

CITY OF ROCK HILL
BOARD OF ALDERMEN MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2007
7:00 P.M.

- 1) **Call to Order** – Mayor Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- 2) **Pledge of Allegiance** - The Mayor requested and led the recital of the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3) **Roll Call** – The following members of the Aldermanic Board were present: Daniel DiPlacido, Ed Johnson and Philip Scherry. T.J. Redmond arrived at 7:02pm; Sheri McCann arrived at 7:03pm.
- 4) **Emergency Items to be added to the Agenda-None**
- 5) **Citizens to Address the Board:** *Each person addressing the board shall give his/her name, address, and organization or firm represented, if any. He/she shall speak for a period not to exceed three (3) minutes; additional time may be granted by the presiding officer or the Board.*

Lucious Carey 1031 Rockman Place Regarding Novus letter sent out, he is very disappointed and feels the City of Rock Hill should get a different developer to do business with. He recommends Pace or the Sansone Group, who will compensate the residents more fairly for their houses.

Joyce Rouse, 1032 N. Rock Hill Rd: Feels that the City of Rock Hill has blighted her neighborhood, her tax appraisal would have gone up higher, and the land would not have been attractive to Novus. Regarding the Pre-School, she feels that facilities such as these are the heart of a community and they should remain open. She suggested further we apply for a grant in order to find money for the City to be able to keep the Pre-School open and that Rock Hill should be more selective in the types of businesses we allow to open in our city.

Dory Degenhardt, 2837 Raritan: Regarding the closing of the Pre-School, she is disappointed and feels it is a hidden gem here in the City of Rock Hill. She is looking to purchase a new home but is discouraged to do so in the City of Rock Hill, due to the Pre-School and the resident membership to Richmond Heights being taken away and doesn't feel there are many benefits in remaining here.

Sharon Taylor, 316 Eldridge: On behalf of the Pre-School, her children and grandchildren have attended, she commends Ms. Pattie as a wonderful teacher, and wants to see it remain open. As a lifetime resident, she feels that the community has done more taking than giving back to the community.

Bev Neville, 9708 Whitestone Terrace: Hopes that all measures have been taken to relocate rather than close the Pre-School. She understands that the budget is strained, however she feels it is very important to remain open for the community. She is a teacher at the preschool and works with Ms. Pattie, whom she highly commends on her teaching talents and abilities.

Marie Hill, 318 Eldridge: Feels hurt that Pre-School is closing, both her children and grandchildren have attended. She understands that Rock Hill has been going through a rough time but the kids did not make this mistake, the grown ups did, and feels that we have to look out for our children and their future.

Michelle Hill 320 Eldridge: Hopes the City will reconsider closing the preschool.

Pattie Wells, Rock Hill Preschool teacher for the last 8 years. States she is not a disgruntled employee, understands the hard decisions the City has to make, although she does not agree with the decision to close the Pre-School. She feels that we need to look for other options to raise money to offset the cost such as planning fundraisers. She is willing to do whatever is necessary to keep the Pre-School here in Rock Hill.

Jody Richards, 805 Webster Court: Past Director of the Pre-School, references the boxes of pictures throughout the years of the children's experiences at the school. Feels it is a relationship building tool for the community to rebuild the pride in this community. Doesn't feel there is adequate reason to close this school and feels it is impractical to close a Pre-School to house City Hall. As a 16 year resident of Rock Hill, she feels the community has deteriorated, communication has deteriorated. Mayor Morgan respectfully disagreed with the lack of communication regarding the Easter Extravaganza and other activities being communicated to the community in newsletters have been mailed to all residents in a timely fashion announcing these events.

