



City of Claremont
Council Meeting Minutes
Regular Meeting
January 3, 2011 - 7:00pm
Claremont City Hall, Council Chambers

- Call to Order* Mayor Pro-Tem Timothy Lowrance called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The invocation was given by Colleen Sampson. Council Member James Stanley led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Attendance* Council Members Dale Sherrill, Shawn Brown, Timothy Lawrence, Nicky Setzer, James Stanley. Mayor David Morrow was absent.
- Office Staff- City Manager Doug Barrick, City Attorney Bob Grant, Administrative Support Clerk Mandy Buff and Henry Helton.
- Department Heads- Gerald Tolbert, Gary Sigmon & Tom Winkler.
- Others in Attendance: Gary Bost, Bobbie Chandler, Robert Chandler, Robert Winrow, Anita Mapes, Reverend Colleen Samson, Guy Guarino, Jr., Bill Shillito, Robert Smith, Dona Cowan, Suzanna Cowan, John Jones, Susan Tucker, Scott Ramsey, Jennifer Lowrance and Sam Ervin.
- Mayor's Report* In the absence of Mayor David Morrow, City Manager Doug Barrick, reported Mayor Morrow wished everyone a Happy New Year. City Manager Barrick also stated Mayor Morrow wanted to ensure the citizens of Claremont that the city is working to retain the businesses in town and to attract new business in the upcoming year. The Mayor and City Manager met with the business owners that had obtained damages from the tornado to encourage them to rebuild within the city limits of Claremont. City Manager Barrick also reported Mayor Morrow encouraged participation in next year's Old Time Christmas in Claremont.
- Approval of Minutes* A motion was made by Council Member Shawn Brown to accept the minutes from the December 6th council meeting. Council Member Dale Sherrill seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- Closed Session - A motion was made by Council Member Dale Sherrill to accept the closed session minutes from December 6th. Council Member Nicky Setzer seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- Presentation* Bill Shillito serves on the Catawba Valley Medical Foundation Board and he introduced Ron Lendler who has served twenty – two years on the board of trustees and the foundation board. Mr. Lendler is the Senior Vice President at BB&T. Mr. Lendler stated that Catawba Valley Medical Center provides excellent healthcare and that it has no tax support. Mr. Lendler introduced Guy Guarino from CVMC who is the VP of Com Serv and CDO (Vice President of Community Services and Chief Development Officer). CVMC is publicly owned and has 258 licensed beds. In the past year 1,638 babies were born at CVMC. CVMC is the 32nd Magnet Hospital in the nation & second in NC. CVMC has a Health First Center in Valley Hills Mall that offers a variety of health services to the public. CVMC is building a 32 million dollar patient building as well as a special care nursery.
- Public Hearing* A motion was made by Council Member James Stanley to open a Public Hearing. Council Member Dale Sherrill seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Henry Helton presented to the City Council what they plan to do to get the grant to improve Francis Sigman Park. There are two facilities already there and in tack. The number one priority is to put in a restroom. The facility was started in 1994 and they are more concerned in getting the two facilities operating. They have been using portable bathrooms. The number two project they put in because they get more points for the grant. The number two project is a greenway. Mr. Helton walked the proposed greenway and stated that there is 45 degree 30 foot angle that he thinks is too steep and he did not try to climb it. Mr. Helton stated that he did not want to take any soil away from another area because he was afraid of damaging another facility. So they are going to redirect the greenway up through the center and connect it to an existing path. The greenway will be right at half a mile all the way around. The third priority is the softball field and the land has already been landscape for it but it has not been approved for putting a fence around it. The fence is going to similar to the fencing a Bunker Hill High School, the same company that did Bunker Hill will be doing Francis Sigman's. Those are the main three projects the restrooms, the greenway and the softball field. There are other little projects that they'll be putting in. The existing dugouts have canvas roofs and they want to put more of a permanent roof. They will be adding a dugout with a permanent roof and also putting in beaches and bleachers. The football field is in good shape but it does not have any benches or bleachers and they will be putting some in also. There is an area that will be for future growth. Once they get the proposed area completed they in vision opening up an area for the high school cross country run at Francis Sigman Park. The grant total is \$140,000. They feel like they have good prices on their estimate and the state required them to put in a contingency which is 6%. Mr. Helton told the city council earlier that in the city park grant they got down to the end and had \$6,000 left over and the state said they did not want that money back, spend it. Mr. Helton hopes they can do that with this park when they get the go ahead they can do some little things. He invited the guest to speak for the project. Mr. Helton mentioned that Sam Erwin from the Council of Government was present that he was writing the grant for them. Mr. Helton also stated that the YMCA wanted to be a part of the scheduling because they only have one softball field for their adults. They can use the park for soccer or maybe flag football. He also stated that there where members present from the Bunker Hill Optimist and the Claremont Optimist. He mentioned that the idea wasn't to compete against each other but rather set up a schedule where everybody would have the opportunity to use the facility. One of the things that the council has eluded to is that we have this facility lets use it to its fullest capacity. Mr. Helton also states that they have more land that can be developed if they need to. He also stated that the grant is a three year grant and in four years they can apply for another grant and develop the other land if they need to. Mr. Helton invites any guest to speak. Mrs. Bobbie Chandler asked how many stalls were going to be in the bathrooms. Henry replied with at least four stalls. He also states Mrs. Chandler lives about half a mile from the park and she gets in her car with her neighbors and they travel to Newton to walk around South Park facility. She was very excited when they gave the plan to the Senior Citizens that there will be a facility close by. City Manager Doug Barrick interjected to encourage Mrs. Chandler to tell the council her comments and what she would like to see.

