

# North Augusta



*South Carolina's Riverfront*

## MINUTES OF APRIL 19, 2021

*Robert A. Pettit, Mayor*

*J. Robert Brooks, Councilmember  
Pat C. Carpenter, Councilmember  
Fletcher L. Dickert, Councilmember  
David W. McGhee, Councilmember  
Eric H. Presnell, Councilmember  
Kevin W. Toole, Councilmember*

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

### **VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING**

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of North Augusta of April 19, 2021 having been duly publicized was called to order by Mayor Pettit at 7:01 p.m. and streamed online for public viewing at the City Facebook page: "City of North Augusta – Public Information" and City YouTube page: "City of North Augusta Public Information" then adjourned at 7:35 p.m. Per Section 30-4-80, (e) notice of the meeting by email was sent out to the current maintained "Agenda Mailout" list consisting of news media outlets and individuals or companies requesting notification. Notice of the meeting was also posted on the outside doors of the Municipal Center, the main bulletin board of the Municipal Center located on the first floor, and the City of North Augusta website.

Mayor Pettit rendered the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members present were Mayor Pettit, Councilmembers Brooks, Carpenter, Dickert, McGhee, Presnell, and Toole.

Also in attendance were James S. Clifford, City Administrator; Rachelle Moody, Assistant City Administrator; Kelly F. Zier, City Attorney; Cammie T. Hayes, Chief Financial Officer; Richard L. Meyer, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism; John C. Thomas, Director of Public Safety;

Lillian E. (Libby) Hodges, Director of Planning and Development; J.D. McCauley, Manager of Human Resources; Ricky Jones, Manager of Information Technology and Sharon Lamar, City Clerk.

The minutes of the Virtual Study Session and City Council meeting of April 5, 2020 were approved by general consent.

**ITEM 5. PERSONNEL: Employee of the Quarter – January, February, March 2021-  
Doug Ruben**

Mayor Pettit announced Doug Ruben as City of North Augusta Employee of the Quarter.

**The City of North Augusta Employee Recognition Committee would like to recognize the employee of the quarter for January, February, March 2021, Doug Ruben, Public Safety Officer, with the Department of Public Safety.**

Doug started with the City of North Augusta as a volunteer firefighter in 1994. He began his employment with the City of North Augusta in 1999 as a paid firefighter and was promoted to Public Safety Officer in 2013.

During his 26 years of service to the City of North Augusta, he has proven himself to be a dedicated and loyal member of the Public Safety team. Doug brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to his shift and has recently been sharing that knowledge as a Field Training Officer. His supervisors are blessed to count on his firefighting abilities, knowledge, and experience at fire scenes.

Doug has shown a passion for our citizen's safety on our roadways and taken an interest in DUI detection and enforcement. In the first quarter of 2021, Doug made 10 DUI arrests. The collection of evidence, operation of breath testing equipment, documentation, multiple hearings and court proceedings involved in DUI cases are all done in addition to Doug's regular patrol officer duties. In addition, Doug also helps other officers with their DUI detection skills as a Standard Field Sobriety Test Instructor and there is no doubt that the City of North Augusta is a safer place to drive due to Doug's efforts.

Doug also serves as Public Safety's Infection Control Officer. He assumes the primary responsibility to manage the Infection Control program, coordinates significant exposure investigations, and ensures that the Department Administration complies with the requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the National Fire Protection Association. He submits written recommendations to the Director of Public Safety and the Department Safety Officer for improvements to training, equipment, policies, and procedures to better effectuate the Infection Control Program. Doug is always eager to complete the hard work that is asked of him and does it with a smile.

Doug Ruben is a tremendous asset to the Public Safety Department and the City of North Augusta workforce.

Congratulations to Doug Ruben, our employee of the first quarter of 2021. We have a plaque for you and monetary prize of \$50.

**ITEM 6. FINANCE: Resolution No. 2021-16 – A Resolution Authorizing a Reallocation of a Portion of the Original Funding Allocation Recommendations of the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee for the Disbursement of Revenues from the Accommodations Tax Year 2017-2018**

On the motion of Councilmember Toole, second of Councilmember Presnell, Council agreed to consider a resolution to authorize a reallocation of a portion of the original funding allocation recommendations of the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee for the disbursement of revenues from the Accommodations Tax Year 2017-2018. Cammie Hayes, Chief Financial Officer, explained the need to reallocate the funding due to events which were canceled due to COVID. The Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee is in support of the resolution. There were no comments from citizens or Council. Council approved the resolution with a unanimous 7-0 vote.

