you weren't allowed to give me any third-party information and my fees would not be waived. So I replied and told her that according to the ordinances, ordinance 2-311 states the City Council shall keep a record of all its official acts and ordinances, financial income and expenditures which shall be open to public inspection, to me that means that contractors, any third parties that the city paid would be included in this request and even for bidders I didn't see an exception for bidders except during the closed bidding process, after the bidding is closed then the information becomes public. Ms. Swann told me that the city did keep a record of all the official acts and ordinances, the financial income and expenditures, and I quote her "all the information can be found in our annual third party audit as well as ordinances, council meeting agendas and minutes and all can be found on the city's website", personal information such as paid to a private contractor cannot be shared I could tell

you which contractors were used and the amount of the total job but not what they were paid and at that point she told me it would take about two hours to get this information so that means that in order to get public information that I am going to be required to pay \$48.68 roughly so a \$50 bill which nowadays does not come around easily but I also took Ms. Swann at her word, so I went looking on the city website to see what I can find on the golf course and in the 2020 audit I found one hit and all it said was that there was that city was going to get \$4 million for renovation of the Wellman Golf Club in the 2021 audit I found one hit it said the same exact thing in the 2021-2022 budget which want to qualify per Jim when he was here is really only recommendation it's a suggestion because at the last minute funds get moved from here to there to there so things can balance out so I can't take that like set in stone and in fact the only reason that the 2021-2022 budget is on the official website is because I filed a FOIA back in 2022 and met with Nick and Mayor Hannah and requested that it be put on the website. in that budget the only thing I could find was three hits \$4000 \$15,000 and \$12,000 for a total of \$31,000 to the golf course we all know it's way more than that so then I went looking through the council minutes and all 9/16/2021 council approved the signing of a contract with southeastern golf for \$3,588,22.00 for construction of the municipal golf course, on October 5th 2021 council voted to enter into a contract with James Smith as a consultant to the city regarding the construction of the golf course but there was no mention of any amount paid to Jim, in December of 2021 council voted to enter into a contract with down to earth to manage the golf course but there was no mention of an amount there either there was a budget workshop on May 4th 2022 and the minutes indicate that the golf course will need to have transfers from other accounts to balance and my notes indicated a whole lot more but I'm going to just leave my notes out of it and on July 5th of 2022 per Mr. Jim the golf course project we had \$3.9 million from the penny sales tax he said something about \$750,000 on refinancing of this building I didn't know if he was talking about the le about refinancing periwinkle or refinancing this building that we're sitting in right now, so that was grey to me on September the 6th 2022 in executive session as a result council voted to move \$70,000 from the general fund to the golf course to cover additional costs of quote due to change order and contracts with southeastern golf no idea what that means no mention of whether it was a loan or we would just move it then October the 4th we talked about 21 loads of sod costing between 150 and \$175,000 back and forth discussions of the course will open October 1st no it's going to be six months long so anyhow it's decided that it would be a button rather than six months and since the side cost 150 to 175 we rounded it off to 200,000 for an intrafund loan to be paid back within two years and that was a result of higher than anticipated pre-opening costs resulting from adverse weather impacts November 9 2022 there was a golf course committee meeting where it was discussed that there's still a lot of work and he done to get full course ready side was laying on all holes that were washed out except #7 don't know why #7 wasn't on resoded or whatever the correct verbiage is netting is still needed to keep up with range falls because costs are up I don't know what that means picnic tables and the rocking chairs for the deck and the entrance was discussed a golf stimulator and the attorney who later resigned in January or sometime thereabouts suggested additional cuts to the budget by reducing cost of the golf course going forward, then on December the 6th the golf course still not ready and needs to be put off DTE is now charging a reduced rate until June the first of 2023 and it was also discussed about a lease agreement with Florence County regarding a quote real property regarding Wellman golf course and other matters relating thereto and the announcement Jimmy Powell resigned from DTE the January minutes it I can't tell you what they say cause they're not up on the minutes posted for January are for December so the December minutes from the January minutes are the same exact minutes and but in my notes I had that the contract was going to be revised to go from \$66,000 a month to 50,000 a month is that right OK oh So what I did after I looked all this stuff up is I thought what if I were a little old lady who couldn't get out I was homebound and all I had to go on about what was going on with this city was what I could find online and if you don't have any knowledge of from sitting in these meetings we got \$4 million from penny sales tax you paid 3.5 million