John Jones 4821 Rock Barn Extension, Claremont stated that he wasn't the President of the Bunker Hill Optimist club anymore, he was there speaking for the group. He stated that the facility the way it is now hasn't been very well used, not any reflection on the people that run the Claremont Optimist, it's just the number of kids. He states his son was playing with Bunker Hill and that's a little before the Optimist Club split. They first put the project up at the elementary school where they use to play at and it only had one field and that was a really nice project and some of those people were really dedicated to it at that time and hoped to get that project underway because that was a good chance for a good facility. Mr. Jones stated that the Bunker Hill Optimist Club has three fields and most people think it's the high school's fields but they're not. The fields border the high school and are the same size as the high schools, they are little league size fields. The Bunker Hill Optimist Club has 325 kids and they need practice facilities. They were talking to the city

about using those fields for practice. His concerns are who is going to maintain the facility and whose going to pay for the lights when they are used and the parking facility isn't very good. At his optimist club they have almost no parking, if it wasn't for the high school they wanted be able to exist. You have everyone from the county because the county has no facilities. Everybody has their own Newton, Hickory, and Maiden. If it wasn't for the Optimist Clubs the kids wouldn't have anywhere to play unless they went to one of these places. The Bunker Hill Optimist Club is trying to build their teams up. In 2009 their boys 12 and under team won the state championship. They went to Atlanta, to the South Eastern Regional's. Their girl's team went to Richmond the same year. This past year the same group of girls went to Florida to the South Eastern Regional's and finished third, which is good for a little group picking from 3 and 4 teams. They are competing with people from Matthews and people from Union County which have 25 to 30 teams in just one age group. They've done real well with what they've had so far. All of theirs have been done through hard work and a lot of hot dogs and hamburgers, parents with sign up money. County gives no kind of funding. They have built all of their fields and they have three of the nicest fields in this area, actually the state, that's connected with some kind of parks and recreation. They can do a lot more improvements but by far Francis Sigman Park would them a really good place to practice. They almost need somebody paid to keep up their facility. Mr. Jones thinks that the proposed would be good for a walking track. His concern is parking. He states that the parking needs to be accessible to the softball field. He mentions that he plays too and that not a lot of money should be spent on bleachers because most of the people that go to the games are people that are playing. He says to put the money into the actual field itself. You can buy small bleachers. He states that a football field is going to be a lot of up keep. Who's going to maintain all of it? Is the city going to since it is the city's property. Around the walking trail is going to have to be mowed. He has concerns about the lights at the fields. The main thing is going to be maintaining it.

Henry Helton stated he talked to Tom Winkler, City of Claremont Public Works Director, about the Francis Sigman Park project.

