MINUTES FOR THE CITY COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
THURSDAY, February 2, 2017
7:00 P.M.


Absent: Blodgett and Bilodeau.

A pre-meeting of the City Council was conducted at 6:30 p.m. in Conference Room A. No Council actions are taken at pre-meetings. Pre-meetings are open to the public.

PRESENTATION AND PUBLIC HEARINGS:

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEM LISTED ON THE AGENDA:

CONSENT AGENDA:

17-019 City Manager (Bureau of City Clerk)
ORDERED, that the minutes of the City Council Meeting held January 19, 2017, submitted by the City Clerk’s office be approved.

17-020 Mayor and Council
ORDERED, that Abigail Silsby be awarded the 2016 Edwards Dam Scholarship in the amount of $500.00 per the recommendations of the 2016 Edwards Dam Scholarship Committee.

17-021 Mayor
ORDERED, that Gerald Bumford be reappointed to the Historic Preservation Commission, said term to expire May 21, 2019.

17-022 Mayor
ORDERED, that Phyllis von Herrlich be reappointed to the Historic Preservation Commission, said term to expire March 18, 2020.

17-023 Mayor
ORDERED, that Daniel Stevens be reappointed to the Historic Preservation Commission, said term to expire February 20, 2020.

17-024 Mayor
ORDERED, that Peter J. Pare be reappointed to the Planning Board, said term to expire February 19, 2020.
Motion for passage of the Consent Agenda orders 17-019 to 17-024
By: Grant  Second by: Alexander
Yeas: 6
Nays: 0

OLD BUSINESS AND TABLED MATTERS

SECOND READING (Ordinances)

16-188 Mayor Rollins and Councilors Blodgett, Conti, Munson, Paradis
Tabled from 11/17/2016

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the current definition of “Religious Activities and Associated Uses” is outdated and does not provide adequate clarity for religious organizations or citizens regarding accessory activities conducted in relation to such uses; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that clarity of interpretation is critical to creating certainty for residents and others; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the faith community is a critical part of the fabric of the community, but as the nature of worship changes, certain activities conducted by religious organizations, like their secular counterparts, could have an impact on the health, safety, and general welfare of the neighborhoods where they are located;

WHEREAS, the City’s Planning Board reviewed this issue and the proposed amendments at two public hearings, at which residents and business owners voiced concern over the impact of social services, traffic and parking on residential neighborhoods and business districts, and religious entities discussed how activities such as community suppers, clothing drives and educational activities are components of their religious practice;

WHEREAS, the City Council respects the needs of all property owners and is interested in limiting traffic, noise, parking, and other impacts of uses in keeping with the nature of the district in which they are located; and

WHEREAS, in keeping with the Comprehensive Plan, the City Council intends to regulate accessory uses conducted by religious entities only to the extent they are significant in scope and, due to their potential impacts, would not otherwise be allowed as primary uses in the district in which they are located;

NOW THEREFORE be it ORDAINED, by the City Council of the City of Augusta, that the Code of Ordinances, Land Use, be amended to repeal the current term and definition of a “Religious Activities and Associated Uses” in Section 300-202 and replace it with the following term and definition:

PLACE OF WORSHIP: Any building used for nonprofit purposes by an established religious organization holding either tax exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or under the state property tax law, where such building is primarily intended to be used as
a place of worship, or for ceremonies, rituals, education, and related social events. The term includes, but is not necessarily limited to, church, temple, synagogue, and mosque. Any new or expanded use conducted on the premises of a Place of Worship shall be considered a separate principal use if it is operated for more than 16 hours a week, for a total of four or more weeks per year.

and that Religious Activities and Associated Uses in the Table of Uses (300 Attachment 4) shall be changed to the new use “Place of Worship”; and

that “Place of Worship” shall be allowed in the same districts, and with the same designations, as Religious Activities and Associated Uses were in the Table of Uses (300 Attachment 4); and

that, additionally, Places of Worship shall be allowed as a permitted use (designated with an X) in the following districts in the Table of Uses (300 Attachment 4): RPDS, RV.

Remained on the table.

NEW BUSINESS
PART 1

17-025 City Manager
BE IT ORDERED, that the City Manager is authorized to accept grant funding in an amount not to exceed $20,000 from the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety for the 2017 Speed Enforcement & Equipment (Municipal & County) Grant. Grant funding will be utilized to provide directed speed enforcement and to purchase a new radar unit. Funds are to be expended from February 1, 2017 to September 15, 2017. There is no monetary match.

Motion for passage of the order 17-025
By: O’Brien Second by: Alexander
Yeas: 6
Nays: 0

17-026 City Manager
BE IT ORDERED, that the City Manager is authorized to accept grant funding in the amount not to exceed $6,000.00 from Inland Fisheries & Wildlife for the 2017 ATV Enforcement Grant. Grant funding will be utilized to provide directed ATV Enforcement.

Motion for passage of the order 17-026
By: O’Brien Second by: Alexander
Yeas: 6
Nays: 0

Minutes of 2/2/2017
17-027    Mayor and Council
ORDERED, that an amount not to exceed $25,000, be hereby appropriated from the City’s Unassigned Fund Balance for the purpose of consultant services regarding blasting in the area of the Grandview neighborhood.

Motion to table order 17-027
By: Wilson Second by: Alexander
Yeas: 5
Nays: 1 - Conti

17-028    Mayor and Council
WHEREAS, the City of Augusta seeks to apply for and receive state and federal grants to make substantial improvements to the infrastructure of its downtown district; and

WHEREAS, the eligibility for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program funds as established under Maine Revised Statute 30-A, Chapter 205 §5201-5205 requires a declaration of slum and blight from the municipal legislative body; and

WHEREAS, Commercial Street, located in United States Census Tract Number DC10CT C23011 001 #104 has been found to meet the criteria for the slum and blight designation.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED, that the City Manager of the City of Augusta is authorized to sign and submit a Declaration of Slum and Blight Area as required by the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development under terms of the Community Development Block Grant program.

Motion for passage of the order 17-028
By: Conti Second by: Grant
Yeas: 6
Nays: 0

NEW BUSINESS
PART 2 –ORDINANCES - FIRST READING
   NO VOTE REQUIRED

COMMUNICATIONS

Committee Reports
City Manager’s Report

Motion to adjourn at 7:35 pm.
By: Wilson Second by: Elliott
Yeas: 6
Nays: 0

Minutes of 2/2/2017
Respectfully submitted,
Roberta L. Fogg, City Clerk
February 2, 2017