

**MINUTES
EMPORIA CITY COUNCIL
RETREAT
EMPORIA-GREENSVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT
JANUARY 23 - 24, 2009**

Note to Reader: Although the printed Agenda document for this City Council retreat is not part of these minutes, the Agenda document provides background information on the items discussed by City Council during the retreat. A copy of the Agenda document for this retreat may be obtained by contacting the Office of the City Clerk.

Emporia City Council held a retreat on Friday, January 23, 2009, and Saturday, January 24, 2009, at the Emporia-Greenville Regional Airport. Mr. Brian S. Thrower, City Manager, presided over the retreat.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 2009

City Council members in attendance:

Councilman F. Woodrow Harris
Councilman James C. Saunders
Councilwoman Doris T. White
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey
Councilman Ned V. Lankford
Councilwoman L. Dale Temple

Others present: Sheila Cutrell, Director of Finance
Brian S. Thrower, City Manger
Steven B. Hall, Assistant City Manager
Jean V. Whiting, City Clerk

Absent: Councilman John R. White

Dinner ~ 6:40 p.m. – 7:20 p.m.

Mr. Thrower welcomed all in attendance and provided a brief overview of the agenda topics that would be covered during the retreat.

Mid-Year Budget Review (Mrs. Sheila Cutrell, Director of Finance)

Ms. Cutrell provided City Council members with a general overview of the City of Emporia's financial status in the form of handouts and slides. Some of the highlights from the presentation were as follows:

General Fund Revenues

- Revenue collections were at 59.75% of the budgeted amount as of December 31, 2008
- Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$1,395,111.00 as of December 31, 2008
- Local sales tax collections increased to \$222,023.19 compared to \$104,619.24 in January 2008
 - ~ Commissioner of the Revenue is investigating the basis of the increase through the Department of Taxation

General Fund Expenditures

- Expenditures were at 51.98% of the budgeted amount as of December 31, 2008
- As of December 31, 2008, revenues exceeded expenditures by \$1,395,111

Utility Fund Revenues

- Revenue collections were at 49.10% of the budgeted amount as of December 31, 2008
- Revenues exceeded expenditures by \$88,202.00 as of December 31, 2008

Utility Fund Expenditures

- Expenditures were at 49.77% of the budgeted amount as of December 31, 2008
- As of December 31, 2008, revenues exceeded expenditures by \$88,202.00

Budget Outlook for FY 2010 & 2011

- Expect reductions in state funding
- Debt payment reductions from the following
 - ~ 2004 Lease Purchase – January 2009 \$44,312 GF..... \$2,470.00 UF
 - ~ 2006 Lease Purchase – December 2009 \$10,288
 - ~ GO Bond Series 2003B – May 2010 will save approximately \$98,595.00 beginning in FY 2011
 - ~ GO Bond Series 2004B – July 2009 will save approximately \$17,700.00 beginning in FY 2011
 - ~ Final payment on a current incentive will be made the current year and will free up approximately \$200,000/year beginning in FY 2010. Recently granted incentives will exceed that amount by approximately \$50,000.00
 - ~ Final payment to VRS for the payroll error will be made in FY 2011 and will free up \$100,844.00 in the General Fund and \$30,885.00 in the Utility Fund beginning in FY 2012

Ms. Cutrell advised City Council members that the City of Emporia's financial picture, "looks good overall."

Break ~ 8:10 p.m. – 8:15 p.m.

Due to early wrap-up of Friday night's agenda items, it was the consensus of City Council members to proceed with the following agenda items that were scheduled to be addressed the following day.

Goal Setting & Budget Development (Brian Thrower)

Mr. Thrower advised City Council members that he wished to develop a mission statement and vision statement for the City of Emporia. He provided them with copies of Lynchburg, Virginia's City Council Vision Statement as well as article published in the October 1994 edition of *Government Finance Review* depicting the successes of Charlotte, North Carolina's strategic processes.

4-Way Stop Signs

Mayor Adams stated, while some citizens oppose the recently installed 4-way stop signs throughout the City of Emporia, he felt that they made respective areas much safer. He suggested that sufficient time be allowed to thorough monitor the effects of the newly installed signs and suggested that the matter be evaluated in 6 months.

Councilman Saunders stated that he received positive and negative feedback from citizens concerning the newly installed signs and that he was informed by a local judiciary member that the signs were, “wonderful for safety purposes.”

