

July 27, 1961
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Special Meeting

A Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, was held in the Council Chamber in the City Hall, on Thursday, July 27, 1961, at 2 o'clock p.m., pursuant to the provisions of Section 26 of the City Charter. Mayor Brookshire presided, and Councilmen Albea, Bryant, Dellinger, Jordan, Smith, Thrower and Whittington present.

ABSENT: None.

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INVOCATION.

The invocation was given by the Reverend William R. Brantley, Pastor of Memorial Methodist Church.

PURPOSE OF MEETING.

Mayor Brookshire announced the purpose of the special meeting is to adopt the Budget, appropriating funds for the operation of the city government and its activities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1961 and ending June 30, 1962, and setting the tax rate per \$100 of valuation of taxable property.

1961-62 BUDGET ORDINANCE NO. 41-X ADOPTED.

The Budget Ordinance for the fiscal year 1961-62 was introduced and read, and Councilman Albea moved its adoption, which was seconded by Councilman Thrower.

Councilman Dellinger stated in view of some further studies of the Budget that have been made and of the threat to the security of our nation, he would like to discuss the budget a little further, and Councilman Smith has a proposal he thinks deserves the attention of the Council.

Councilman Smith stated in the last couple of days the Civil Defense situation has changed; that not many of the Council has been enthusiastic about the civil defense program and reluctant to put money in it, but now President Kennedy has put emphasis on the construction of fallout shelters, he would like to have \$50,000 set aside in the Contingency Fund to await developments as to State and Federal matching funds; that the amount is not much but a step in the right direction. That last year the water rates were increased substantially in order that the Water and Sewer Department pay its own way and the people were told the rates had to be increased to support the services or the taxpayer would have to subsidize them. That he thinks the taxpayer will have plenty cause to complain about this increased water rate and the same tax rate if it is held at the same figure in view of the increase of a million dollars in revenue. That he thinks the Water and Sewer Department should stand on its own feet but if the tax rate is left the same, it is hitting the citizen twice and they should have some relief. That with the city rate at \$1.50 and the County rate \$1.61, the total rate of \$3.11 is too much.

Therefore, he proposed that the \$50,000 allocated for the Northwest Expressway right of way which will probably not be needed for two years, be earmarked for Civil Defense fallout shelters in the Contingency Fund, which

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leave \$105,000 in the right of way fund. That the \$59,000 allocated for the opening of Kenilworth Avenue, which has not been definitely decided on, be eliminated and the \$65,500 for a new traffic engineering sign shop also be eliminated, and the present shop building be used for another year, which will result in removing \$124,500 from the budget and reduce taxes 2 cents, making the tax rate \$1.48, and this 2 cents would go back to the taxpayer to ^{help} offset the increase in water and sewer rates.

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Councilman Dellinger stated he supports the recommendation and thinks the people are entitled to a reduction in the tax rate. That the citizens have not complained too much about the water rates and many businesses are paying from \$100 to \$200 water bills per month - which is too much and many of them are upset about the pay-as-you-go program and think the Council should be reasonable. He stated he thinks the citizens should be given the benefit of a two cents reduction in the tax rate.

Councilman Albea stated he wanted to keep the water rate lower at the time it was under discussion. That the only way we can reduce the tax rate is to do away with the pay-as-you-go program but he does not want to undo something it took the Council a year to settle about the water and sewer rates.

Mayor Brookshire stated the increase in valuation will be badly needed to keep up with the growth of the city.

Councilman Jordan stated in his opinion the increased water rate has brought about a most antagonistic situation, and the two cents reduction in the tax rate would compensate the taxpayer considerably. He stated further he feels the money should be earmarked for Civil Defense, as suggested by Councilman Smith, in recognition of the national situation and to show our cooperation in a national program for the protection of the citizens.

Councilman Dellinger pointed out that in spite of any pay-as-you-go program, we will be obliged to have some bond issues on the big projects. Councilman Smith stated it is impossible to pay-as-you-go on streets, and he has his doubts as to the fairness of it anyway, as the taxpayer today would be paying for street improvements that will be in use twenty years from now.

Councilman Smith stated in connection with the Civil Defense program, that the Council should make it feasible to build fallout shelters, and they should be exempt from tax assessments as property improvements, and this should be made very clear in order to encourage the building of shelters.

Councilman Whittington questioned the proposed use of the \$50,000 by Civil Defense and the city subsidizing fallout shelters. Councilman Smith called attention that the President stated there would be a program to encourage building shelters and providing matching federal and state funds and therefore, he thinks such local funds should be available, and if not needed for this purpose, they can be put back in the right of way fund.