Mayor Morgan: addresses the decision made for the Pre-School as one not made lightly and with a heavy heart by the board members and there was considerable time devoted to the budget meeting regarding the funding for the preschool. The Pre-School loses money every year and because the City owns that building, moving City Hall to the Pre-school location for a long term situation until the street work is done. Increased dues were discussed, although it does not cover the cost of what the City spends on the preschool. Speaking with Mr. Hayden regarding possible options of moving the school, exchanging a few ideas, and that idea is being explored. The Pre-School building is going to be a temporary place for the City Hall, this was discussed at the budget meeting, and the Board has not completely abandoned the Pre-School and are looking at other options, but there is a time when the decision has to be made and it was not a fun decision to make, as it consumed a vast majority of the time allocated for the budget meeting.

A question was raised regarding the area where the Head Start Program was being held at one time, a program set up for kids.

Don Cary responded that this a state run program for the School District.

Bob Weider, 1028 Charleville: Recognizes that decisions had to be made due to financial hardship that the City has, thus the reason for redevelopment and working with Novus, who has made a start with Market at McKnight. In reference to the letter received from Novus regarding Rock Hill Phase II that asks for more TIF because they underestimated the costs and they seems to be laying blame with the City. Mr. Weider feels that someone larger than Novus should be handling the redevelopment to assure that completion happens. In talking with his neighbors on Charleville, they are willing to relocate to help the City move on, but feels as though they have not been treated fairly, which is why the residents have not responded. The offers sent out were insulting. Recommends the Board stand together and move on to another larger company, resulting in more revenue, making the future decisions easier concerning budget allocations.

6) **Public Hearings-NONE**

7) **Announcements, Presentations, Proclamations, Communications and Invitations:**

8) **Old Business:**

Old Business–DiPlacido: I want to thank the people who showed up tonight to voice their concern about closing the preschool, I for one am bowled over by the eloquent outpouring of support for the preschool, I don't think that moving city hall to the preschool is the make or break decision of Rock Hill, the money that could be saved; we don't know what is going to be saved, right now it may be a maximum of \$30,000 dollars, that is \$30,000 is rent, the preschool is \$9,000 loss right now, which could be a break even if things were arranged, so there is going to be costs involved in moving the preschool; they're going to be substantial, I think we can safely say the first year is not going to save us any money and it may be two years before any money is saved. The question is how long are we going to be there? Is it a permanent move or a temporary move?

Mayor Morgan: the \$30,000 a year we are currently spending on this location I think it was pretty clear in the budget meeting that we still have 4 million dollars in street repairs to maintain and a lot of those streets cost \$30-50,000 dollars, we have multiple \$250,000 payments to fund our police and fireman pension fund that has been neglected for the last 10+ years and so by allocating that 30k dollars and as I said, and actually said after the board made it's decision after the budget meetings, that we are working on options, so the preschool building itself is a room of love and that we will be able to find another place for it, and by taking everything else we possibly raising the fees, and looking into various options, fundraising and I think there are a lot of good people in this room that are willing to and understand what we are trying to do, (and Miss Pattie, you are saying "yes") and that we need to do our homework and find the best solution, and by doing such we will find a solution and put it in place.

DiPlacido: Well, I think there are too many uncertainties involved, we don't know what the cost is and you mention that there are all kinds of expenses, we are spending 55k to demo the 5 houses, now that is a matter of priorities, 55k we are spending, we are not going to spend it on a street, we are going to tear down 5 houses,

Mayor Morgan: Mr. DiPlacido, in the budget meeting discussion that we had, it was unanimous to close the preschool, it was unanimous to tear those 5 homes down, because they are an eyesore, and when we have our brand new development across the street...

DiPlacido: I objected to the tearing down of the 5 houses.

Scherry: I did as well

Johnson: I was not there, so I did not vote.

DiPlacido: We are also spending 5,000 for a motivational retreat for the board of alderman to set goals for the city...we need to spend 5,000 to set goals for the city?

Mayor Morgan: Mr. DiPlacido, if you are not going to listen to reasons, very valid reasons, then that is fine. So..

DiPlacido: I listen as well as anybody does, Mrs. Mayor. I would like to move to amend the city budget to fund our preschool through the fiscal year 07/08.