Please see a copy of the proposed resolution below:

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-16  
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A REALLOCATION OF A PORTION OF THE ORIGINAL  
FUNDING ALLOCATION RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ACCOMMODATIONS TAX  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE DISBURSEMENT OF REVENUES FROM THE  
ACCOMMODATIONS TAX YEAR 2017-2018

WHEREAS, the City adopted Resolution 2020-05 on February 3, 2020 with the following funding allocations; and

Organization	Project Category	Project Name	Amount Requested	Amount Awarded
Aiken County / Ashley Havird	Tourism-Related Events	Ad in Rowing News Magazine	\$1,377	\$1,377
FWB Fund Inc. / Lisa Taylor	Tourism-Related Events	Spring Concert Amphitheater	\$20,000	\$15,439.31
Arts & Heritage / Mary Ann Bigger	Tourism-Related Events	Arts & Heritage Rack Cards	\$1,500	\$1,500
NAPRT/ Rick Meyer	Tourism-Related Events	Amphitheater Grand Opening	\$10,000	\$5,146.44
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$32,877</b>	<b>\$23,462.75</b>

HEREAS, the Mayor requested an extension to expend these funds from the Tourism Expenditure Review Committee (TERC) on September 29, 2020 due to delayed projects as a result of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, due to continued restrictions on gathering and social distancing requirements several projects have now been restructured to local only events or delayed indefinitely; and

WHEREAS, the City's Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department (PRT) was allocated \$10,000 from the accommodations tax year 2019-2020 for the Sharon Jones Amphitheater Concert Event Operations; and

WHEREAS, PRT was allocated \$45,147.37 from the accommodations tax year 2018-2019 for a mobile stage; and

WHEREAS, additional funding is needed to support event operations of the Sharon Jones Amphitheater Concert to include stage, sound, backline and staffing and additional funding is also needed to secure the mobile stage for use at City events and other entertainment events; and

WHEREAS, the following revised funding allocations are presented for Council's consideration:

Organization	Project Name	Original Allocation	Revised Allocation
Aiken County / Ashley Havird	Ad in Rowing News Magazine	\$1,377	\$1,377
FWB Fund Inc. / Lisa Taylor	Spring Concert Amphitheater	\$15,439.31	\$0
Arts & Heritage / Mary Ann Bigger	Arts & Heritage Rack Cards	\$1,500	\$1,500
NAPRT/ Rick Meyer	Amphitheater Grand Opening	\$5,146.44	\$0
NAPRT/Rick Meyer	Sharon Jones Amphitheater Concert Event Operations	19/20 tax year request	\$6,500
NAPRT/Rick Meyer	Mobile Stage	18/19 tax year request	\$14,085.75
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$23,462.75</b>

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council for the City of North Augusta, in meeting duly assembled and by the authority thereof that:

1. Funding be reallocated as recommended and that the funding source be the Accommodations Tax Fund for tax year 2017-2018.
2. Any net profits received by the City from the Sharon Jones Amphitheater Concert are to be deposited into the Capital Projects Fund and combined with accommodations tax funding awarded to PRT for purchase of the mobile stage for City and other entertainment events.

DONE, RATIFIED AND ADOPTED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH AUGUSTA, SOUTH CAROLINA, ON THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF APRIL, 2021.

**ITEM 7. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:**

Rachelle Moody, Assistant City Administrator, reminded Council the Sharon Jones Amphitheater Dedication event will be Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup>. If there is a need to re-schedule the event due to inclement weather, a decision will be made by Noon on Saturday.

**ITEM 8. PRESENTATIONS/COMMUNICATIONS/RECOGNITION OF VISITORS:**

A. Citizen Comments:

Fred Ilardi – Please see ATTACHMENT #8 for a copy of the comments.

B. Council Comments:

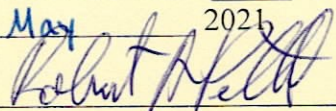
Mayor Pettit reminded everyone In-Person Absentee Voting for the City’s General Election is available at the North Augusta Community Center, April 19-22 from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Councilmember Carpenter encouraged everyone to vote in the City’s General Election on Tuesday, April 27, 2021. She also thanked City Administrator Jim Clifford for attending opening day for the REcing Crew. She invited others to attend future games on Saturday mornings at Riverview Park at 10:00 a.m.

Councilmember Presnell congratulated PSO Doug Ruben on being recognized as Employee of the Quarter.

