

Mayor Nathan Senn
Councilors

Johnnie L. Bolt
Sara C. Latimore
Marian C. Miller

Cassandra Campbell
S. Martin Lowry, Mayor Pro-Tem
Alicia Sullivan

Regular Council Meeting
126 East Public Square

AGENDA

February 16, 2021 – 5:30 PM

Call to Order – The Honorable Mayor Nathan Senn

Invocation: Councilor Latimore

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of February 16, 2021 Agenda

Approval of January 19, 2021 Minutes

Approval of Special Called Meeting February 2, 2021 Minutes

Opening remarks from Mayor Nathan Senn

I. **COUNCIL BUSINESS**

1. City Attorney Tom Thompson presenting second reading Ordinance 11-20-02 Annexation of Parcels 325-00-00-014 and 354-00-00-022.
2. Police Chief Chrissie Latimore speaking in favor of Ordinance 9-20-01 Parade, Event, Block Party, Performance, Filming and Picketing Regulation Ordinance.
3. City Attorney Tom Thompson presenting second reading Ordinance 9-20-01 Parade, Event, Block Party, Performance, Filming and Picketing Regulation Ordinance.
4. City Attorney Tom Thompson presenting second reading Ordinance 2-21-01 Renaming Mock Street to Kelly Street.
5. City Attorney Tom Thompson presenting first reading Ordinance 2-21-02 Amend B2 Classification in the City of Laurens Code of Ordinances for Zoning to include all residential dwellings except for manufactured homes.
6. City Attorney Tom Thompson presenting Resolution 2-21-04 Declaring Building located 111 & 113 East Laurens Street as an Abandoned Building.
7. Councilor Alicia Sullivan addressing council discussing the need for a temporary mask ordinance with possible action.
8. Councilor Alicia Sullivan and Council recognizing several individuals for their accomplishments in honor of Black History Month.
9. Adjournment.

**CITY OF LAURENS
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
126 EAST PUBLIC SQUARE
FEBRUARY 16, 2021
5:30PM**

PRESENT

Mayor Nathan Senn, Councilor Johnnie Bolt, Councilor Cassandra Campbell, Councilor Sara Latimore, Councilor Martin Lowry, Councilor Marian Miller, Councilor Alicia Sullivan, IT Director Colby Rice, and City Administrator Gary Coleman

ABSENT

City Clerk Leslie Mattison

PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

Judith Brown – The Advertiser, Iva Cadmus – WLBG, and Kelsey Woods - GoLaurens

THE MEDIA WAS NOTIFIED BY AN EMAILED AGENDA.

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Mayor Senn called the meeting to order with Councilor Latimore giving the invocation and was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan to amend the agenda moving item #8 (Councilor Alicia Sullivan and Council recognizing several individuals for their accomplishments in honor of Black History Month) to item #1. This was seconded by Councilor Lowry and approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 19, 2021 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilor Miller and seconded by Councilor Campbell to approve the January 19, 2021 meeting minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 2, 2021 SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilor Latimore and seconded by Councilor Miller to approve the February 2, 2021 special called meeting minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

OPENING REMARKS

Mayor Senn stated that the city is making great strides to combat Covid-19. The operations at the Ridge to get people vaccinated are going extraordinarily well. The only difficulty so far is out of the city's hands and that is getting supplies of the vaccine. He is grateful to Prisma for setting up this facility. According to DHEC, the number of cases is on the decline.

Mayor Senn also stated that he wants to offer some information on what is being done to help develop a nightlife scene in the city. He stated that several months ago, he met with someone

that is interested in redeveloping a building downtown. The developer asked several questions such as what the city is doing for the arts, what our education system is like, and what the community support for the education system is like. Mayor Senn explained that he was surprised by the question about what the nightlife is like in the city. He had to confess that there isn't much of a nightlife and he didn't like having to say that. Another downtown business has expressed interested in later hours as well. Mayor Senn met with City Administrator Gary Coleman, Parks & Rec Director Jason Pridgen, and Main Street Director Jonathan Irick to brainstorm about this issue. They decided it's going to take an all hands on deck approach, which led to meeting with local merchants. They suggested the idea to local merchants to offer incentives such as \$1.00 off or a percentage off of a meal. Council could possibly call on willing community partners (large industrial employers, the school district, healthcare, and other large groups) to encourage their employees to visit these businesses. Mayor Senn told everyone to stay tuned for more details.

COUNCILOR ALICIA SULLIVAN AND COUNCIL RECOGNIZING SEVERAL INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN HONOR OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Council acknowledged several African American leaders from the community as part of celebrating Black History Month.

Councilor Campbell and Councilor Lowry both selected Elma Morrison. Councilor Campbell recognized all of Mrs. Morrison's work, especially for her work with the Sanders Alumni Association. Councilor Lowry appreciates Mrs. Morrison helping to establish Back Street Park. Councilor Bolt recognized Freddie Davenport for her 52 years with the school district and her hard work in the community. He stated that Ms. Davenport has been an inspiration to him. Councilor Miller recognized Attorney Gary Williams. She is grateful for Mr. Williams because he shares milestones of local African American history and all of his contributions to African American citizens. He often places ads in the Laurens County Advertiser celebrating notable African Americans of the community from the past.

Councilor Sullivan honored Reverend David Kennedy for his work as a Civil Rights activist. She talked about his story being made into a documentary.

Councilor Latimore recognized Reverend Anthony Sims because of his work in the community and especially with charitable causes.

Plaques were presented to each honored individual.

