

**CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
CITY OF GEORGETOWN, SC
SEPTEMBER 17, 2009**

Notices of this meeting have been made in accordance with the 1976 Code of Laws of South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

A City Council Workshop was held this date in the Council Chambers at City Hall with Mayor Lynn Wood Wilson presiding.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

	Mayor Lynn Wood Wilson	
Mayor Pro Tem Brendon M. Barber		Councilmember Clarence C. Smalls
Councilmember Paige B. Sawyer, III		Councilmember Peggy P. Wayne
Councilmember Jack M. Scoville, Jr.		

Councilmember Rudolph A. Bradley was absent from the Workshop.

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr. Chris Eldridge, City Administrator
Mrs. Elise Crosby, City Attorney
Ms. Ann U. Mercer, City Clerk

DEPARTMENT HEADS:

Mr. Paul A. Gardner, Chief of Police
Mr. Alan Loveless, Electric Utility Manager
Mrs. Jessica Miller, Finance Director
Mr. Lane Mixon, Public Water Utilities Director
Mr. Steve Stack, Assistant Director of Development
Mr. Joey Tanner, Fire Chief
Mr. Keith Wilson, Keep Georgetown Beautiful Executive Director

NEWS MEDIA

Georgetown Times – Mr. Scott Harper

Mayor Wilson opened the City Council Workshop at 4:30 PM.

Mayor Wilson asked that all electronic devices and cell phones be turned off or changed to vibrate.

HR Director, Mrs. Debra Mumford, stated that during a Council Workshop in July Mr. Chris Eldridge presented an overview of several revised personnel policies. Council expressed a desire to change some of the revisions and those changes are being presented for consideration at this time. The Communication Policy is adding language as far as cell phones assigned by the City and employee personal cell phones usage. The Dual Employment is a new policy being presented.

Mrs. Mumford referred Council to Policy #4, Filling of Vacancies. Councilmember Wayne referenced number 3, Examinations, and asked if the word *may* should be changed to *shall* in the first and last sentences. Mrs. Mumford said the City's labor attorney had reviewed all language in the policies being presented. Councilmember Wayne questioned the process in number 5, Selection of new employees. Mrs. Mumford said once the Department Heads go through their selection process they send a form to her which she sends to the City Administrator and Mayor for formal approval. The labor attorney asked staff to add language that the form be sent to the Administrator and Mayor because of our form of government. Councilmember Smalls said the City has had this form of government for a long time and doesn't know why the attorney feels the Mayor and the Administrator have to approve the selection. He wants to go on record that he does not agree. Mrs. Mumford referenced number 7, Regular status, and said there were questions about the *full-time* employees and explained that part-time employees could be given regular status but don't qualify for benefits unless they work 30 hours or more.

Mrs. Mumford said because of safety reasons a great deal of input was added by Cindi Howard to the Vehicle Management Program. She noted under 5, Restrictions on use of City Vehicles, g, h and i and d, Operator responsibilities, item f were issues discussed in the July workshop which have been added to the policy. Councilmember Wayne referred to 4, Vehicle management, item d and asked if *public* street should be changed *any* street. Councilmember Smalls referred to item 4, family members being transported while the employee is directly in route to or from work, under 5, Restrictions on use of City vehicles, and asked if this will be

Call to Order

**Proposed
Revisions to
Employee
Personnel Policies**

a part of the revised policy. Mrs. Howard said the item was struck through, but left in the policy, because she did not know the consensus from Council at the July workshop. She understood several members wanted this removed but didn't know what the majority wanted. Councilmember Smalls stated the City has been doing this for years without any problems and he did not approve of removing it from the policy. Mayor Wilson said he was concerned about the liability on the City. Councilmember Wayne said she did not have a problem with this and agreed with Councilmember Smalls. Chief Joey Tanner referred to 4, Vehicle management, item d and said State law exempts fire trucks from state license plates. Councilmember Wayne asked if this should be added. Mrs. Howard said she did not know if that necessarily has to be in the policy because it is a State law. Councilmember Wayne referred to i under 5, Restrictions on use of City Vehicles and asked if an employee must pull off the road every time he or she receives or makes a call. Mrs. Mumford said this was added for safety purposes. Mrs. Howard said this would not apply to public safety. Mrs. Mumford reiterated this is to protect the City in the event an employee is using a cell phone and causes a major accident and we are sued.