Councilman Albea advised that Council has authority to instruct the City Manager to take \$50,000 from any fund in any department and use it for Civil Defense at any time the need arises.

Councilman Thrower stated there are two schools of thought - one, pay-as-you-go; the other go back to having bond issues; that bond elections can be approved by the people or not and sometimes \$30,000 can be spent

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just to find out. He thinks the water rates are too high, and should be reexamined but now we are on the road to pay-as-you-go, we should not jeopardize ourselves over a 1 or 2 cent tax reduction, and should put first things first and find other sources of revenue.

Councilman Whittington stated he is willing to go along with Councilman Smith's idea to take \$50,000 from the expressway fund and make it available for Civil Defense in the Contingency Fund, but he cannot go along with cutting the tax rate, as it is not good business. That if Charlotte is going to be a metropolitan city we must pay for it as we go along. That he does not think we have had but one bond issue since he has been on the Council and thinks we can keep them at a low minimum. He stated further he thinks the President is trying to prepare the country on Civil Defense and he will vote for putting the \$50,000 in the Contingency Fund for it, but as to the remainder of Councilman Smith's proposal, he cannot go along with them. That it is his understanding that the Sign Shop is badly needed as the old building is about to fall down. Mr. Veeder, City Manager, stated the building needs to be demolished and he recommends that it be replaced.

Councilman Thrower stated the tax rate could be cut 5 cents or 15 cents, but we are going to get just what we pay for, and if the people want boulevards, expressways etc, they must pay for them.

Councilman Smith offered a substitute motion that \$50,000, earmarked for the northwest expressway be taken from the right of way funds, leaving a balance of \$105,000 for the program, and take out \$59,000 allocated for Kenilworth Avenue extension, and take out \$65,500 allocated for the Sign Shop, which is a total of \$174,500.00, and add \$50,000 to the Contingency Fund earmarked for Civil Defense, to be used at the discretion of Council, which would result in reducing the tax rate to \$1.48. The motion was seconded by Councilman Dellinger, and lost by the following recorded vote:

YEAS: Councilmen Smith, Dellinger and Jordan.
NAYS: Councilman Albea, Bryant, Thrower and Whittington.

The vote was then taken on the main motion by Councilman Albea for the adoption of the Ordinance, and carried by the following recorded vote:

YEAS: Councilmen Albea, Thrower, Bryant and Whittington.
NAYS: Councilmen Dellinger, Jordan and Smith.

LIST OF PAST DUE WATER BILLS REQUESTED .

Councilman Thrower gave the City Manager a notice from the Water Department to a resident requesting payment of water used for the past four months, in the amount of \$142.00, and asked that the amount be investigated.

Following the discussion, Councilman Dellinger requested the City Manager to have a survey made in the Water Department if there are other bills allowed to run past due and to submit a list of them to Council.

PRESIDENT'S CIVIL DEFENSE PROGRAM ENDORSED AND FUNDS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO MATCH STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDS TO CARRY OUT PROGRAM IF NEEDED.

Councilman Jordan stated he would like the Council to go on record endorsing the President's Civil Defense Program, and that it be understood if funds to match state and federal funds are needed in the program,

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they will be made available by the city. No objections were expressed to the recommendations.

The City Manager advised that the Council may be required to weigh any city project against civil defense needs, and budgeted funds can be adjusted at any time.

CONTRACT AWARDED MILL POWER SUPPLY COMPANY FOR CONDUCTOR CABLE.

Councilman Thrower moved the award of contract to the low bidder, Mill Power Supply Company, for 25,000 feet of No. 36 Conductor Traffic Control Cable to be used in connection with the downtown master control traffic system, as recommended by the City Manager. The motion was seconded by Councilman Jordan, and unanimously carried.

The following bids were received:

Mill Power Supply Co.	\$ 7,214.72
Superior Cable Corp.	7,226.25
Shelby Supply Co.	7,575.00
Westinghouse Electric Supply Co.	7,587.57
Graybar Electric Co.	7,829.29
Carolina Electric Supply Co.	8,166.47
Anacona Wire & Cable Co.	9,527.50
General Electric Supply Co.	9,847.50

ADJOURNMENT.

Upon motion of Councilman Albea, seconded by Councilman Jordan, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned, with Mayor Brookshire advising the Council members that the Executive Session in his office will be at 1:30 p.m. on next Monday instead of 2 p.m. in order to have sufficient time to hear a report from the National Safety Council.

Lillian R. Hoffman
 Lillian R. Hoffman, City Clerk