

DATE: December 11, 2017

ISSUE:

The City of Conway's request for Horry County Schools to sell the old Whittemore School property to the City

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS:

City Council committed funding from FY 2016-2017 Community Development Block Grant funding to the construction of a new Community Center in the Whittemore Park area. They allocated all CDBG funds for FY 2017-2018. In total, nearly \$500,000 has been committed to the development of a Community Center in this area.

For the last year, the City has been working with Horry County Schools to acquire the former Whittemore School building located behind the current Whittemore Park Middle School. This building is in very poor condition and was heavily damaged during Hurricane Matthew. Large portions of the building will be required to be demolished before any restoration can commence. Further, there is asbestos in the building which will need to be safely and correctly removed.

The City of Conway values the relationship it has with the Horry County School District, specifically the Conway area schools. The City has offered grant money to each of the Conway schools, maintains the track area behind Conway Elementary, helped spearhead the Safe Routes to School Project aimed at bringing much needed sidewalks to Conway Elementary, provides SROs to Conway schools, offers additional police to assist in traffic control in the mornings, afternoons and during special events at Conway High School, including football games, basketball games and other sporting events.

The City is a proud sponsor of the Solid Gold Booster Club and broadcasts the voice of the Tigers, Ashley Smith's live broadcast on the City Access Channel on game days. Downtown Conway is the home of the Conway High School Homecoming Parade and we have encouraged the parade route to be moved to Main Street in each of the last two years to expand visibility and community pride in the event. City Council is honored to get to ride in the Homecoming Parade every year.

Few cities can show a stronger commitment to their schools than Conway and we hope to continue that pride in even greater ways. The City hopes to partner with Horry County Schools to acquire the old Whittemore School property. We plan to demolish some portions of the school building and restore the core of the building as a Community Center that can benefit all of the surrounding areas. Specifically, though, Conway hopes to host afterschool programming at this Community Center which will be a direct benefit to the Whittemore Middle School, providing a safe, educational, and monitored location for kids to be after school when children are most at risk of being led astray. While there are no immediate plans to add sports or recreational

offerings at this site, were we to do so, we would certainly offer those amenities to Whittemore Middle School to help accommodate their recreational and athletic needs.

REQUEST:

The City of Conway requests that Horry County School District give the Whittemore School property to the City. The City is committed to making the building and site a viable amenity for the community and restoring a source of pride for those who consider the school a landmark.

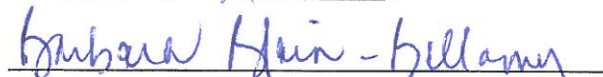
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA }
COUNTY OF HORRY }
CITY OF CONWAY }

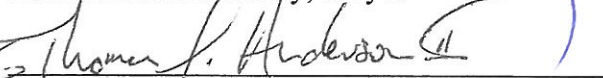
R E S O L U T I O N

COMMITMENT TO ACCEPT THE FORMER
WHITTEMORE SCHOOL BUILDING PROPERTY

- WHEREAS,** Conway City Council has expressed a desire to develop a community center that would benefit the greater Whittemore Community and, as evidence of this desire, has set aside funding for this purpose; and
- WHEREAS,** the City believes the best location for this proposed community center would be that property which is the site of the former Whittemore school building; subject property being a portion of TMS# 136-04-03-001 and owned by the Horry County Board of Education; and
- WHEREAS,** City Council has expressed a commitment to restore and maintain historical structures, such as the Whittemore School; and
- WHEREAS,** the City has approached the Horry County School District regarding the possibility of the subject property being donated to the City; and
- WHEREAS,** the Horry County Board of Education has requested a public commitment from the City to accept this property should it be given to the City: Therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that Conway City Council hereby declares its commitment to accept the property which is the site of the former Whittemore school building should the Horry County Board of Education elect to donate it to the City.


IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this resolution is hereby adopted and made a part of the City records this 4th day of December, 2017.



Barbara Blain-Bellamy, Mayor


Thomas R. Anderson II, Council Member


Ashley Smith, Council Member


Larry A. White, Council Member


Randle L. Alford, Mayor Pro-Tem


William M. Goldfinch IV, Council Member


Jean M. Timbes, Council Member


ATTEST: Debbie Smith, City Clerk