Mrs. Mumford referred Council to the Payment of Wages policy, 9, On-Call Pay. Currently the on-call pay is \$100 per week. At the July workshop the proposed policy was to change that amount to \$50 per week for on-call and employees who are called out and earn \$50 or above for their on call hours will not receive a stipend for that week. Several members of Council wanted this removed. Mrs. Mumford said if the policy is approved tonight, the following sentence will be eliminated: 'employees who are called out and earn \$50 or above for their on call hours will not receive a stipend for that week' and they will receive the \$50. Councilmember Wayne said she talked with some of the on-call employees who receive the \$100 a week which averages out to about 70 cents an hour. She said they can't go anywhere the week they are on call because they have to be able to respond within 15 minutes of a call. If we reduce this to \$50, that's 35 cents an hour for a week; they are on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. When an employee is on call during the holidays they can't visit with family if they live very far away. She offered two options, either leave it at \$100 or when the call is received, forward the complaint to the Department Head and they can call the employee who takes care of that particular problem, whether it is a meter or a light pole, and let them come in and make the repair. Councilmember Wayne said she does not agree with cutting the \$100 to \$50. When asked by Mayor Wilson,

Mr. Alan Loveless said, as part of their job, the line technicians are on a rotation. Councilmember Smalls asked Mr. Loveless if his employees have to be on call. Mr. Loveless said before on-call candidates are hired they are told they are expected to live where they can get here within 15 minutes. Lengthy discussions continued. Mrs. Mumford said number 10, Negligence while using City Vehicle, was added because there was language added in the Vehicle Maintenance about damages to city vehicles. If the money is going to be collected from employees, we have to have it in our Payment of Wages. Mr. Eldridge said there was a budgetary impact, that is why we did this on the on-call. We are going to run a deficit and we need to make it up somewhere. This is why we looked at no pay cuts, no furloughs...

Mrs. Mumford presented updates to the Communication Policy to include cell phones. This includes monitoring computers or cell phones assigned by the City. The Cell Phone/Wireless Devices relates to the Vehicle Management. Councilmember Wayne said she is not in favor of people talking on the phone when they are just riding around...text messaging absolutely not. She wanted to know if an employee is going to be required to pull off the road to answer the cell phone: will they just use the radios? If we are going to use the radios, then we don't need cell phones at all. She also asked if employees who use their personal cell phones for city business are reimbursed. Mayor Wilson wanted to know why they are using their cell phone. Councilmember Wayne said they have not been issued a cell phone by the City. Mayor Wilson said not everybody gets a telephone with the City and they don't need to be using their personal telephone on City business. Mrs. Mumford said most employees are assigned radios so if they don't have a City cell phone they can use their radios to communicate with other employees. She referenced the language under NOTE: Use of cell phones for personal conversations is restricted to non-duty time, such as breaks, lunch, etc and in designated break areas. Please do use cell phone to call for help or to help others in an emergency. Mrs. Howard stated the intent of this is for safety, it's not targeted toward city employees. This is a nation-wide effort. Discussions continued.

Mrs. Mumford presented a proposed new policy: Dual Employment. This would require employees to report their secondary employment to their Department Head. This would give the Department Head an opportunity to review and ensure that an employee's secondary employment is not likely to conflict or cause safety concerns. Mr.

Eldridge stated it is not unusual to have this policy.

COUNCILMEMBER SAWYER MOVED TO ADJOURN THE CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP, SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER WAYNE AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 6-0.

Adjourn Council Workshop

The City Council Workshop was adjourned at 5:17 PM.

Ann U. Mercer
City Clerk

DATE APPROVED: 10/15/09
VERIFYING INITIALS: _____