

MINUTES
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
December 9, 2024

The December 9, 2024 Regular meeting of the City Council was held at the City-County Complex, 401 W. Main Street, Dillon, SC. Notices of this regular meeting of City Council was provided to the media and individuals requesting a copy of the agenda informing them of the date, location, and time of the meeting.

Councilmembers in attendance:

Mayor Tally McColl

Councilmember James Washington

Councilmember Jay David

Councilmember Dr. Phil Wallace

Janet Paschal, City attorney was in attendance.

Mayor Pro Tem Timothy Cousar

Councilmember Johnny Eller

Councilmember Douglas Jackson

- I. **Call to Order** - Mayor McColl called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
- II. **Invocation** – Pastor Mary Keyes, Bibleway Tabernacle Church, Dillon gave the invocation.
- III. **Approval of Agenda**
Councilmember David made a motion to approve the agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Cousar seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The motion passed 7-0.
- IV. **Approve minutes of the November 11, 2024 Regular Council Meeting** A motion was made to approve the minutes by Councilmember David. Mayor Pro Tem Cousar seconded. The motion passed 7-0.
- V. **Mayor's Report**
Mayor McColl warmly welcomed everyone and wished them a Merry Christmas, noting how quickly the holiday season arrived. The City of Dillon has been busy, with standout events like the Christmas parade and tree lighting, which had a great turnout, along with other well-attended activities such as the Senior Citizens' lunch, Holiday Goodness, and Breakfast with Santa. Mayor McColl encouraged support for these events, which involve significant time and effort. Mayor McColl continued saying the City had a busy November, hosting the Farm City event, commemorating Arbor Day, honoring Pearl Harbor veterans, and welcoming Congressman Frye's office for a community listening session. Mayor McColl praised the Visitors center as a great facility for such events. Next, Mayor McColl said the City also hosted 40 high school students for a tour, where they learned about local government, voter registration, and visited the police department, engaging with officers and city leaders such as Tim Harper, Councilwoman Dawkins, and Chief Lane.
Mayor McColl emphasized the importance of community, reflecting on the holiday season as a time to make memories with loved ones and remember the true meaning of Christmas. Lastly, the Mayor recognized Councilman James Bobie Washington for his service to Dillon since 1999, presenting him with a plaque in appreciation of his contributions.

City Manager's Report

Glen Wagner began by saying as mentioned in his letter, the City's offices will be closed from December 24-26, with a luncheon planned for Friday, December 20 at the Wellness Center. Additionally, the sanitation department will work on New Year's Day, and we will notify residents of any schedule changes via trash can hangers and social media.

The bidding for the Market Pavilion opened on January 5, and bids will be reviewed on January 15. C-funds will be used to resurface South Railroad Ave (from Main Street to Hampton St and S. 1st Ave) later in 2025. This project will border the Market Pavilion site and come at no cost to the City.

Next, Glen said we have awarded a contract for an engineering firm to create a master plan for the Wellness Center. We hope to have direction by February, although much of the land is classified as wetlands. However, we are still exploring what can be done with the space, and the engineering firm will present their findings in our January meeting.

Duke Energy plans to implement lighting near the intersection of MLK and Radford, likely in January or February.

Lastly, Glen said the funds received for revitalization will be allocated to the Market Pavilion project.

Finance Report

Finance Director, Janet Bethea is out sick but the Mayor, City Council, and the City Manager have received a copy of the Finance report. Glen said he can answer some questions about finance.

Downtown Coordinator – Lisa Moody

Lisa thanked everyone for making the tree lighting event a success. New banners were purchased for downtown, and 12-14 snow burst decorations were added to South Plaza for the first time, which was well received. Lisa suggested moving next year's parade to 5:30 PM to avoid a train schedule conflict. Lisa said she has been in contact with Amtrak about ADA access, and next year, will allow disabled passengers to board the Polar Express in Dillon.

Lisa also shared that buildings downtown (100/101/104) are being rented for a coffee shop and thrift store. The market analysis presentation is scheduled for tomorrow, and Main Street SC plans to showcase Dillon once the details are finalized. Lisa expressed excitement about Dillon hosting one of Main Street SC's meetings next year.

Lisa thanked everyone for their help with the tree lighting and parade and mentioned working on securing more seats for the Candy Cane Express, although prices have increased. There will be 120 people traveling, two complete cars, and elves accompanying the group. Afterward, there will be pizza, a movie, shopping, and events. Signature Event Rentals has loaned a beautiful chair for photos in front of the tree on December 14.

Citizens' Report

No report.

VI. Old Business

None.

