

Minutes
City Council Meeting February 15, 2021
Mauldin City Hall - Council Chambers
7:00 p.m.

Members present were Mayor Terry Merritt via Zoom, Council members Taft Matney, Carol King, Jason Kraeling, Diane Kuzniar, Dale Black, and Michael Reynolds.

Other Members: Brandon Madden, City Administrator and John Duggan, City Attorney via Zoom

1. Call to Order- Mayor Merritt

- a. Invocation- Councilwoman King
- b. Pledge of Allegiance- Councilwoman King
- c. Welcome Mayor Terry Merritt

2. Proclamations and Presentations- None

3. Reading and Approval of Minutes

- a. City Council Meeting: January 19, 2021

The minutes were approved by acclamation.

4. Public Comment

- a. Robert Adams: I live at 907 Fargo Street. I would like to speak on the resolution for Butler Road. Everyone knows that alternate 1 is probably the best way to go, but I am against it. The reason is I don't want those people to lose their homes. Also, I am against it because under Title 6 of the Civil Rights Act, if federal money is involved, anyone can file a complaint. It's one thing to be for the proclamation, but the SCDOT can do anything. The proclamation is not going to do any good. I think you ought to do a proclamation saying you don't want to see anyone hurt and you don't want to see Butler Road rerouted. People will get hurt.

The way to do this to hurt nobody is to leave things alone. If they must put a stop light on Old Mill, so what. If it slows down traffic, so what. A lot of us want traffic slowed down. They keep saying they can't put a stop sign up because of the stop lights. That is not true. There are stop signs all over this town near stop lights. I can give you two examples right now. Augusta Road where Faris crosses, and the next road after that. There are stop lights all over this town. SCDOT is not going to consider this proclamation, but they may consider not rerouting Butler. That is what I urge you to do. Mr. Mayor, I appreciate your time and everybody's time. Thank you.

- b. Karen Conrad: Hi. I am one of two residents at 905 Fargo. We are directly behind the Taylor Farm. We always understood that the area would be developed at some point. If you are putting a bicycle route, which I understand is part of the Swamp Rabbit Trail, I don't understand the point. I always thought it would be part of the residual strip at Gilder Creek. I bicycle, and I would rather see something attractive. Doesn't that make more sense, instead of being so close to the traffic on East Butler? That doesn't make too much sense to me.

The other thing is when I tell people they are planning to infill and put a cul-de-sac there, but our police and fire are there. What does that do for the neighborhood as far as adding time to emergencies? I consider that to be rather important. It is important to us. That is a concern.

You are infilling Bethel and then sending Fargo out this way. Right? Then there will be a new stop light. Those things are expensive. I have priced them. When I show people that, they say why are they doing that? Are they going to put in new bridges?

There is a lot of water there. There is water under. I don't know how many of you have looked at that, but we all know about the flooding issues. My question is what kind of traffic... if you expand the road that a way and infill Bethel/Butler intersection, how heavy will the traffic be there? We have had sinkholes before. Can we really have that thought out? It is a large body of water.

My other concern is in terms of the time we have had for public comments. What a horrible day this is weather-wise and with Covid. I work at FedEx and we just lost one of our co-workers. We have a lockdown and we know that traffic is not getting better, it has gotten worse. I am glad I am not a route driver right now, thankfully. But who do we want to be in this town? It seems to me, we have more traffic, what happens to small businesses here? I understand we have improvements on Main Street and more is coming, it is great, but Butler itself, is it going to be an afterthought with more traffic? That is my concern. The public comments period, you should extend that.

And there are families with younger children. Have I extended my time? Ok. The public comment extension I believe is essential. And I would like to get a response back to my two letters to Casey Jones and her team in Columbia. I FedExed them two days ago.

