CITY OF GREER, SOUTH CAROLINA

MINUTES of the FORMAL MEETING of GREER CITY COUNCIL
March 24, 2020

MEETING LOCATION:
Mayor Rick Danner, Ed Driggers, City Administrator, Tammela Duncan, Municipal Clerk and Jim Ridgill, IT Manager were located at Greer City Hall, 301 East Poinsett Street, Greer, SC 29651. Councilmembers and all other participants and viewers were on Remote Access through Zoom Meeting.

I. CALL TO ORDER OF THE REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Rick Danner – 6:36 P.M.

The following members of Council were on remote access: Jay Arrowood, Wayne Griffin, Mark Hopper, Lee Dumas, Wryley Bettis and Judy Albert.

Others on remote access: Mike Sell, Assistant City Administrator, Steve Owens, Communications Manager and various other staff, Angela Davis, Greenville News and Kaelyn Cashman, Greer Citizen.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Rick Danner

III. INVOCATION

Mayor Rick Danner

IV. FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. First and Final Reading of Ordinance Number 9-2020

AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE TO TEMPORARILY SUSPEND THE NORMAL OPERATING PROCEDURES OF THE CITY OF GREER COUNCIL MEETINGS AND TO AUTHORIZE THE GREER CITY ADMINISTRATOR AND MAYOR TO TAKE ACTIONS TO ENSURE CONTINUITY IN THE DELIVERY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE CITIZENS OF GREER IN LIGHT OF THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK; AND MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Ed Driggers, City Administrator and Daniel Hughes, City Attorney with Duggan Hughes presented the request. They explained the ordinance and advised Council the ordinance would expire in sixty (60) days with an expiration date of May 24, 2020.

ACTION – Councilmember Jay Arrowood made a motion to approve First and Final Reading of Ordinance Number 9-2020. Councilmember Mark Hopper seconded the motion.
Discussion was held.

**VOTE** – Motion carried unanimously.

V. PUBLIC FORUM

An opportunity to speak was provided, no one choose to speak.

VI. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

**ACTION** – Councilmember Wryley Bettis made a motion that the minutes of March 10, 2020 be received as written. Councilmember Mark Hopper seconded the motion.

**VOTE** - Motion carried unanimously.

VII. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

A. Building and Development Standards, Finance, Fire Department, Municipal Court, Parks & Recreation, Police Department, Public Services and the Website Activity Reports for **February 2020** were included in the packet for informational purposes.

**Finance**

Susan Howell, Budget and Audit Manager presented the Financial Report for the period ending February 29, 2020. (Attached)

- General Fund Cash Balance: $18,412,476.
- General Fund Revenue: $19,951,503.
- General Fund Expenditures: $19,894,462.
- Revenue Benchmark Variance: $1,345,132.
- Expenditure Benchmark Variance: ($2,454,355.)
- Overall Benchmark Variance: ($1,109,223.)

The City is 3% over budget during this time period.

- Hospitality Fund Cash Balance: $1,005,540.
- Storm Water Fund Cash Balance: $1,466,341.

VIII. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Ed Driggers, City Administrator presented the following:

**COVID19** – Unprecedented is certainly where we are in responding to the COVID 19 crisis Worldwide within our Nation and our State and our response here within our own community. One of the things we recognized from the beginning is we have a responsibility first and foremost to the citizens of our community and we also have a responsibility to make sure that we continue central government services that are being
provided within our community as well. One of our primary responsibilities in that area is public safety we understand our roll and responsibility in that area and all provisions are being made to make sure we carry out our responsibilities, our mission in that area. We needed to react swiftly there’s been a number of things we needed to do.

I shared email communications with you earlier today and all of our employees in a mass email setting. I have now provided three (3) of those communications to our team and an additional communication sent today from our Human Resources Team as well. As we approached what was beginning to be recognized as a major issue and concern for us back on March 9th, we were in a situation where we did not have a declared pandemic and since that time we have.

Initially in our communications we were advising our team members, our employees that if they were sick to stay home. First and foremost, do not come into the community or the work place. We gave our employees instructions on hygiene, the need for them to use soap and water, also to use disinfectants and sanitizers we’ve made available to them. We gave our employees instructions in general hygiene about simple things as in cover your mouth when you sneeze or cough, disposing of any tissues and often cleaning surfaces.

We began immediately to put protocols in place in all of our front-line operations for sanitation, making sure we are sanitizing with equipment that we have available to us on a regular basis. Those things have continued for us. We started advising our employees that are designated as critical operations versus those that are non-critical, at that point in time we did not identify as what we would designate as essential or non-essential and I will have some information on that as we continue to move forward but more than anything being said is you do report to work ill as your employer we will be sending you back home. This was our general instructions as this began.