Anita Mapes, district officer for the Optimist Clubs in Catawba County, stated Francis Sigman's dream was to develop the park into a facility where the youth would be able to play and there has been a lot more work done on it. It needs a lot more and the city is willing to help us do that. We also need some community people to come up and join our optimist club, to help build and be a friend of optimist or a friend of youth. Than we can really get this really going really well. There are other programs that the optimist does other than just sports. We can make a soccer field out of the football and have a football/soccer field and use the youth and children or kids, older teens and adults to be able to play some tournaments or baseball games at the park and yes the bathrooms are the first thing. Porta-Jon's are not easy to use. So basically the optimist club Bunker Hill along with Claremont who is still surviving as of right now but we are looking at making it a bigger and better club again, also to get more kids into our program. We did have two teams in the fall play baseball there plus they went to Mt. View & some of the other recreation centers in Mt. View and a couple of other areas. So we need some help and along with getting the grant which would be a big help. But we can use some people that can join the optimist would be a big help also. And I feel that we could make it a go. But it does need to be used for more than it is being used for right now. And with the changes that the city has put into the grant it could be used to its fullest potential. Thank You.

Henry Helton stated using it to its fullest potential, we want to make it a community park not just a park for the county. Right above up here is a housing development, all down this road here of housing development is another one down here about a quarter of a mile down where these people can come use this facility and eventually maybe we can put picnic areas up in here for people to use. Robert Smith you've been a part of this from day one you want to say anything?

Robert Smith stated my name is Robert Smith and of course I live in the Shangri La and I was actually the one that went forth to Mr. Sigman and ask him for, actually I asked him to sell us property for the Claremont Optimist Club to develop into a park. Most of you actually know how he gave the first piece of land, this land here, and then later he gave us this section in here, and I believe if we will double check the property line right there I believe that line goes straight across. I've personally put over one hundred and fifty cars in that parking lot. But it is a worthwhile project and I'm glad to see the city proceeding with it and personally I'll do anything I can to help in that project. This area right in here has already been perked at one time for septic tank. I think I gave Mr. Winkler and Mr. Helton copies of the permits on that so it actually has already perked to put a bathroom facility on there. And of course one of the requirements is going to be is that you have a paved parking area for handicap at that bathroom facility. So that's why I say that this area right here is an ideal place for if you want to call it a picnic area but parking area also. There is a driveway that already goes into that property off from up in here, up in there. Cause a culvert is already there. And I know what else you want to know about.

Sam Erwin stated last year the authority had about eight million dollars to award. It's down like two years ago they had sixteen million dollars. Their revenue pool is based on license tags they get a percentage of those. So if the economy goes so does part of revenues. Applications are due January thirty-first and as always they are going to be very competitive. I know there are several different applicants in our region that are going to be applying. You never know until you apply. They look at scoring, they look at geographic distribution, how the applicants have done on previous grants. I know Henry done a great job on that other grant which will be helpful. And a lot of it is the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Board Members. I always recommend people that apply to send letters to the board members, invite them out to look at the park and you know it could always help. But they'll make a decision probably in May to allocate seventy-five percent of the funds that they have available and then the other twenty-five percent would be in July probably. And you know if you get funded you would probably get a contract maybe next October then you have three years to complete it. The biggest thing the purpose of this meeting is to get public input and to get you points scoring wise and I know Henry's done a couple of meetings with civic groups which helps get scoring also. There'll be a certification board that the town will sign with the application and it's pretty cut and dry from that. We had Luanne Bryant from the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund come out, she met with Henry and me. And she liked the park and the idea of what we are trying to do and everything so we've been working closely with her on that. That's pretty much in a nut shell what that's all about.

Henry Helton stated some of the other projects we didn't talk about we want to put scoreboards out here. There are no scoreboards for these. We want to put a scoreboard here and we have budgeted a scoreboard here. We don't know whether we're going to come out with that one yet or not. We have three years to develop this. When you have games somebody needs to keep the score so we're looking at getting really inexpensive scores table to put at each facility. We've already taken Mr. Jones advice before we met Mr. Jones, we're going to have the minimum amount of bleachers, we're not going to expect a large crowd at any of these games. Just enough for mom and dad to sit down on. That's basically all the project we have. There are thirteen different areas listed here and a lot of them overlap. Like the fence here and the fence here are all in the same budget item. But we're not going to do this part until we get done with all the construction driving in and out so we'll do that later. Gate it. A gate here and a gate here and we'll use the old Georgia power system of your group have a lock so if you leave it open we'll know who left it open. That's basically it Mr. Mayor.