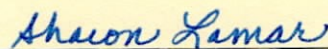
There being no further business, Council adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

APPROVED THIS 3<sup>rd</sup> DAY OF

May 2021  


Robert A. Pettit  
Mayor

Respectfully submitted,



Sharon Lamar  
City Clerk

**Lamar, Sharon**

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**From:** Frederic Ilardi <fred00701@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 19, 2021 11:00 AM  
**To:** Lamar, Sharon  
**Subject:** Questions and Comments 04/19/2021 Council Meeting

Dear Mrs. Lamar:

At the North Augusta Council Meeting tonight, April 19, 2021, I would like the following letter read and answers supplied to the questions asked.

Thank you in advance for your response to my request.

Sincerely,

Fred Ilardi  
 803-279-7823

Dear Mayor Pettit:

I have further reviewed your response, via Facebook, that you made to my letter dated 04/05/2021. As you are aware, I requested my letter to be read and answered at the April 5<sup>th</sup> 2021 Council Meeting . You chose to verbally answer my questions at this meeting. As a follow up, I submit the same questions as previously sent to you and one new additional question. I request a clarification to some of your responses and an answer to the 4<sup>th</sup> question.

The first and second questions were as follows:

1. **I have been told in previous requests that I made, that the information required to get financial information for the payment of the City's financial obligation for Riverside Village, can be reviewed on the City Website under the category " Series 2017B Disclosures" . After reviewing this information I noticed that the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter for the 2019 Voluntary Filing was missing. Was this done for any reason? Was the information required supplied in the City's financial documents and is it general policy not to supply financial information in this format to the financial institution reviewing the bond payments at year's end?**
2. **It has been 95 days since the completion of 2020. Our mayor, Mr. Pettit, has indicated that he reviews financial status monthly. It would appear somewhat strange to me that council and or citizens have not been able to review the financial status of the Riverside Village Project after all of January, February, March, and 5 days in April have passed. When can this information be reviewed by Council and citizens and in what time frame can it be expected going forward?**

**Mayor Pettit's Response and I paraphrase:** The final financial audited report for 2020 has not been completed. Thus, the audited information necessary to complete the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter EMMA report is still not available.

**My Further Questions and Comments to your Response:** Isn't it true that the first 3 quarters of EMMA reporting are based on available information at the time they are generated? What would prevent our City accounting staff from preparing the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter report in EMMA format, noting it is unaudited, posting it **only** on the City website for all to review, and not sending it to the banking institution until all the I's are dotted and T's are crossed in a formal report? Are you further implying that Council, citizens and you can not react to financial status until a formal, audited financial report is available? Wouldn't their own current evaluation , reaction, and recommendations be based on dated information that presently is at least 100 days old? As regards 2019, there is still no 4<sup>th</sup> quarter EMMA like report which would make it impossible to do a comparison of 2019 results and 2020 results once 2020 results became available. I hope you were not suggesting that Council and citizens generate their own EMMA like report which, in order to be created, would have to be extracted from a 200 page 2019 audited financial statement.

The third question was as follows:

3. **We are nearing the time where we should start to prepare for 2022. Based on the information only City staff can review, will we have enough funds to meet our financial obligation in November or can the citizens anticipate a tax increase to cover any shortfall?**

**Mayor Pettit's Response and I paraphrase :** I believe you stated that if you were continuing as mayor for an additional term you would be recommending a tax increase based on infrastructure needs.

**My Further Questions and Comments to your Response:** Nowhere in your response did you anticipate or state the need for additional funds to support Riverside Village or the loan payment to support that project. Clearly there are shortfalls in the TIF/Scenario 90 funds. How will they be made up? On what basis can you conclude that no funds would be required for RV since you don't have the 2020 financial information available at the present time to make that evaluation or the financial information for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2021?

**As the 4<sup>th</sup> and final question , has the Comprehensive Plan, which was generated at a cost of approximately \$200,000, and was adopted on August 7, 2017, been reviewed annually with the Planning Commission providing a January report to City Council on the progress made in implementing an annual priorities list as detailed in Paragraph 11.1.1 of the Comprehensive Plan? if so are there records of the Planning Commission's annual reports to City Council that citizens can access? If the Planning Commission has not provided annual reports on the progress made in implementing an annual priorities list for the Comprehensive Plan, when will a report be provided by the Planning Commission to City Council and will the citizens be able to access the report?**

Thank you in advance for your attention to my letter. I request that you insert this letter as part of the minutes of the meeting and if answers are provided in writing, they also should be included in the minutes.

I want take this time to thank you for the City service you have provided as Mayor . I wish you a happy and long life in your retirement from your Mayor's position. I appreciate your patience and understanding to the questions I submit, and hope they provide some insight to what the citizens are concerned with.

Sincerely,

Fred Ilardi

803-279-7823