WORK SESSION MEETING

May 29th, 2018

The Bessemer City Council met in work session on Tuesday, May 29th, 2018 at 1:00PM in the Council Chamber of City Hall. Proper notice was given.

Call to Order
Mayor Becky S. Smith called the meeting to order.

Members Present
Mayor Becky Smith, Council Members: Dan Boling, Joe Will, Donnie Griffin, Kay McCathen, Alfred Carpenter, and Sonny Boyd were all present. Also present were City Manager, James Inman, and department heads.

Department Reports
Bessemer City Department heads gave reports on their department status:

Public Works Director, Jamie Ramsey led the discussion by thanking everyone for assisting and respecting him during the City's time of need.

Chief Tom Ellis reported on the recent accident that occurred Sunday, May 20th at the Surf and Turf Lodge, of Bessemer City. Subsequently, two murder investigations are being conducted during this time. Minimal details regarding the case will be provided to the general public. Chief Ellis commended the Charlotte and Gastonia Police and Fire Departments for their assistance. Efforts to debrief all officers involved are underway. City Manager Inman informed Council that he directed the Finance Officer to pay overtime for all City employees involved with assisting the Police Department in the recent accident.

Dr. Robyn Byers, Zoning Administrator addressed Council regarding recent planning department changes. Effective Saturday, June 30th Benchmark will no longer be providing planning services to municipalities. Benchmark is a consulting firm that provides the City with planning and zoning services.

Economic Development Officer Josh Ross introduced Summer 2018 intern, Mikel Graham. Mikel is a UNC Charlotte student pursing his Masters in Public Administration (MPA). This summer he will be assisting in the Economic Development and Code Enforcement divisions. Mayor Smith welcomed him aboard.

Parks & Recreation Director JoD Franklin addressed Council regarding Down Home Festival, the Swimming Pool, landscaping issues, and CDL training. A number of Public Works and Parks & Recreation staff members are currently training to obtain their CDL required for driving the City's bus. Pool operations are underway as lifeguards have been hired and the pool will be opening soon.

Economic Development Officer Josh Ross addressed Council regarding the Charlotte Airport Strategy drop in Wednesday, May 30th. This drop in focuses on the economic development plan focusing on area businesses. The airport plays a major role in introducing the visiting public to Gaston County. Mr. Ross further noted a development meeting with the Osage Mill

Redevelopment team and two (2) new restaurants opening downtown. A sub shop on West Pennsylvania Avenue and steak diner on West Virginia Avenue are expected to open soon.

Finance Officer Jenkins informed Council that bonds from 2004 had been paid off and a new budget audit is underway.

City Manager's Report

City Manager, James Inman addressed Council regarding a change in recycling services, planning services, and the budget. WastePro informed Mr. Inman that the supplier who buys City recycling would be closing. Thus, a meeting has been set to establish plans for future City recycling service. An update to the draft budget would be needed to address planning services and recycling changes after meeting with WastePro representatives. The resolution stating the City's intent to change the Charter has been filled with the North Carolina General Assembly. Said resolution would permit the City Manager to hire the Clerk to serve at his pleasure instead of Council. A light discussion regarding potential annexation plans in the Southridge Business Parkway ensued between Manager Inman and Council.

Resolution-Water Interconnection Agreements & Commerce Grant

City Manager, James Inman requested that the water interconnection and commerce grant be added to the regular Monday, June 11th meeting. Said agreements and grants would permit the City to buy water from Gastonia. By general consensus this item was approved for the regular Monday, June 11th 7:00 PM meeting in Council Chambers.

Discussion-ABC, Downtown Development, Planning & Zoning Board Appointments

Light discussion amongst Council, City Manager, and Department Heads ensued regarding appointments to the ABC, Downtown Development, and Planning & Zoning Board of Adjustments.

Zoning Administrator, Dr. Byers informed Council that changes on the Planning & Zoning Board would be needed. Said changes would include the amount of board members inside City limits and ETJ and the possibility of dual members. Economic Development Officer, Joshua Ross informed Council that a resignation effective May 23rd, 2018 had been received from Downtown Development Chair, Pamela Gladney. Furthermore, Mr. Ross mentioned potentially changing the amount of members needed to serve on the board and bylaws to support such change.

By general consensus, Council moved to table the conversations regarding the Downtown Development and Planning & Zoning Boards to a later date until Dr. Byers and Mr. Ross can better advise.

Effective Saturday, June 30th, 2018 Council member Joe Will would like to resign from the ABC Board. Light discussion regarding possible appointments were discussed amongst Council. Appointments will be made at the regular Monday, June 11th, 2018 meeting.

Discussion-Brunch Bill

A local downtown business approached City administration regarding the Brunch Bill. Said bill would allow restaurants to serve alcohol on Sundays as early as 10AM, Manger Inman noted that several other Gaston County municipalities had adopted the bill.

By general consensus, the Brunch Bill will be added to the regular Monday, June 11th, 2018 meeting for Council consideration.

Council General Discussion

Mayor Smith led Council general discussion by thanking Police Chief Tom Ellis, Assistant City Manager Jamie Ramsey, and Economic Development Officer Josh Ross for representing the City well in the Sunday, May 20th incident. Council members Joe Will, Dan Boling, and Donnie Griffin commended Police Chief Ellis and City staff for their hard work in the last week. Council member Kay McCathen mentioned prayers from her church were sent for all involved in the tragedy. Council member Donnie Griffin also thanked the fire, finance, and economic development departments for great work in their divisions. Council member Alfred Carpenter asked Mr. Inman to check on code enforcement issue to ensure all business properties are adhering to City code.

Adjourn

Being no further business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:19 PM by motion of Alfred Carpenter and unanimous vote.

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Becky S. Smith, Mayor Hydeia Y. Hayes, City Clerk