Council Member Tim Lowrance stated thank you Henry for the information and thank you folks for making your comments. As we said this a state parks grant and Henry has worked on getting the pricing together so we hope that we can do good with that.

Citizen's Comments A motion was made to close the public hearing by Council Member Dale Sherrill. Second was made by Council Member Shawn Brown and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business None.

New Business City Manager Doug Barrick proposed to finalize the date for the council budget retreat for February 26th. A motion was made by Council Member Shawn Brown to have the council budget retreat on February 26th. Second was made by Council Member Nicky Setzer and the motion passed unanimously. The retreat will be at the Claremont Fire Department from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. It is open to the public and media.

There was a budget transfer to fix the heat pump at city hall.

A motion was made by Council Member Shawn Brown to transfer the estimated amount from the Powell Bill Fund to the Powell Bill Balance for additional work required by NCDOT in order for them to take over Hart Drive. A seconded was made by Council Member Nicky Setzer and the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Council Member Nicky Setzer to approve the draft Pierre Foods Economic Development Agreement. A seconded was made by Council Member Shawn Brown and the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Council Member Shawn Brown to approve the equipment lease agreement with Pierre Foods. A seconded was made by Council Member Dale Sherrill and the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Council Member Nicky Setzer to approve the surplus property to be sold on govdeals.com. A seconded was made by Dale Sherrill and the motion passed unanimously.

A letter was written by Abbey Moose requesting support from the City Council by donating money to aid her in her trip to Europe this summer through the People to People Ambassador Program. A motion was made by Council Member James Stanley to donate \$500. A seconded was made by Nicky Setzer and the motion passed unanimously.

Departmental Reports A motion was made by Council Member Shawn Brown to change the February City Council meeting to February 8th due to Council Members being absent. A seconded was made by Nicky Setzer and the motion passed unanimously.

Youth Council- Council Member Shawn Brown reported they are doing a fundraiser which consists of a taking a coupon into Boxcar Grille On January 24th and present the coupon to your waiter/waitress and Boxcar will donate 10% of the bill to the Youth Council.

Fire Department- Gary Sigmon reported shortly after they finished the training exercise on Main Street they came and cleaned up the debris. Total calls for the year was 327.

Police Department- Chief Gerald Tolbert reported there was a break in at Dollar General. They have the video from Dollar General and the suspects were very professional. There have been four cars stolen in the past year and all were Hondas and they have been recovered. There were no major accidents at the Claremont Christmas Parade.

Public Works- Tom Winkler reported during the snow and ice there was a wreck that took out the electronics to the water tower. He thanked Gray Bost and Gerald Tolbert for officers assisting with the water tower.

Planning- Doug Barrick reported Lori is back. She started back the third week of December. He also mentioned the applications for new businesses are picking up.

Recreation- Henry Helton introduced Susan Tucker who will be introducing more recreation projects.

Appearance- Council Member James Stanley reported they judged Christmas decorations and awarded five communities. The emergency notification group is going to get together to pick out emergency signs for each community.

*City
Managers
Report*

Veterans Memorial- Henry Helton reported they have applications for the spaces on the memorial. The starting goal is to sell at least 75 spots.

*Closed
Session*

City Manager Doug Barrick reported the 2010 census states 1,123 people live in Claremont and 1,498 people live in the city limits. The county gives a kickback for recycling. The surplus will on govdeals.com in the next week or two. He also mentioned that the truck route signs are being reordered because Mom and Pop's is shutting down.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Council Member Nicky Setzer to go into closed session to discuss the Mom and Pop's. Second was made by Council Member Shawn Brown and the motion was passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Council Member Nicky Setzer to adjourn the meeting. Second was made by Councilmember Shawn Brown and the motion passed unanimously.

Adopted this the 8th day of February, 2011

APPROVED FEBRUARY 8, 2011