VII. New Business

Accept donation of land Tax Map # 059-10-26-004 - Dr. Wallace made a motion to accept the property owned by Minturn Cotton Company. Councilmember Jackson seconded. This property was recently demolished, which had been condemned, had a total cost of \$250,000. The City reached out to the property owners with the cost, offering options to pay in full or work out a payment agreement. If they did not comply, a lien would be placed on the property. The owners chose to donate the property instead. Janet Paschal reviewed the packet, confirmed that the corporation was in good standing with the Secretary of State, but noted that a lien and judgment check would be necessary to ensure the property was clear of any attachments. Councilmember Eller asked what could be done with the property, and Burt Rogers suggested that Public Works could use it to store equipment, especially for use during storms, as the department is growing. The donation of the property was approved unanimously, with a 7-0 vote.

VIII. Councilmember's Report

Councilmember Eller inquired about a maximum limit for the market analysis, to which it was confirmed that there was no set maximum. He also asked if a certified letter had been sent to the owners of the condemned building on Radford Blvd. Benny confirmed that it had, but due to a new ordinance, the entire process would need to be redone before moving forward with either tearing it down or beginning billing.

Councilmember Eller also commented positively on the train mural, suggesting that it would be great to light it up, as it's hard to see when coming across the railroad tracks.

Councilmember David expressed appreciation for the work on the lighting at Radford and MLK and brought up the hedges in front of Dollar General, asking if anything could be done about them. Glen explained that the hedges were originally planted by the Movie theater owners, which had a permit from the DOT, and unless DOT approves, they cannot be altered. Glen said he would check with the DOT the following day.

Councilmember David also asked about the plans for the Rownds property, noting that a grant had been used to clean up hazardous materials there.

Councilmember Washington expressed gratitude, stating that it has been a pleasure working with everyone. He mentioned that his district is looking good and thanked Council for all the work they have done.

Councilmember Jackson mentioned the light on Main Street that he has been discussing for the past year or two. Glen responded that they are working on it and have requested that all lights be converted to LED. Councilmember Jackson emphasized that the lights will need to be placed on the corner. He also took a moment to thank Councilmember Washington, reflecting on how they all came together in 1999.

Mayor Pro Tem Cousar had no report.

Councilmember Eller mentioned the lights coming in from Harbor Freight, noting that Duke Energy had said they would address it after the QT was built. Glen responded he will follow up with Duke Energy again. Regarding the Rownds property, Councilmember Eller pointed out that the son now owns the property, which has been an eyesore for years. He asked if the City could acquire the property, clean it up, and potentially turn it into a park. Glen responded that if the

City wanted to buy the property, they would need to make an offer, as the owner was not willing to donate it.

IX. Closing Prayer

Benny Genwright said a prayer.

X. Executive Session

Dr. Wallace made a motion to go into Executive Session. Councilmember Jackson seconded and the motion passed unanimously. No action was taken in Executive Session. Dr. Wallace made a motion to come out of Executive Session. Councilmember David seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Open Session

Dr. Wallace made a motion to hire Burt Rogers as the City Manager following Glen Wagner's retirement, with start date of March 4, 2025, Councilmember Washington seconded the motion. Councilmember Eller opposed, expressing concerns that there was no contract agreement in place and that the decision to appoint Burt had not been discussed in detail, including the terms of the contract. Councilmember Jackson suggested rephrasing the motion, and Mayor McColl clarified that Burt could serve under his current contract until a new one was finalized.

Dr. Wallace amended the motion to offer Burt Rogers the city manager position under his current salary until a contract was made, and Councilmember Washington seconded it. Mayor McColl explained that he had spoken to Burt, who had been aiming for the job for 25 years, and emphasized that the City needed to ensure a smooth transition with a steady leader in place. He felt making the decision now would ensure continuity.

Councilmember Eller raised concerns about the potential for a future council to make a different decision, leaving Burt without job security. Councilmember Jackson agreed with Councilmember Eller but suggested that Burt should be consulted before offering a contract. Glen advised that the Council should speak with Burt directly to see if he was willing to take the position on an interim basis or as a permanent hire.

Mayor Pro Tem Cousar commented that they should confirm with Burt if he wanted the job before making any decisions. Councilmember Washington expressed confusion about the disagreements, and Councilmember Eller reiterated that he wanted to speak with Burt before proceeding with the vote.

In the end, Mayor McColl reiterated that, upon Glen's retirement, Burt would assume the city manager position under his current contract and salary effective March 4, 2025. Councilmembers Wallace, Jackson, David, Washington and Mayor McColl voted to hire Burt Rogers as the new City Manager and Councilmember Eller and Mayor Pro Tem Cousar opposing. The motion passed 5-2.

XI. Adjourn

With no further business to discuss, Dr. Wallace made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Jackson seconded and the motion passed 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Approved: _____

Nicholas Tally McColl, Mayor

Attest: _____

Tina Scott, Council Clerk

Date Approved: _____

1/13/2025