Johnson: I second the motion

All those in favor:

McCann: I have a question, I think we need some discussion: In our budget meetings, over a period of 4, 5, 6 months: this has been ongoing

Mr. Liyeos: Yes, we've been looking at trying...every department has taken a hit, the police dept is only replacing 1 vehicle, they are in dire need of 3 vehicles, we have a fire truck in need of replacement, we have a street that was taken off the list of streets to do that has serious storm water problems, so, yes, every department has been cut, but the preschool did take up the majority of the discussion, as a motion to amend the budget for the preschool, but if that is something that you want to do at this time, then that is up to you, but I think we gave it due consideration, it was a very difficult decision, but I would encourage you to discuss this more before you make any decision on amending the budget. I think the direction we are heading with this is, you have to have this kind of discussion in a very deliberate manner, we were always very upfront with this as far as saying that we do not have all of this information at this time. We were simply identifying this as a program as with other departments, that we could look to streamline to a certain degree, so we could stop the bleeding on other items as well.

Johnson: Mayor Morgan, I have a question...did we not just have a vote? On the decision, we called for a vote.

Liyeos: we had a motion to amend the preschool. DiPlacido called the motion, you seconded it.

Alderman Mc Cann asked for discussion after the vote.

Mr. Liyeos: I heard a yea and two nays. Two people asked for discussion: Alderwoman Barnard and Alderwoman Mc Cann

Heinz: Procedurally the budget can only be amended by Ordinance and that cannot be done at this meeting,

Alderwoman Mc Cann: If we need to discuss this more, I think that is fine, we have discussed it for 6 months, personally, I would prefer that we discuss it, rather than in the heat of the moment, it has been a difficult budget session, not just for the preschool, we cut 780,000 out of our budget, and there is a bigger picture here. We're looking to make sure that everyone in Rock Hill has a safe community in which to live. So, every component of the budget has been cut. We are talking about making sure that not only do we have a police department and fire department and safe schools.

Without all of that we are not our own community. So this has been a very difficult six months for the board. I can't speak for the rest of the board, but I haven't taken this process lightly, so if we have to discuss this more, than I am happy to discuss it. But I don't; know that we need to make sure that we alter the budget. I think we should discuss how we are going to handle the preschool, if this is the direction that the board chooses to go.

Mayor Morgan: which I don't think anyone one on this board opposes to discuss the options, but to go ahead and try and make a rash decision for the sake of doing so with out all the proper information is unwarranted.

Johnson: Mayor, I think the concern is more making sure the preschool stays open, because if you close it, it is unlikely that you will go back and reopen. For the city to lose the preschool, which is something we say we value, and if we value education, you actually have to put your money where your mouth is, and if that is the case, then we have to put money in the budget to make sure it stays open, vs. taking money that is going into savings, because we are not talking about whether we will put preschools in, we are going to be in the red, we are talking about not saving as much money.

Liyeos: One of the other things taken into consideration as relates to all budgetary items is: what are the industry standards as it relates to service from the city? I don't think there is another city that provides a preschool service. I think that is primarily taken care of by the school district or by private industry, and that is something, that unfortunately has been the case for a number of cities throughout St. Louis county in making cost cutting ventures. The City of Brentwood discontinued their program and a number of other cities had them at one particular time and there is federal funding for, but now you see less and less of these programs, if any at all funded by the city directly.

DiPlacido: Mr. Liyeos, I have to say that just because other cities don't do it does not mean that we should not do it. That has become a mantra as long as I have been a mayor, or a... ,excuse me mayor, that's next on the list, as long as I've been an *alderman* there has been a mantra that comes from city hall:, the other cities don't do this, so we shouldn't do this, the other cities do this, so this is the way we should do it. We should do it the way we want to do it.