Councilwoman Carey requested that the area of Williams Street and Lowground Road be reviewed for potential safety concerns regarding the stop light location. She stated that the stop light did not appear to be close enough to Lowground Road.

Councilman Harris suggested that a potential stop bar be placed at the area where traffic should halt.

Mr. Thrower advised City Council members that he and Mr. Royal Jones, Director of Public Works, would review the area.

With no further business to present before City Council, Mr. Thrower moved into Closed Session for the purpose of discussing Virginia Code § 2.23711(A) (3) Acquisition of Real Property for Public Purpose.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to present before City Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24, 2009

City Council members in attendance:

Councilman John R. White
Councilman F. Woodrow Harris
Councilman James C. Saunders
Councilwoman Doris T. White
Councilwoman Carolyn S. Carey
Councilwoman L. Dale Temple

Others present: C. Butler Barrett, City Attorney
Jack Davenport, Executive Director for the Emporia/Greenville Industrial Development Corporation
Donald Goodwin, Community Development Director for the City of Franklin, Virginia
Brian S. Thrower, City Manger
Steven B. Hall, Assistant City Manager
Jean V. Whiting, City Clerk

Absent: Councilman Ned V. Lankford

Economic Development (Jack Davenport)

Mr. Davenport provided City Council members with an overview of the Industrial Development Corporation’s organizational structure, past and current ventures, and the area’s overall economic status at that time including, but not limited to, the following information:

Key Issues for the City of Emporia

- Joint industrial park
- Free-standing industries
- Lack of ready-to-go industrial sites
- Condition of current industrial park
- Flow of manufacturing offshore

Future Growth Engines

- Megasite projects
- Expansion and replacement of aging manufacturing facilities
- Travel and tourism industry
- Fort Lee expansion
- Health care industry
- Telecomm users
- Mid-to-large scale distribution facility and intermodal sites

Mr. Thrower suggested that focus be placed on the quality of life within the City of Emporia in addition to the matters presented.

Break ~ 9:53 a.m. – 10:05 a.m.

Property Maintenance and Code Enforcement (Donald Goodwin, City of Franklin)

Mr. Goodwin Provided City Council members with ideas for implementing more stringent code enforcement practices. He also advised them that the most challenging aspects of implementation would be overall buy-in. He further advised them that such implementation would entail the following:

- Enhance curb appeal
- Establish set goals/objectives
- Step up code enforcement
- Lowered rental houses

He reported that, since implementing stringent enforcement of codes, the City of Franklin mostly received complaints concerning their rental inspection program. He provided City Council members with an overview of the following information:

- City of Franklin's mission statement
- 5 phases to implement a more stringent code enforcement plan
- Guidelines for Property Maintenance in the City of Franklin
- Ways to enhance public notification of code requirements and their stringent enforcement

He emphasized the importance of consistency when enforcing codes and that they be enforced justly. He advised City Council members that the City of Franklin had to factor in additional staff during their budgeting process for the sole purposes of ensuring code enforcement for their locality.

Mr. Thrower provided City Council members with copies of an article titled "Cincinnati's Neighborhood Enhancement Program Produces Results, Forest Partnerships" printed in the 2008 edition of the *Public Management*.

Working Lunch ~ 12:20 p.m.

Community Development (Steve Hall)

Mr. Hall provided City Council members with an overview of the status of the following projects:

- West Atlantic Street Neighborhood Revitalization Project
- South Main Street Improvement Project
- Meherrin Blueway and Canoe Trail
- Green Infrastructure Mapping

He also provided them with an overview of the following pending and potential projects:

Pending Projects

- Long-range rural transportation plan
- Tourism assessment plan
- Emporia-Greenville Sesquicentennial Committee

Potential Projects

- Farmer's Market grant application
- Comprehensive Plan implementation
- Regional broadband study

Mr. Hall provided City Council members with an overview of the City of Emporia's past and current (at that time) building permit fee schedule. He also provided them with copies of the City of Emporia's current zoning fee comparison schedule which including the City of Emporia, City of Franklin, Town of Vinton, and the Town of Smithfield). He advised city Council members that he would update the schedules to elaborate on each item and would provide copies to them.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to present before City Council, Mr. Thrower adjourned the meeting at 2:15 p.m.

Samuel W. Adams, III, Mayor

Jean V. Whiting, City Clerk