



Richland County Council

DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES COMMITTEE

July 28, 2020 – 5:00 PM

Zoom Video Conference

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Allison Terracio, Chair; Jim Manning, Calvin Jackson and Chakisse Newton

OTHERS PRESENT: Bill Malinowski, Dalhi Myers, Michelle Onley, Clayton Voignier, John Thompson, Ashiya Myers, Leonardo Brown, Angela Weathersby, Stacey Hamm, Elizabeth McLean, Liz McDonald, Brian Crooks, Dale Welch, Tariq Hussain, Jennifer Wladischkin, Michael Niermeier, Sandra Haynes, Dwight Hanna, Katie Marr and Ashley Powell

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Ms. Terracio called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 PM.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a. June 23, 2020 – Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Mr. Manning, to approve the minutes as distributed.

In Favor: Terracio, Manning, Jackson and Newton

Not Present: Kennedy

The vote in favor was unanimous.

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Mr. Brown noted that Item 4(b): “CDBG-DR Rehabilitation Project Change Order” will need to be taken up in Executive Session.

Ms. Newton inquired why Item 6(a): “I move to direct the County Attorney to work with the County Administrator to research and draft an absentee landlord ordinance. The ordinance should provide potential remedies for individuals who violate county ordinances and provide, via supplemental documentation, a comprehensive review of the legal impacts [potentially] associated with the adoption of such an ordinance. [NEWTON and DICKERSON]” was listed under “Items Pending Analysis”.

Ms. A. Myers responded this item did not move forward during the last meeting. There have been communications from the County Attorney’s Office, to members of the committee, regarding information they needed clarification on, based upon that the item is not ready for committee consideration.

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to adopt the agenda as amended.

In Favor: Terracio, Jackson and Newton

Opposed: Manning

Not Present: Kennedy

The vote was in favor.

4. **ITEMS FOR ACTION**

- a. I propose the change of the Animal Care Officer's official title to that of "Animal Welfare Officer" within our County's ordinances. "Animal Care Officer" tends to be a bit confusing for those in the public who do not fully understand what they do, and "Animal Control Officer" tends to have derogatory connotation. The field of animal welfare/care has dramatically changed within recent years. A title of "Animal Welfare Officer" offers a broader understanding of what their duties entail. [MALINOWSKI, DICKERSON, JACKSON, MANNING and McBRIDE] – Ms. Terracio stated staff's recommendation is to change the division name of "Animal Care" to "Animal Care and Control." Change the title of "Animal Care Supervisor" to "Animal Care and Control Supervisor." Change the title of "Animal Care Officer" to "Animal Care and Control Officer." The title changes will also be made within the County's ordinance.

Mr. Manning moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to forward to Council with a recommendation to approve staff's recommendation.

Mr. Malinowski stated the recommended action is exactly what his motion was trying to get rid away from. Staff has taken the two titles that he cited as being confusing and derogatory, and put them together to make "Animal Care and Control." The intent was to make it "Animal Welfare Officer" as was explained.

Mr. Manning withdrew his motion.

Ms. Newton stated the way she read the briefing document was that the proposed name change would make the name consistent with industry standards.

Mr. Brown stated in the Richland County environment, and in his previous environment, the department is referred to as Animal Control, and Animal Control Officer is the industry standard. As an example, one of the requirements for service animals is that the owner must maintain care and control, which is important because care communicates the importance of making sure the animal is taken care of, but control means there is a level of responsibility. What we found is that when individuals do not recognize Animal Control personnel as officers of the law the way the individual responds to them can be very dramatic. It is important to give the personnel the appropriate title that reflects they have a level of authority, and have a level of concern. In speaking to the Director, and utilizing his experience, "Animal Control" or "Animal Care" would be more appropriate.

Mr. Malinowski stated the Human Resource Director noted the most common job sector title for services provided by Animal Care is "Animal Services". Other commonly used names include: Animal Care, Animal Control, Animal Welfare and Public Animal Welfare Services. The titles he suggested in his motion are those that are also used, and the one most common is Animal Services. The fact that the field of animal welfare has dramatically changed, as they do more than pick up strays. They also conduct humane investigations into animal welfare; seek justice for abused, neglected and abandoned animals; go into court to face violators; and go into homes to remove animals whose owners are deceased. Therefore, he stands by his motion.

Mr. Jackson moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to table this item in committee, return it to staff to have them look specifically at what Councilman Malinowski has suggested, and resubmit it at a later time.