As we moved into the next week, last week on March 16th we expanded our communications to our employees reminding them of the good hygiene methods that were recommended to them not only from the CDC (Center for Disease Control), SCDHEC (South Carolina Department Health and Environmental Control) but also from our own Safety Team and Wellness Team we have on board with the city reminding employees what they need to do in regards to good hygiene. We were reminding folks that they were not to report to work ill but we went on a little further to advise our employees that we have suspended travel for all city employees of any type of training and conferences and that it was suspended indefinitely. That suspension is still in place. We advised our employees that requests to perform work remotely would need to be approved by their department head and the city administrator. We are reviewing those requests on a case by case basis. Again because of the nature of our work about seventy percent (70%) of our work is public safety so we don’t always have the luxury of someone to be able to work remotely so we do consider all of those requests on a case by case basis. We only had less than a dozen requests, of those requests to date and we have been able to approve all of those employees that have needed to be away from the work place either from concern for being around others, social distancing concerns that they may have or more specifically they needed to care for a child that is out of school or a parent or elderly person that may be in the home. We’ve made our folks aware of our policy relative to that.

We encourage our folks to continue to practice social distancing, we ask them to use teleconferencing like Zoom. We’ve purchased licenses for all of our departments so that:
we can conduct conference meetings within departments and outside contractors and other parties that need to do business with the city. We have those tools in place for us and are using those now. Again, we are asking employees that have symptom of the coronavirus or they suspect they have been exposed to self-quarantine and to let us know if that is the case. We’ve only had two (2) issues where that has been some concern we had an employee prior to the travel ban attended a conference where someone exhibited the symptoms of coronavirus, that employee placed themselves on self-quarantine we later learned there was no positive test for coronavirus of the individual that was there and the self-quarantine was lifted. We had another circumstance within our workplace with an employee that exhibited symptoms of coronavirus that person referred themselves to their personal physician and their personal physician referred them for a coronavirus test they took the test and tested negative. So, we have no reported situations with our employees being exposed directly to coronavirus. Again, we are taking every precaution to stay in that manner.

One of the things we advise our employees is that we understand the stress of this type of event can place them specifically in relation to pay compensation and benefits we advised them of our policy of how we would handle full time employees and part time employees we later revised that and I’ll review that in just a moment but what we’ve said to our employees is that if you have available leave time and this is an appropriate use of that leave time if you do not have leave time then we are in a position to loan you leave time until such time you would accrue that and be able to pay that back. Again, our highest priority is the make sure that employees do not have a gap in compensation and we believe this policy would certainly guarantee that to happen. At that time we said to our part time employees that they are not eligible for leave benefits that this would be an opportunity to provide them make up work opportunities in the future so that if they did lose any time related to this crisis they would be able to make that up in the future.

We issued a press release at that time primarily announcing that we were cancelling a couple of our public events, we cancelled the Eggtastic Easter Event, the Greer Goes Global International Festival, we also announced that jury trials and traffic court was suspended until further notice and that is still in place. We discontinued the use of our electric vehicles in the downtown area indefinitely. We contacted all renters of our event space at that time we contacted anyone with a confirmed booking with a party of fifty (50) or more to cancel or postpone. We have suspended our rules on refunds on any facilities we rent because we were trying to make sure that we were minimizing through social distancing of the number of people gathering.

Through communications the Mayor for the general public we continue to ask residents to assist with helping with the spread we gave general hygiene guidelines to our community. Yesterday, we issued our most recent communication from me to our team members in that communication we announced we were closing our lobbies and many of our recreational facilities. We have accomplished that, we have placed drop boxes at each location, all locations are posted with a telephone number and email address. Employees are on the inside of our facilities processing the work on a day to day basis. We are limiting access into our public buildings at this time. We will continue to do that until further notice.

We are continuing to advise our employees that our first and foremost issue and concern is the health and wellbeing of the general public and our employees and that is the need
for these rules and regulations as we move forward. Essential government services need to be provided to our community and work plans have to be put into places to allow for use to do that.

I give full credit to all of our department heads who are continuing to be creative and look for ways we can continue to serve without any interruption to business in our community.

We have now identified our employees that are essential versus non-essential and that is simply by definition of whether or not it is essential for them to be on location with us or is it essential for us to call them when needed to provide essential governmental services and we are communicating that to all of our team at this time.

We again made them aware of continuation of pay provisions that we have put into place and we are encouraging our employees that if they believe that they are working in an environment that gives them concern for either themselves or their family they should stay home. As I stated earlier, we have had less than a dozen that have requested that and we have granted one hundred percent (100%) of the requests we have received for folks to do remote work. We do consider on a case by case basis if we can provide that accommodation for remote work.

We emphasized with them our restrictions for our employees relative to travel and social distancing and we made them aware that now we have information that has been provided to us through the federal government through the Families First coronavirus Response Act we are sharing with them that provisions are being made through the federal government for additional sick leave to be made available for both full time and part time employees. The effective dates of that benefit are April 2, 2020 through December 31, 2020. Through the communication today we identified the six criteria that would make someone eligible to receive that benefit we’ve also made them aware of how that is compensated, the amount of paid sick leave they would be entitled to what that rate of pay would be. They needed to know as well if they exhaust that leave we are still covering them through their remaining balances of leave and again of our policy of offering loan time to them if they should need time and they no longer have available leave. Again, that was made available to them today.

