

**GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
MINUTES  
November 6, 2012  
4:57 p.m.  
County Square - Conference Room D**

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting date, time, place and agenda was posted on the bulletin board at County Square and posted on the County's web page for all media and concerned citizens to access and review.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

CHAIRMAN BUTCH KIRVEN  
VICE CHAIRMAN BOB TAYLOR  
JOE BALDWIN  
LIZ SEMAN

FRED PAYNE  
DAN RAWLS  
XANTHENE NORRIS  
JOE DILL

JIM BURNS  
WILLIS MEADOWS

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

LOTTIE GIBSON  
SID CATES

**STAFF PRESENT:**

JOE KERNELL, County Administrator  
MARK TOLLISON, County Attorney  
THERESA KIZER, Clerk to Council  
REGINA MCCASKILL, Deputy Clerk to Council  
BOB MIHALIC, Governmental Relations Officer  
JOHN HANSLEY, Deputy County Administrator  
PAULA GUCKER, Assistant County Administrator, Public Works  
SHANNON HERMAN, Assistant to the County Administrator  
SANDRA YUDICE, Assistant to the County Administrator

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

JEFF GILSTRAP, Chairman, Arena District Board  
ROGER NEWTON, President and General Manager, Bi-Lo Center

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Butch Kirven

**INVOCATION**

Councilor Willis Meadows

**Item (3)**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**ACTION:** Councilor Norris moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Committee of the Whole meeting of October 16, 2012.

Motion carried unanimously by all members.

**Item (4)**

**ARENA DISTRICT BOARD CAPITAL PLAN PRESENTATION**

Mr. Jeff Gilstrap and Mr. Roger Newton gave a presentation of the Arena District's Capital Plan. The financing and development of the Bi-Lo Center was achieved after numerous attempts to replace the Greenville Memorial Auditorium. The center was financed with four series of bonds with unique funding sources. The Bi-Lo Center opened on September 3, 1998. The original economic model, a unique public/private partnership, was manageable during the first several years of operation, however it quickly became challenging to sustain due to a sequence of events starting in 2006 and ending in 2008. The series of events in 2006-2008 created financial challenges for the Greenville Arena District (GAD) and Bi-Lo Center operations. GAD, the City of Greenville and the County of Greenville worked together and developed a more sustainable financial mode for GAD. The financial position of the Bi-Lo Center and GAD improved in 2012 largely due to some positive changes made from 2009 -2011. In 2012 Operating Income for the Bi-Lo Center operations was \$1,411,000, compared to \$902,000 in 2011 and \$1,223,000 in 2010. In 2012 results were the second best over the past ten years, when FY2007 Operating Income was \$1,545,000. Excess Accommodations Fees, after 2009B debt service, were \$956,000; the City of Greenville's share was \$611,000 and Greenville County's share was \$345,000. As of June 2012, outstanding debt for GAD was \$33,890,000, with \$2,370,000 due within one year. In a survey performed by CH Johnson Consulting it was determined in relation to peer facilities the Bi-Lo Center was the only venue to generate an Operating Profit (ten year average is \$1,229,000 per year); can pay for a portion of its debt obligations and was responsible for funding Capital Improvements. The Bi-Lo Center was a major economic contributor to the community. The GAD is committed to improving the Bi-Lo Center in order to remain competitive wit peer facilities in the region and to continue to contribute to the local economy and quality of life for the community. The Capital Improvement Plan totaled \$14,515,000, which included upgrading the fall protection system, new spotlights, a new roof, replace marquee on Church Street, update landscaping and janitorial equipment. A partnership with the City of Greenville and Greenville County were essential for the implementation of Capital Improvement Projects.

Councilor Dill asked the presenters to explain the drastic change with the bottom line in 2008.

Mr. Gilstrap stated the biggest difference was the debt obligation issue.

Councilor Baldwin asked if money was borrowed now, what would be the anticipated interest rate.

Mr. Kernell stated Teresa Cawley and Brad Love have worked very closely with Greenville County and the Arena District to determine opportunities to entertain the Capital Plan. In 2009, the refinancing freed up approximately \$350,000 through local Accommodations Tax for the County. BB&T agreed to refinance again in 2016, which would free up approximately an additional \$100,000 to go towards the Capital Improvement Plan presented. The interest rates would be approximately 2.20%. He stated in order to receive the savings from the current bond issue with the refinancing and rates it would have to remain bank qualified. The biggest portion of support would have to happen in 2012 with the remainder happening in 2013. He is optimistic the City of Greenville would work with the proposed plan.

Ms. Cawley stated it was a long process in receiving the commitment letter from BB&T; they have agreed to submit the commitment letter which would expire at the end of 2012.

Councilor Dill commended Mr. Kernell for a great job in the process.

Chairman Kirven stated there was no action required by County Council during the meeting.

Councilor Burns stated BB&T was willing to work with us was a testament to the changes that have occurred with the Bi-Lo Center over the years.

Councilor Payne asked was it possible to phase in some of the improvements and where would the additional funds have been spent, if not on the Bi-Lo Center.

Mr. Kernell stated he did not think it would make a difference in phasing in improvements because of the 2.20% interest rate over a 15-year term. He stated they deliberately held back committing those funds for anything long term.

**Item (5)**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**ACTION:** Councilor Rawls moved to adjourn the meeting.

Without objection, the Committee of the Whole meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

---

Theresa B. Kizer, Clerk to Council