

**Hickory Bond Commission**  
**April 19, 2016 at 5:00 P.M.**  
**Highland Recreation Center – Community Room**

A quarterly meeting of the Hickory Bond Implementation Commission was held in Highland Recreation Center – Community Room on Tuesday, April 19, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Hani Nassar, Stacey Rash, Kay Schmucker, Ernie Sills, Mikaela Simmons, Carolyn Sinclair, James Tilton, Suzanne Trollan, Susan Walker, Burk Wyatt, Jason Yates, Sherrill (Frank) Young, R. Alan Barnhardt, Jennifer Beane, Patricia Bowman, Dana Chambers, Jennifer Clark, Rob Dickerson, Ed Farthing, Kimberly George, Ralph Griffith, Charlie Hayes, Jennifer Helton, Allison Holtzman, Alan Jackson, Anthony Laxton, Norm Meres, and Cliff Moone.

A quorum was present.

**Members Absent:** Shanua O'Brien (excused), Adelia Parrado-Oritz, Dean Proctor (excused), David Roberts II, Katherine Rogers, Michael Thomas (excused), Nick Walden, Blake L. Watts Jr., Michael Bell (excused), Paige Brigham, Norman Cook, Charles Dixon (excused), and Will Locke (excused).

**Others Present:** Multiple City Staff and community members

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Burk Wyatt called the meeting to order at 5:13 p.m.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Sills moved, seconded by Mr. Dickerson that the Minutes of the January 13, 2016 be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

**III. Introduction of New Members**

Chair Wyatt introduced all the Bond Commission Members to the new Bond Commission Members and their subcommittee assignments.

- Suzanne Trollan (Riverwalk)
- Kay Schmucker (Streetscapes and Gateways)
- Jason Yates (Streetscapes and Gateways - \*Requesting to be on City Walk)
- Cliff Moone (Streetscapes and Gateways)
- Ernie Sills (City Walk)
- Dr. Ralph Griffith (Streetscapes and Gateways)
- Mikaela Simmons (Riverwalk)

**IV. Appointments to Subcommittees**

Chair Wyatt explained that Mr. Charlie Dixon was currently unable to attend the meetings due to medical reasons. This matter had been discussed with current Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Bond Commission. Chair Wyatt announced that Alan Barnhardt was willing to serve as Interim Chair of Riverwalk with Mike Bell continuing to serve as Vice-Chair of the Riverwalk Subcommittee. Chair Wyatt also discussed that a few members have expressed interest to serve on another

subcommittee. Anyone interested in switching subcommittee assignments will need to contact him for discussion.

**V. Bond Program Update**

Ms. Surratt then went over the PowerPoint presentation for the meeting on April 19. She went over the consensus of the program schedule for 2016, including the Citywalk Design RFQ (Request for Qualifications) being processed currently in April, with a design contract going to City Council in July. She stated this would be available online and the Citywalk subcommittee would begin working first on this first but certainly, any subcommittee could attend these meetings.

The 321 Gateways (at Clement Blvd and 321) Design RFQs would be in May with City Council approving the design contract in August. Finally, the Riverwalk Design RFQ will be in July and Design contract to City Council in October. Ms. Surratt clarified the consensus of the Program Schedule in 2017-2019 (LR I-40 Gateway in 2017 to coincide with DOT project; LR Boulevard in 2017-18; Riverwalk/City Walk Connection in 2018; and Riverwalk "P3", the private and public development, with Proof of Concept and Developer Interest in 2017-2019 and 2019 Design).

Ms. Surratt mentioned that the group met 26 times in 38 weeks from April 24, 2015 through January 13, 2016. She discussed the role of the Bond Commission going forward during the design, review of plans, partnership and fundraising, meetings (full Commission and subcommittees). She covered the draft plan for the Bond Projects and the schedule for presenting to the Local Government Commission (LGC) and tax increases coinciding with the bond structure that was approved and not new ones. Staff anticipates two bond issues depending on project timing. First issue planned for spring 2018 with a tax increase planned for July 2018 (4 or 5 cents). The second issue planned for spring 2020 with a tax increase planned for July 2020 (3 or 4 cents).