It also provided additional information that the act provides for expanded FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) as well. Some of those are just the details of making sure we are still complying with all federal statutes we still have to comply with ADA regulations, HIPA regulations so we are being very, very careful to protect the rights of our employees and we are also doing that in a way that we protect our employees but also the folks that visit our facilities and do business with the City.

In the ordinance you passed earlier Daniel Hughes provided information on the suspension of deadlines, also what that will do for us and our business community is this allows for business licenses that are due April 30th the ability for the extension of time, sixty-one (61) days and we are able to provide there are no penalties for late payments of business license. We do encourage folks to submit if they are able today that but we certainly recognize that we will extend all of those deadlines for the sixty-one (61) day period. We will also do that for the Hospitality and Accommodations Tax collections those are remitted
to us on a month to month basis those deadlines will also be suspended for the sixty-one (61) day period as well.

It is our hope and intent that this will offer some relief to our business community while we know they are in a tight cash flow environment. We will continue to evaluate that to see if there is a need for Council to consider extending the Emergency Ordinance in the future.

Council will obviously be involved in giving us direction in how you would like to proceed. Providing our service levels is top priority, continuity of business plan is in place we actually have a continuity of business plan and we have implemented that plan.

The Mayor has been working with staff and myself relative to decisions that need to be made in the general health and welfare of our community, my role and responsibility will continue to be operationally within our organization and our employees I believe that has gone extremely well and we’ve been able to make decisions that have had positive impact for our employees and for our community. I am in communications daily with our county emergency operations centers. They provide an update to me and all municipalities in the respective counties, we are working with both Greenville County Emergency Operations Center and Spartanburg County Emergency Operations Center. Our first point of contact with those centers is our Fire Chief Dorian Flowers and he has continued to represent us well making sure our plans are communicated to the respective county and them sharing information back with us.

Statement of Economic Interest Report is due March 30th. The report must be completed online.

Discussion was held.

IX. APPOINTMENT TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

A. Board of Architectural Review
   Marney Hannon resigned his term expires 6/30/2020.

   No action was taken.

B. Planning Commission
   District 3 Mark Hopper resigned his term expires 6/30/2021.

   No action was taken.

X. OLD BUSINESS

A. Second and Final Reading of Ordinance Number 7-2020
   AN ORDINANCE TO CHANGE THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION OF
   PROPERTY OWNED BY CMT INVESTORS LLC, LOCATED AT 1940 GIBBS

Greer City Council Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2020
Page 6 of 8
SHOALS ROAD FROM I-1 (INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT) TO DRD (DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT).

**ACTION** – Councilmember Mark Hopper made a motion to hold over Second and Final Reading of Ordinance Number 7-2020 until the next meeting. Councilmember Judy Albert seconded the motion.

**VOTE** – Motion carried 4-3 with Councilmembers Arrowood, Griffin and Danner voting in opposition.

B. Second and Final Reading of Ordinance Number 8-2020
AUTHORIZING THE RELOCATION OF CERTAIN ALLEYS AND A QUITCLAIM DEED FOR PORTIONS OF THE SAID ALLEYS; AND OTHER RELATED MATTERS.

Ed Driggers, City Administrator stated there was no new information.

**ACTION** – Councilmember Wryley Bettis made a motion to approve Second and Final Reading of Ordinance Number 8-2020. Councilmember Jay Arrowood seconded the motion.

**VOTE** – Motion carried unanimously.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

A. First and Final Reading of Resolution Number 6-2020
CONSIDERATION OF A PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURE

Daniel Hughes, City Attorney and Ed Driggers, City Administrator presented the request.

**ACTION** – Councilmember Mark Hopper made a motion to approve First and Final Reading of Resolution Number 6-2020. Councilmember Wryley Bettis seconded the motion.

Discussion was held.

**VOTE** – Motion carried unanimously.

B. First and Final Reading of Resolution Number 7-2020
ALLOCATION OF GREENVILLE COUNTY CDBG AND HOME FUNDS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

Mike Sell, Deputy City Administrator presented the request.

**ACTION** – Councilmember Wryley Bettis made a motion to approve First and Final Reading of Resolution Number 7-2020. Councilmember Jay Arrowood seconded the motion.
VOTE – Motion carried unanimously.

C. First and Final Reading of Resolution Number 8-2020
A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF LEASE AGREEMENTS

Ed Driggers, City Administrator and Daniel Hughes, City Attorney presented the request.

ACTION – Councilmember Judy Albert made a motion to approve First and Final Reading of Resolution Number 8-2020. Councilmember Lee Dumas seconded the motion.

Discussion held.

VOTE – Motion carried unanimously.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Danner stated an Executive Session was not needed.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT 8:18 P.M.

Richard W. Danner, Mayor

Tammela Duncan, Municipal Clerk

Public Forum Sign Up List - March 24, 2020

https://zoom.us/j/3337188295

1-929-205-6099

ID: 333 718 8295

Name: _______________________________

Address: _______________________________

Phone Number: _______________________________

How will you join the meeting?

Video: ___________ Audio: ___________

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How will you join the meeting?

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No one signed up.

3/29/2020
## Financial Performance Summary

As of Month End February, 2020

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