roughly to southeastern can't subtract the contract with Jim because I don't know how much it is can't subtract the contract with DTE because then at home I don't know how much that is refinancing of a building accredited \$750,000 I credited \$70,000 that were transferred that was transferred from the general fund and then I also credited the \$200,000 that was the intro loan fund to the golf course account so I'm sitting at home and I'll do my math we got almost \$1.5 million left to put on that golf course now of course I don't sit at home I come here I take my notes I do my thing but even using my notes and I'm a pretty good note taker and I'm a pretty good perusal of documents because that's what I do as part of my job working for the state is I look at documents to make sure that the information is correct and accurate and detailed before we send it out to our workforce. but even that it looks like we have almost a half \$1,000,000 left in the Golf Club and we all know that's not the case you know yourself Mr. Mayor from the time that I met with you and Nick I've been asking about this golf course I want this golf course to succeed but not at the expense of losing our city and So what I'm asking for tonight is all the information that I put in that FOIA request and I'm asking council to waive that fee. Mayor Hanna stated the reason we charge the fee is because staff has to stop their job to gather this information, we have to pay for our supplies and that's a lot of paperwork.

Motion was made by Councilmember Arthurs and received a second by Councilmember Collins to waive the fee for FOIA information requested by Ms. Tamala Owens. Councilmember Arthurs- Mayor Hanna voted-no, Council Members Collins, Poston and Khambhaita voted yes. **Motion carried** with a with a 3 to 2 vote.

Public Forum

Jackie Stasney 245 Stone Ave. Stated a few years ago they allowed the city to put a drainage ditch on their property to help with drainage on that side of town, she doesn't have any problems, but there are neighbors on Maple street who is cutting their yards and taking their limbs and debris and putting it in that ditch and it's filling up, if the ditch can't drain the problem will happen again with flooding. She asked if there was any way to stop the neighbors and have someone come clean the ditch. City Administrator Ms. Swann asked if she could get her the addresses, Ms. Stasney said she would.

Renee Harrell 442 S Pine St., Stated she was here for the same reason she had been here for several years, what is being done to make our city presentable with private property. Several properties in town are an embarrassment. If her 90-year-old father can keep his lot clean with the help of Sammy and Wayne and anyone else who stops by others can to. She asked what can be done. She is seeing travel trailers pop up.

Chief of police Ron Douglas stated our ordinance is very clear on this the administrator has to have city clerk notify the property owners to come before council, the council has to agree its an eye sore.

Ms. Harrell stated she would love for this council to have some way to enforce,

Ms. Harrell stated to change the subject to the golf course who was the consultant that said a golf course was going to be a wonderful thing for Johnsonville and that the residents here were going to be able to keep that property and keep it going financially. Is that going to be a good thing for Johnsonville- I'm just saying if I was from out of town I would not come here to play golf.

Councilmember Arthurs stated the city of Johnsonville by itself cannot, there's people coming, there is a buzz around the beach, I get asked about it all the time, I tell them it's being rebuilt and will be open soon.

Ms. Harrell then stated lets get on the job and get these properties around here cleaned up then.

Kenneth Ard-announced that he will be running for the open City Council seat in May.

OLD BUSINESS

Mayor Hanna stated we had a very good question last month, so I called Roger Poston this is what he told me. Any municipality that gets a transfer station county pays for it, the municipality leases it from the county and pays the taxes on it. So instead of leasing from the county we lease from the property owner. That is why we are entering into a lease with Mr. Langley.

Motion was made by Councilmember Poston and received a second by Councilmember Khambhaita for Second Reading of an ordinance authorizing and ratifying the entry by the City of Johnsonville into a lease agreement with Roger N. Langley (lessor), with respect to real Property comprising the manned convenience center **Motion carried unanimously.**

Motion was made by Councilmember Arthurs and received a second by Councilmember Khambhaita to Approve A resolution authorizing submission of an application by the City of Johnsonville to the Division of Community Grant Programs of the SC Department of Commerce. **Motion carried unanimously.**

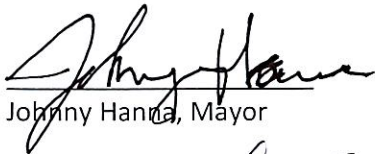
City Administrator reported, (1) plan a budget workshop Tuesday March 14, 2023 at 6pm, we will go over our request for next year budget and where we are right now. (2) The election will be a right in candidate, election will be May 2, 2023, early voting will begin April 17, (3) The Heritage Festival is May 19th and 20th.

Mayor reported he is glad to see we got concerned citizens coming and voicing their opinion,

Motion was made by Council Member Poston and received a second by Council Member Collins to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Adjourned: 7:29pm

Approval of Minutes: Minutes approved by City Council on this 14th day of April, 2023



Johnny Hanna, Mayor

Attest: 

Marlene Rollins, City Clerk