In Favor: Terracio, Manning, Jackson and Newton

Not Present: Kennedy

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- b. CDBG-DR Rehabilitation Project Change Order – Mr. Manning moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to go into Executive Session.

In Favor: Terracio, Manning, Jackson and Newton

Not Present: Kennedy

The vote in favor was unanimous.

***The Committee went into Executive Session at approximately 5:20 PM
and came out at approximately 5:38 PM***

Ms. Newton moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to come out of Executive Session.

In Favor: Terracio, Jackson and Newton

Not Present: Kennedy

The vote in favor was unanimous.

Mr. Jackson inquired if there is any action needed from the committee, if this item will be taken up by Council at tonight's Special Called Meeting.

Mr. Jackson moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to forward to Council without a recommendation.

In Favor: Terracio, Manning, Jackson and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

- c. County Attorney's Office – Request to Close a County Road – Murray Tract – Mr. Manning moved, seconded by Ms. Newton, to forward this item to Council with a recommendation to approve petitioner's request to close the subject road and direct Legal to answer the lawsuit accordingly.

In Favor: Terracio, Jackson and Newton

The vote in favor was unanimous.

5. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

- a. I move to evaluate affordable housing options to include the option of establishing an Affordable Housing Trust Fund for Richland County as a benefit to the public. Housing is considered to be "affordable" when 30% or less of one's income is spent on housing and utilities. In Richland County, nearly half of renters pay more than a third of their income on rent and utilities [TERRACIO] – Ms. Powell noted Mr. Brian Crooks, Comprehensive Planner, who is leading an internal work group around affordable housing and Ms. Katie Marr, with the Assessor's Office, were on the line.

Mr. Crooks stated they have provided a background overview of the current atmosphere of affordable housing in the County. They are looking at housing needs, and what policies and

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programs the County currently has underway. In addition to that, the briefing documentation explores potential barriers, as well as identifies some potential actions or options the County could pursue in tackling affordable housing.

Ms. Newton commended staff on the information they put together. She inquired if there are any items that staff considers being close to being completed, or significant progress has been made.

Mr. Crooks responded the next steps/action presented here are what staff has identified as being "low hanging fruit". The group has gone through and looked at the various actions and what steps would still need to be taken.

Ms. Powell stated today they are looking for a general consensus from the committee regarding the establishment of a committee as the next step. Each of the options the work group has presented need to be fleshed out further.

Ms. Newton noted the City of Columbia has a similar task force that is already underway. She inquired if staff sees any benefit to participating with the City of Columbia's group, either separately or in lieu of ours.

Ms. Powell responded that multi-jurisdictional collaboration is the best path forward, but she also thinks it is important that an internal group be convened to establish what the County's priorities are.

Ms. Newton inquired as to what staff's next step will be. (i.e. proposed make up of committee; charter).

Ms. Powell responded the next steps would be similar to what Councilwoman Newton outlined. They intend this to be an iterative, so there could be conversation with the committee. The plan is to bring this back to committee at the September committee meeting.

Mr. Jackson stated he believes it would be helpful to have some predetermined goals before the committee formulates itself. We have had experiences where without that, depending on who was on the committee, they can take it over, and it becomes something different than we intended it to become. For example, the Transportation Penny Advisory Committee (TPAC). They thought they were a governing organization, as opposed to an advisory committee. They thought that in order for things to happen in Transportation it had to get their approval. He would hate for us to lose control of Ms. Terracio's desire to get this accomplished, because he fully supports her. He suggested adding the Community Relations Council. He believes that organization needs to be represented, as they represent the community in various ways.

Ms. Terracio stated, for full disclosure, she has been invited to the City of Columbia's meetings.

Mr. Manning inquired how the City of Columbia is viewing Ms. Terracio's participation on their committee. (i.e. D&S Chair).

Ms. Terracio responded she does not know if she has a formal role, but she will provide an answer to Mr. Manning's question.

6. **ITEMS PENDING ANALYSIS: NO ACTION REQUIRED**

- a. I move to direct the County Attorney to work with the County Administrator to research and draft an absentee landlord ordinance. The ordinance should provide potential remedies for individuals who violate county ordinances and provide, via supplemental documentation, a comprehensive review of the legal impacts [potentially] associated with the adoption of such an ordinance [NEWTON and DICKERSON] – Ms. Powell stated there is a staff work group waiting to move forward, in terms of enforcement, but before they do so they need to have the actual language established and clarification on the intent.

Ms. Terracio stated the consensus was to move forward with the residential landlord ordinance separately from the commercial landlord ordinance.

7. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:58 PM.