CITY ATTORNEY TOM THOMPSON PRESENTING SECOND READING ORDINANCE 11-20-02-A and 11-20-02-B ANNEXATIONS OF PARCELS 325-00-00-014 AND 354-00-00-022

City Attorney Tom Thompson reminded council that this property consists of 126 acres and is owned by Chen Investments. It is adjacent to parcel 906-01-03-048 that was recently rezoned from B4 to R3. This ordinance does two things...it will annex the 126 acre parcel and zone it as R3. City Attorney Thompson stated that it is his understanding that this property will be developed as a residential subdivision.

Mayor Senn voiced concern about recent social media comments stating that the West Main subdivision will have homes that are priced too high. He explained that the West Main subdivision will have homes that are priced lower than the subdivision next to the Ridge.

A motion was made by Councilor Miller and seconded by Councilor Sullivan to approve Ordinance 11-20-02-A. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilor Bolt and seconded by Councilor Lowry to approve Ordinance 11-20-02-B. The motion was approved unanimously.

POLICE CHIEF CHRISSIE LATIMORE SPEAKING IN FAVOR OF ORDINANCE 9-20-01 PARADE, EVENT, BLOCK PARTY, PERFORMANCE, FILMING, AND PICKETING REGULATION ORDINANCE

Police Chief Latimore spoke on the need for this ordinance. She urged council to adopt the ordinance because the city is growing and with growth comes challenges. The police department wants to take an active role in maintaining safety for the residents. Chief Latimore explained that many previous events were held in violation of guidelines set up by federal, state, and local governments. With this ordinance, the police department will be able to regulate the quantity and quality of events and will set up guidelines of what to expect with regard to the police.

CITY ATTORNEY TOM THOMPSON PRESENTING SECOND READING ORDINANCE 9-20-01 PARADE, EVENT, BLOCK PARTY, PERFORMANCE, FILMING, AND PICKETING REGULATION ORDINANCE

City Attorney Thompson explained that this ordinance regulates special events in town. It makes it necessary to obtain a permit for events such as parades, filming, block parties, picketing, and performances. He stated that this is a good piece of legislation that will provide peace and harmony in the city. People wanting to host these events now must fill out an application to be approved by the City Administrator after he consults with the city departments that may be involved in the event.

A motion was made by Councilor Campbell and seconded by Councilor Miller to approve Ordinance 09-20-01. The motion was approved unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY TOM THOMPSON PRESENTING SECOND READING ORDINANCE 2-21-01 RENAMING MOCK STREET TO KELLY STREET

City Attorney Tom Thompson reminded council that the renaming of the street is to honor the late Councilor Johnny B. Kelly who passed away April 15, 2020. Mr. Kelly represented District Three and resided at 116 Mock Street for a number of years before his death.

A motion was made by Councilor Sullivan to amend this ordinance by changing the error of Mr. Kelly's election date being March of 2018 to March of 2019. Councilor Miller seconded this motion and the correction was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilor Campbell and seconded by Councilor Sullivan to approve amended Ordinance 02-21-01. The motion was approved unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY TOM THOMPSON PRESENTING FIRST READING ORDINANCE 2-21-02 AMEND B-2 CLASSIFICATION IN THE CITY OF LAURENS CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR ZONING TO INCLUDE ALL RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS EXCEPT FOR MANUFACTURED HOMES

City Attorney Thompson explained that B-2 zoning does not presently allow single family homes. B-2 zoning currently exists from the square and the surrounding areas to Jones Street,

Hampton Street, Caroline Street, and Harper Street. This ordinance will amend B-2 zoning to allow single family homes.

A motion was made by Councilor Bolt and seconded by Councilor Campbell to approve Ordinance 2-21-02. The motion was approved unanimously.

**CITY ATTORNEY TOM THOMPSON PRESENTING FIRST READING RESOLUTION 2-21-04
DECLARING BUILDING LOCATED 111 & 113 EAST LAURENS STREET AS AN ABANDONED
BUILDING**

City Attorney Thompson explained that this building belongs to Gary Bailey and that it is over 60% abandoned. This qualifies this property for the Abandoned Building Tax Credit.

A motion was made by Councilor Lowry and seconded by Councilor Campbell to approve Resolution 2-21-04. The motion was approved unanimously.

**COUNCILOR ALICIA SULLIVAN ADDRESSING COUNCIL CONCERNING THE NEED FOR A MASK
ORDINANCE WITH POSSIBLE ACTION**

Councilor Sullivan stated that she wanted to pose the question to council to see if they think that council has done enough providing mask ordinances for the city. She pointed out that there have been four additional strands of Covid-19 reported and she just wanted to have an open discussion about it. She believes that there a need for a mask ordinance.

Councilor Campbell stated that Covid is real and it is changing. It is important to encourage citizens to wear masks.

Councilor Miller would like to see more awareness. She believes that more emphasis should be placed on wearing masks in businesses.

Councilor Bolt stated that businesses should be the ones to police customers and to ensure their patrons where masks. He does not believe an ordinance is necessary. He commended Mayor Senn for his efforts in getting the word out about the importance of wearing a mask.

Councilor Lowry stated that he is not sure if the city is prepared for what would happen if council enacted an ordinance. He stated that he is not prepared to go the ordinance route.

Mayor Senn concluded the conversation by stating his appreciation for the discussion. Wearing a mask is something he feels strongly about and that people should undertake as a matter of responsibility. Endangering other people should not be an option. He believes that the most effective means is to change hearts and minds because the most exquisitely worded mask ordinance will be ineffective if we can't enforce it and we don't have the belief in the hearts and minds of the people in this city that what we are asking them to do is appropriate and necessary. The moment that there is not a police officer there in the line of sight to enforce it, if people don't think it's worthwhile, they will just ignore it.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Lowry and seconded by Councilor Sullivan to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

APPROVED:



NATHAN SENN, MAYOR

ATTEST:



LESLIE MATTISON, CITY CLERK AND TREASURER