Liyeos: I respectfully disagree with that because that is something on a limited budget unfortunately you have to make tough decisions on and there unique ways that things were done here in the past and I would like to put an end to that and run things in a professional manner in the services that we provide, hopefully, in a manner that is no longer on a shoe string budget, we are on a shoe string budget, we have been operating in that fashion for a long period of time and services suffer as a result. We have to reevaluate what is the city's primary responsibility in services that are provided. Streets are something that only the city can provide. We cannot farm that out to private industry or school district. Everything on down the line in terms of if you want to keep your fire department, you have to buy a new truck, if you want to keep your police department you have to buy new cars. Those are the types of things that if push comes to shove, you're going to have to seriously consider whether or not you can afford those services and provide those down the road.

McCann: and if you have police department and fire department and you have a pension fund that

has been under funded, we have to fund the pension, which for a very, very small city such as ours, a \$250,000 payment in order to insure the future of our fire and police is what we absolutely have to do. And that has taken a very large chunk of our budget. I would like to see what we can do to resolve the issue at hand. There are major issues at this particular point in time. If it is the wish of the board to keep the day care center here in Rock Hill, I would like to see us explore other venues. Because it would seem to me, according to other discussions we have had longer than 6 months ago, that we have to go somewhere else eventually, we cannot stay here forever, so where is that going to be? We have to go someplace that the city owns, so rather than discontinuing the preschool, let's discuss other venues so that we can do our homework and make sure that we can actually go when this side of the development is finished. Isn't that reasonable? That we discuss it more and have more facts?

DiPlacido: Sherry, in the meantime, I think that we do need to fund the preschool.

Liyeos: Addresses an audience member who is interjecting and states that this needs to stop and that this discussion is amongst the board members at this time and please be respectful in terms of that discussion. Do not interject.

Mayor Morgan: The preschool is funded until July 27

DiPlacido: Why not fund it until through the end of the fiscal year?

Mayor Morgan: I think that all of the 3 people in this room that have a desire and a lot of great solutions how about if they get together and work on those solutions? I have had discussions with Mr. Hayden and I want to stress and I kind of resent the fact that you are kind of grandstanding on the fact that you are the sole fighter, it was a decision that the board made after lengthy discussion and I don't really appreciate you at the last minute after never objecting truly during the budget meetings at the last meeting you decided to

DiPlacido: So you are saying that I can't change my mind, so you're saying that Philip Scherry can change his mind about the resolution naming two board members, and you're saying that Mrs. Barnard cannot change her mind on the AT&T issue. I can change my mind; I changed my mind after the meeting.

Mayor Morgan: That is not at all what I am saying. We have a lot of great influence in the=is room and we will work towards a solution, but the budget was approved and we will do what we need to do and get this moving forward, so like Alderwoman Mc Cann et al, we will work toward that solution.

Johnson: Now Mayor, are we working towards making sure that we keep the preschool open? Because that is really what it is coming down to.

Mayor Morgan: Yes.

Johnson: and I think that is the main concern is keeping the preschool open.

McCann: I think that we need to figure out what can be done because it cannot continue to operate at a loss. We need to figure out a way to make sure that there is enough kids there, that it is filled to capacity, or we can look for some other options, but everybody was pretty upset to make that decision, and if there is some way that we can keep it open, I think, I know that in the past most of us have supported the preschool, but it has just been a difficult budget year. And maybe there is a way that we can make it solvent. I don't know, is it operating at capacity?

Wells: No, but I have ideas.

McCann: I'm not opposed to keeping the discussion going, but I think we need to make sure that we are operating from sound information, that we have all the facts in front of us before we start making amendments.

Johnson: But it still comes down to putting enough money in the parks budget, so that they can operate the preschool. If you don't put the money there, they cannot do it. Unless there is money in the budget, you can't keep it open.

Mayor Morgan: I feel we are all saying the same thing...we can all agree upon the fact that we are going to work toward a solution to keep the preschool open.