- c. Mike Edwards: I am Mike Edwards. Karen is my wife, and we live at 905 Fargo Street. We need your help. We are asking for support. There are other alternatives to this rerouting of Bethel Drive. One of these is a rotary where Bethel meets Butler. I would like to echo the thought of the Swamp Rabbit Trail being along Gilder Creek. That would be awesome. It would be out of the traffic. There are a lot of different things going through my mind and I know you are not the people to talk about this with. But we need a lot more time. This will wipe out three families and take half of my backyard. We have put thousands of dollars into this house and I am going to be out on my deck looking at Bethel Drive. We bought that house because of the farm there and the cows. My little boy used to go out there and play with them. He thought they were bulls.

Things are changing, and that is good. I love this. I think this is awesome. People ask me where is downtown Mauldin. You know? There is a little here, and a little there, but we have some direction now. I know that is part of the reason you want to get this taken care of now. Not you, but DOT. I like the idea of widening the road. I sit on the back deck and hear sirens, motorcycles, and it is all happening so quickly. Now they want to tear down three houses and mine might be one of them. I have a business I operate out of my home. I pay taxes, I have a business license. There are a lot of considerations on the table for us anyway. With that, I am going to shut up, but thank you for your time.

5. Report from City Administrator

Mr. Madden had no report.

Pat Pomeroy from the Chamber sent over a report. She said one of the most important things the Chamber needs to do now is reaching out to businesses and this will be happening on a weekly basis. Ms. Pomeroy will be going out with Cristina Ortiz this week to meet with some of our businesses.

The Chamber is working on business renewals. The chamber will never drop a business because they cannot pay their renewal. The chamber is working on the directory and should have it ready by the end of May. The chamber also has a new website. The Welcome to Mauldin page will be the most important part of the website.

6. Report from Standing Committees

- a. Finance and Policy (Chairperson Reynolds)- Chairman Reynolds reminded Council that the goals workshop is February 25th, and the first budget workshop is March 11th.
- b. Public Safety (Chairperson King)
- c. Public Works (Chairperson Kraeling)
- d. Economic Planning and Development (Chairperson Matney)
- e. Building Codes (Chairperson Kuzniar)
- f. Recreation (Chairperson Black)

7. Unfinished Business

Ordinances – Second and Final Reading

- a. An ordinance to provide for the annexation of property Owned by Nolan Max Cox, and located at 1140 E. Butler Road by one hundred percent petition method; and to establish a zoning classification of C-1, commercial, for said property

Action: Chairwoman Kuzniar made a motion to pass this ordinance on second and final reading. Councilman Black seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (7-0).

- b. An ordinance to approve an amendment to the infrastructure reimbursement agreement between the City of Mauldin and Centerpoint Land, Inc.

Action: Chairman Matney made a motion to pass this ordinance on second and final reading. Councilman Kraeling seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (7-0).

8. New Business

Standing Committee Items

a. Amendment to Standing Committee Rules

Action: Chairman Reynolds made a motion to pass this ordinance on second and final reading. Councilwoman King seconded the motion.

Action: Councilwoman King made a motion for an amendment to strike “in Council Chambers” on page 78 and just have the location be Mauldin City Hall to have more flexibility. Chairman Reynolds seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote on the amendment was unanimous (7-0).

Councilman Matney asked if the provision for meeting monthly at city hall would preclude any special meetings off-site. John Duggan answered that a provision should be added to allow for off-site meetings.

Action: Councilman Matney made a motion to amend the original motion to add a provision to allow for off-site meetings. Councilwoman Kuzniar seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote on the amendment was unanimous (7-0).

Vote: The vote on the motion as amended was unanimous (7-0).

b. Reimbursement Resolution

Action: Chairman Reynolds made a motion to adopt a resolution to express the intention of the City to be reimbursed for certain costs for certain public improvements with the proceeds of tax-exempt obligation. Councilwoman Kuzniar seconded the motion.

Chairman Reynolds said the City, on behalf of the FSA, requested a millage increase from Greenville County Council to assist in funding the FSA Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), specifically, the construction of the new fire station and the purchase of 3 fire apparatuses. Greenville County Council provided a millage increase for the FSA and issued a \$3.3M bond in FY2021 attendant to the CIP for the FSA. The City initiated the purchase of the 3 fire apparatuses on December 10, 2020, using the \$3.3M bond funds from Greenville County. The purchase totaled \$2.6M which was under the CIP amount of \$2.8M.