**VI. General Discussion of Wayfinding, Friends of Hickory, Lackey Project, Hickory City Park, Meisner Park, Kiwanis Splash Pad, Hickory Optimist Park, Streetscape Zoning Overlay & Utility Work (Non-Bond Related Projects)**

Mr. McLeod an update on the Lackey Project at Rotary-Geitner Park. He gave the group an update on the status of the project, items discussed, operation and maintenance, and the Conservancy. He explained that this project ties in with the Riverwalk. He explained that earlier in the day, staff meet with the Lackey family and their design firm. He explained the work on the conservancy was also discussed at the meeting. He then touched on an update with the Kiwanis Park Splash Pad. Mr. McLeod went over the cost of the project and funding raised by the Kiwanis clubs to be over \$200,000 and updated the group that the anticipated completion date is June 2016.

Mr. McLeod provided an update on the Bruce Meisner Park, formerly known as Cloninger Mill Park on Cloninger Mill Road. He discussed the plans for the 63-acre park project, \$900,000 funding received for the project from NC Outward Bound adding another 10 acres, and project design schedule. Mr. McLeod briefly updated the group on partnership with the Greater Hickory Tennis Association, pledging \$125,000 which lead into the City Park - Tennis Courts' new expansion of parking spaces. Mr. McLeod touched on the Friends of Hickory Park and Hickory Optimist Park. He discussed all the upgrades to the Hickory Optimist Park, which is a block from

the proposed Riverwalk, which includes new features like an outdoor fitness park. Phase 2 of the project will include new restrooms and new pickle ball courts (combination of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong).

Mr. Frazier provided the group an update on the Streetscapes / Zoning Overlay Consultant who would be working with the City on coordination on lighting, landscaping, improved signage design and placement, building façade, and more efficient ingress / egress. He stated that staff is reviewing the three consultant proposals, regulations for several identified streetscape coordinator in Hickory. He added they are all North Carolina firms. The areas between Old Lenoir Road, Lenoir-Rhyne Blvd, City Walk, and near the Riverwalk would be examined. A decision should be made in the next week or so in those five areas. The cost is estimated at \$150,000.

Mr. Hansen discussed that something in late May or early June should be coming from the Friends of Hickory Park. The Friends of Hickory group is close to reaching their fundraising goal and their next step will be to get with staff on design and update the water and sewer for the park.

Mr. Hansen provided an update on the Sandy Ridge Road - Roundabouts. He discussed the CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation Air Quality) grant for \$3.7 million. He provided details about where the roundabouts are planned (at intersection of Sandy ridge Road / 29th Avenue NE and 16th Street / 8th Street Drive / 21st Avenue NE to relieve traffic congestion. The total estimated project is over \$4.6 million. The schedule is over the next two years but he noted every step had to have NC DOT (North Carolina Department of Transportation) approval. Mr. Hansen discussed the downtown utility work for the Friends of Hickory Park along with other water and sewer line replacements and storm water drainage work that needs to be done. He stated that Trade Alley would be disrupted by the work and stated this was several months' worth of work during this process.

He then covered the Wayfinding / Gateway the project was developed eight years ago, but needed to be held for economic reasons and since the City has rebranded and worked on the areas that need specific Wayfinding focus. This project is 95% designed and hopes to get this out in the next 90 days for bids. He stated it is around 100 signs. The estimated cost of the project is \$800,000. Mr. Moone asked if the base of the signs would be the clamshell base like similar signs that we have in some areas. Mr. Hansen stated that yes, it would be.

Ms. Brigham asked about the traffic project near LR (Lenoir-Rhyne University). Mr. Hansen stated that near St. Lutheran's Church and University Christian High School and LR (on 7th Avenue NE), speed tables and lane removals for safety of pedestrians would begin over the summer. He stated this is an in-house project. Ms. Surratt stated that there is many things going on including the bond projects and asked the group to share the information.