Mr. Liyeos: We are going to have to move on, we have to stop, I am trying to keep order here, we have a motion and a second on the floor, there needs to be some vote on this:
The motion was to amend the budget.

Mayor Morgan suggests that **Alderman DiPlacido** amend his motion that there are options explored so that all the facts are present before a motion if filed to amend the budget. An amendment to the motion is not acted upon and the original motion proceeds to a voice vote. Upon voice vote the motion is tied with the three votes a piece. In order to break the tie Mayor Morgan casts her vote against the motion and the motion fails.

A motion is then made by **Alderwoman McCann** to look at options at keeping the preschool open, setting up a planning meeting with a task force and please provide the names on the list being circulated to Alderwoman Barnard. **Alderman Redmond** seconds the motion. Upon voice vote the motion is passed unanimously.

9) **Minutes of Previous Meetings:** Approval of the minutes from the meeting held on March 20, 2007. Alderman Scherry motioned to accept the minutes with a minor correction regarding a citizen's comment for the meeting held on March 20. The motion was seconded by Alderwoman Mc Cann. Upon voice vote the motion carried.

10) **New Business – Alderman Johnson** has a concern about racial profiling or target harassment by the Housing Department. He mentions that on March 8, 12, 19 housing reports called an "Exterior Survey" done in a specific area of Rock Hill, known as "the Hill". Alderman

Johnson agrees that there are some homes in Ward 1 that need some surveys done also. He wonders why the other areas haven't been done. The City Administrator states that the Building Inspector does indeed go to each area of the city to make these reports.

This area was not singled out by the Building Inspector and this is not a racial issue and to implicate this as such is a very sensitive issue in terms of the Building Inspector's credibility, as he has worked in a racially diverse area for along period of time. The City Administrator offered to talk with the Building Inspector regarding this situation. Alderman Johnson felt that the timing of these notices was politically driven not in his favor as this was prior to election time. The City Administrator disagrees that this was a politically driven issue and that Alderman Johnson was really undermining the credibility of the Building Inspector and this type of accusation was unwarranted.

Alderman Redmond commented that in his Ward, he gets calls all the time regarding notices given to residents to repair their properties. Alderman Redmond stated that it is the Building Inspector's job to do this and that this should not be a personal attack on Mr. Cantwell. People were cited last year in the redevelopment zone by the Inspector. He is simply doing his job.

Alderwoman McCann stated that she has received calls from residents regarding certain streets as they were unhappy with the way their neighbors were keeping up their yards.

- 11) **Treasurer's Report: Donald Cary, Finance Director:** Bills for the month were \$68, 819.87 all from the General Fund, largest portion is in administration, and rent payment was held off until April 1 as it is the beginning of the new fiscal year. Administration costs were Kirkwood running our payroll from July of last year, they only bill us once a year; Legal bills paid for the pension fund execution. A motion was made to pay the bills by Alderman Scherry. The motion was seconded by Alderwoman Barnard. Upon voice vote motion the motion carried.
- 12) **Bills and Resolutions:** Pursuant to RSMo. 79.130, all bills and resolutions will be read by "title" only. Copies will be available to the General Public at City Hall during regular office hours.

ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR FIRST READING: NONE

ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR SECOND READING AND OR ADOPTION:

- a) **Bill No. 1681:** AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF ROCK HILL MUNICIPAL CODE, CHAPTER 520 SIGN REGULATIONS BY DELETING THE EXISTING PROVISIONS AND ADDING THERETO CERTAIN NEW SECTIONS REGARDING SIGNS (TABLED). **No motion made or action taken on this item.**
- b) **Bill No. 1697:** AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A LEGAL SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR THE REPRESENTATION OF THE CITY IN CERTAIN LITIGATION CONCERNING THE CITY'S LICENSE TAX ON TELE-COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES. A motion was made by Alderwoman McCann to approve the second reading of Bill No. 1697. The motion seconded was by Alderwoman Barnard. Mayor Morgan

proceeded with the roll call vote on the motion: Redmond, Di Placido, Johnson, Barnard, McCann, and Scherry. The motion carried

13) Planning and Zoning Report-Regarding the meeting held April 3rd, Alderman Redmond stated that a request would be forthcoming for a special use permit for Avis Car Rental to locate on Bremerton, which was the previous site of Accel Car Leasing. Alderman Redmond stated further the Commission approved the new sign for Heartland Bank and Philly Grill. Alderman Scherry asked whether the new signs meet the new code and the City Administrator responded that they did.