Since the City Council has yet to issue its debt to fund its portion of the CIP for the FSA, approval of a Resolution is being requested to express the intent of the City to be reimbursed for the expenditures which occurred prior to the debt being issued.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (7-0).

c. Architectural/Engineering Services

Action: Chairwoman King made a motion to approve Stewart Cooper Newell Architects to serve as the Architectural/Engineering Services for the New Fire Station. Councilman Matney seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (7-0).

d. Resolution to Approve Construction Contract

Action: Chairman Kraeling made a motion to approve a resolution to enter into a Construction Contract with Cely Construction. Councilman Black seconded the motion.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (7-0).

9. Committee of the Whole

a. A Resolution to Support the Bethel Drive/Old Mill Road Intersection Alternative 1 Design for the East Butler Road Improvements Project

Action: Councilman Matney made a motion to consider this item under the informal method with Councilwoman King seconding.

Vote: The vote was unanimous (7-0).

Action: Councilman Kraeling made a motion to adopt the resolution to support Alternative 1. Councilman Black seconded the motion.

Councilwoman Kuzniar asked if the Council could ask DOT to consider a traffic circle. She said that may be the least disruptive to the neighborhoods. City Administrator Madden said that could be added to the resolution. Whether or not SCDOT would consider that as an option would be up to them.

Councilman Black agreed that he doesn't want to see anyone displaced. No matter which way this goes, it will inconvenience someone. SCDOT could overrule us on any option because it is their road. Council could let DOT know the opinion of the City and hope they will listen, but that is up to DOT. Councilman Black said alternative one would be the least invasive to our citizens.

Mayor Merritt said SCDOT went through their 30-day public involvement period. Everyone had a chance to post comments and criticism. Mayor Merritt said he thinks the involvement period was too short. The City has had ongoing discussions with SCDOT. This is a long overdue project. DOT has ignored the maintenance on Butler Road for many years which has resulted in the state it is in now.

There was a GPATS study finalized in 2016 that has been sent to DOT. They are aware of what the City is asking for. We won't get everything we want, but discussions continue. Alternative

1 is the best solution for a parallel corridor. He would like to see Council stay behind the resolution and alternative one. There have been meetings requested with Christy Hall, the Transportation Secretary, and she is aware of our thought processes. There is a process to go through if there is a potential dislocation of minority-based residents.

Councilman Kraeling said he would like to keep this simple. He has asked about the possibility of a traffic circle and was hoping someone would have an answer for him. He thinks it would be best if we support alternative 1 and not dilute the resolution with anything else.

Action: The vote for the resolution was unanimous (7-0).

10. Public Comment

- a. Robert Adams: This concerns the Alternate 1. I think it is the best way to go but we are going to have to get some of the trailer residents to move and they may move for a financial incentive. I am in contact with some of those people and they are not opposed to moving, but they are sort of trapped. They are not rich people, but they do own their trailers. We would need 13-15 to move but DOT would have to pay to move the trailers to the eastern side of the park. There are some older trailers over there and I don't know if they are lived in. You only need 15 out of 43. I will do everything I can to talk to my contacts to see if we can get that many to move. I want to stress this shouldn't hurt anybody.

Putting a new bridge outside of the Taylor farm on Bethel. You have a 36" culvert plus two little ones. The little stream that crosses at Fargo has two 6-foot culverts. Dual culverts. I am talking about the one behind CVS. I don't know what CVS is going to think about losing two street accesses. I am not sure they even know. I am trying to contact them.

Putting in a second streetlight at Owens, I said Owens, I meant Old Mill. We don't need that. We have lived without it for 20 something years. Or make it illegal to turn left off of East Butler or Old Mill. Anyway, thank you for your time.

11. Council Requests- None

Mayor Merritt asked Mr. Madden to confirm with DOT that Alternative 1 showed an impact on up to 10 mobile home users.

12. Adjournment- Mayor Merritt adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Miller
Municipal Clerk