## **VII. Role of the Bond Commission in RFQ Process and Conflicts of Interest Policy**

Deputy City Attorney Dula stated there is not sufficient time to discuss individual conflict concerns; however, she stated she would be available for any questions. She mentioned that the City Attorney, City Manager, and Deputy City Attorney reviewed various policies and talked with

the UNC School of Government. The Conflicts of Interest Policy does not apply to the Bond Commission, however, the boards and commission handbook states the definition of the "public employee" which includes boards and commissions. The handbook clarifies that the member cannot vote on matters that maybe of conflict of interest and may need to leave discussion on such matters. Ms. Dula stated that there are some items that may be a violation of State Statutes (misdemeanor). She clarified with some examples of the conflicts of interest. She clarified what violations could mean and how it could affect someone with interests. She touched on the members who may own property on particular projects who will need to recuse themselves from participating in the matter or potentially purchasing property along the project (information has not been made available to the public) and the information is used to purchase property, a criminal violation of self-dealing. She stated that the handbook applies to all members and can be provided to all members. She stated it is complicated and believes all members wants to do what is right for the citizens in the community.

Ms. Surratt touched on why many members were selected before Council knew exactly where the project would go and this is why the members are hearing about this concern at this time.

#### **VIII. City Walk RFQ Update, TIGER Grant Application Update & Next Steps**

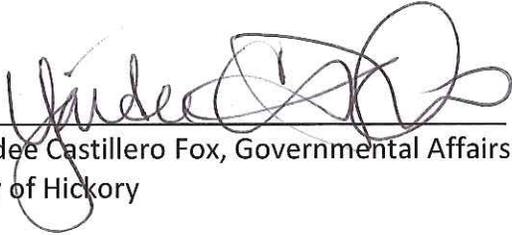
Ms. Surratt discussed the TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) Grant. She stated their packets included a resolution for the TIGER Grant and a sample letter. She said staff has received over twenty letters from several groups. She mentioned that lobbying efforts have already started. She provided a draft template letter to the group but clarified that staff could write up the letter should they want to simply inform staff to draft the letter. She discussed what the sections of the City Walk and City is included and the new inclusions for the area. She reminded the group that last year the application included all of the City Walk. She provided the feedback that the City received after the last round of TIGER grant funding. She stated that the application includes what is informally known as the ribs (as the City Walk is the spine). The project scope includes the City Walk Greenway, two additional segments (ribs) connecting the Ridgeview area to the SALT Block to provide access to higher education (LRU), public libraries, arts and science, low-moderate income neighborhoods, and medical facilities, a pedestrian bridge over HWY 127, the Depot Station Parking Deck, the 2nd avenue Realignment, Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard Streetscape, and the 9th Street NW Streetscape. She reviewed the TIGER Scope elements and the estimated project costs. Ms. Surratt added the importance of pedestrian safety with back up statistics would be included along with the connection to education, health facilities, and cultural resources. She went over the breakdown for the estimated cost of the project at \$25.4 million. The City's match would be 25% at \$6.3 million, with Hickory Local Match for STIP (State Transportation Improvement Program Grant) at \$1.9 million, STIP allocated at \$7.6 million and TIGER request at \$9.4 million.

Mr. Hansen discussed the RFQ for the City Walk. He stated it was a draft Request for Qualifications. He stated that it is a legal process that the City must follow. Mr. Hansen then informed the group of the process to review the RFQs upon receiving them into our offices. He covered the questions that the City can and cannot ask due to the legal process. Ms. Surratt showed the group where anyone could sign up to be notified once the RFQs are ready. She

touched on different ways the RFQ process may happen and the different options staff has discussed. Mr. Hansen and Ms. Surratt reinforced this would be run through Ms. Dula.

**IX. Adjournment**

Mr. Farthing moved, seconded by Mr. Young to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m.



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Yaidee Castellero Fox, Governmental Affairs Manager  
City of Hickory



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Burk Wyatt, Chair  
Hickory Bond Commission