14) Departmental Reports

- a) **Paul Arnett, Rock Hill Police Department Captain** Thanked the board for funding the pension plan for the Police and Fire Department. He stated he has attended two seminars, dealing with difficult people and leadership in the command position with advanced narcotics investigations. He is in the process of ordering new copier for the department and parking and loud music at Café Brasil is being aggressively monitored. Conducting a written test to hire new police officers. A stake out will be held this summer to insure that liquor is not sold to minors at the Conoco station.
- b) **Kevin Halloran, Fire Department Captain:** Thank you for the pension. Learned a lot about bombs at a seminar attended last week in New Mexico to pass along to the police and the firefighters. Firefighters are going through a certification course for drivers again this year.
- c) **Don Cary, Finance Director:** New employee part time, Lori Medlin, Spring building projects are starting, more people bringing in plans, requesting permits for occupancy, etc. Neil Cantwell, City Building Inspector, will continue to do his drive by inspections, section by section, allowing the residents enough time to complete the repairs before winter. We are working on the budget regarding the Pre-School for Alderman DiPlacido, having some questions answered regarding cost and revenues regarding the school, costs and revenues on the move, costs of renovating the site, looking back at the revenue from last year, working with Al Hayden from that program. We will continue to work on that information as requested. We are working on getting the year end financial statements done, getting the fixed asset listing out to the departments for them to do an audit of all of their fixed assets and other prep work for the upcoming audit.

15) City Attorney Report: Ken Heinz

There will be a meeting out in Creve Coeur to discuss what to do with the new state law regarding the cable and video franchising. In addition to the State taking away the franchising authority, they are also looking to take away the back wireless telephone taxes owed to the city. He urged that we write to our State Legislators regarding that issue and proposal.

16) Mayor's Report

- a) Spring Newsletter-need letter from Ward II
- b) Mayor Morgan will be going to the homeowners in Phase II of the Novus project and talking with them in three different homes. The Aldermanic representatives in Ward III will

also be present at these meetings. This will be happening next week.

c) The Mayor had the City Administrator brief the Board regarding the City's website being repaired by REJIS along with the problems with Verio. Allied Waste is in the process of delivering new recycling bins. They are being received both positively and negatively by the citizens. The purpose is to promote recycling in the city. Alderwoman Barnard suggested that the letter from the Mayor regarding the new containers should be posted on the website. Mayor Morgan extended congratulations to Mr. Liyeos, since he will be going to attend a three week seminar at Harvard for Senior Executives in State and Local Government. Mr. Liyeos did not ask for money from the City for these expenses. Other congratulations to Mr. Liyeos for being appointed to the Board of Directors of the Missouri State City Managers Association.

- 17) **City Administrator's Report: George Liyeos:** TIF Meeting 7 p.m., Wednesday, April 11, at Hudson Elementary. The agenda for this meeting is going out on April 5, 2007.
- 18) **Al Hayden: Parks and Recreation Director:** Arbor Day program is Saturday April 7, and may be rescheduled due to weather. Also of note, Brenda Wilson and Al Hayden of Parks and Recreation will be meeting with the Presbyterian Church to go over using the facility for the summer program, and will be discussing using the facility for the preschool program with the church as well.
- 19) Alderman Scherry made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderman Johnson seconded the motion. Upon voice vote the motion carried. **ADJOURNED at 8:40 pm**