

City of New Ellenton
Special Meeting of City Council
City Hall Council Chambers
Minutes

Monday, June 1, 2009

Welcome

Mayor Dunbar welcomed everyone to and called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Invocation

Councilman Braswell offered the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Dunbar again welcomed everyone.

Roll Call for the Record

Present: Rex Nordeen, Eartha Rogers, Terence Williams, Vernon Dunbar, Daniel Braswell

Others Present

City Clerk Vernel Sanders, City Administrator L.C. Greene, [inaudible], Debbie Bouknight, Jeff Smith, Cheryl Braswell

Mayor Dunbar thanked everyone again for attending.

New Business

First Reading: Budget Ordinance, Fiscal Year 2009-2010 – Mayor Dunbar asked City Administrator Greene to speak on the budget ordinance. City Administrator Greene read the ordinance. Mayor Dunbar stated that the budget includes no tax increases, the millage rate stays the same, and the sewer rates, fire rates, and garbage rates stay the same. Mayor Dunbar stated that there would also be no cost of living increases for City employees and expressed regret over this being the case, but mentioned the current economic state and the lack of a finalized state budget. Mayor Dunbar stated that the total estimated revenue for the City would \$1,351,080.00 and the total estimated expenditures would be \$1,351,080.00 representing a balanced budget. Mayor Dunbar continued that there had been three budget meetings during which each line item had been reviewed and \$110,000.00 had been cut from last year's budget. Mayor Dunbar stated that the budget had been adjusted in February as well to drop it down. Mayor Dunbar called for a motion. *Motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Budget Ordinance on First Reading by Councilman Braswell, second by Councilman Nordeen. 4 in favor. Approved with Councilwoman Rogers opposed due to not being present in the budget meetings.*

First Reading: Ordinance to Levy Taxes – Mayor Dunbar stated that the millage rate is 77.4 mills and will remain the same and has been the same since about 2005. City Administrator Greene read the ordinance. Mayor Dunbar called for a motion. *Motion to approve the Ordinance to Levy Taxes on First Reading by Councilman Williams, second by Councilman Nordeen.* Mayor Dunbar asked if there were any questions. Councilman Nordeen asked if there was a set penalty regarding the penalty mentioned in Section 6. City Administrator Greene stated that the County sets that value since the County actually collects the taxes. City Administrator Greene added that the City cannot set those. Mayor Dunbar called for a vote. *4 in favor. Approved with Councilwoman Rogers opposed due to being absent the last few weeks and unable to review the information.*

Mayor Dunbar stated that this was all on the agenda and asked if anyone had anything else. City Administrator Greene reminded the Mayor that he had just come from a meeting in Washington, D.C. Mayor Dunbar stated that he and Councilman Braswell had gone to Washington to learn about the stimulus funds and that there is a lot of money out there. Mayor Dunbar continued that Congress had passed the stimulus bill in February, but that nothing new had been created and more funds had just been added to the existing. Councilman Braswell stated that it is really the same process as always. Mayor Dunbar stated that Community Development Block grants had the same criteria and that the City does not qualify. Mayor Dunbar stated that it was the same scenario for Rural Development Community Facilities grants. Mayor Dunbar stated that there was positive information about expanding the determination area. Mayor Dunbar stated that the City had been graded based off of the corporate city limits and that the service area would be looked at including the fire, water and sewer district. Councilman Braswell stated that data other than median household income might be looked at. Mayor Dunbar agreed and added that Lower Savannah was going to help. Mayor Dunbar stated that the City is not eligible now, but added that he is hopeful that the City can get something. City Clerk Sanders added that she had gone to a meeting last Wednesday regarding the 2010 census and signed an agreement that the City would become a partner and needed a focus group and needed volunteers. City Clerk Sanders thanked Mrs. Braswell and stated that a focus group would make sure that information is disseminated in a timely matter, all questions are answered and people who need help can get it. City Clerk Sanders stated that she has already put the Census 2010 information on this month's bills and will continue to have it on the bills if there is room. City Clerk Sanders stated that they census forms would be coming out in March of 2010 and due in April of 2010. City Clerk Sanders stated that it would behoove the City to get people to fill the forms out and reminded everyone that the forms are confidential. City Clerk Sanders emphasized this with an example and added that this is a mechanism to determine who gets money. City Clerk Sanders ended by saying that the more people that fill these out, the more money the City can be allocated in the future. Mayor Dunbar stated that the census data drives every grant, local sales tax option, and federal money for the schools. Mayor Dunbar stated that not filling out the form hurt the municipality because the people still use the services. City Clerk Sanders stated that it was important and added that the City may be able to get some promotional stuff. City Clerk Sanders stated that the focus group would approach churches, City Hall and the library about putting advertising for the census up to get the word out. City Clerk Sanders stated that the promotional material would be free similar to a grant. Mayor Dunbar stated that there are paid workers. City Clerk Sanders stated that this would not be the focus group and indicated that after the forms are returned, a list of non-returned forms will be compiled and the door-knockers come. City Clerk Sanders stated that people who are already working with the census may be favorable since they are already experienced in the census. City Clerk Sanders stated that it is not a promise of a job, but puts one in a better position. Mayor Dunbar stated that another thing that he found out was that part of the stimulus plan was an energy grant to weatherize houses. Mayor Dunbar mentioned Southern Siding advertising energy efficient windows and doors. City Clerk Sanders asked if these were low income grants, Mayor Dunbar stated that they were energy grants and thought that if one replaces the windows on his house, he is eligible for the grant. City Clerk Sanders stated that she thought there might be some elderly people who did not know they qualify. Mayor Dunbar stated that he did not think anyone is excluded. City Clerk Sanders asked how to find out more about it. Mayor Dunbar stated that he thought the County Administrator knew of the program. City Clerk Sanders asked if the Mayor would let everyone know. Mayor Dunbar affirmed. Councilman Braswell stated that he thought one could go to the USDA website and find a link. An unidentified person asked if the meeting in Washington was conducted by a government office. Mayor Dunbar stated that it was the State of Environmental Justice put on by several organizations. Councilman Braswell named the USDA, EPA, and DOE. Mayor Dunbar stated that Environmental Justice is a DOE project. Mayor Dunbar stated that it was a huge conference, more so than he realized and stated that there was a lot of information passed on. Mayor Dunbar asked if there was anything else. Mayor Dunbar stated that tomorrow was his birthday. Councilman Williams stated that his grandson might be born on the Mayor's birthday.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Councilman Braswell, second by Councilman Williams. All in favor. Approved.

Mayor's Signature

Date

City Clerk's Signature

Date