PRESENT: Mayor Bo Dorough

Mayor Pro Tem Matt Fuller (virtual)

City Commissioners: Jon Howard, BJ Fletcher Chad Warbington and Demetrius

Young and (Bob Langstaff, Jr - virtual)

City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis (Virtual participant: Bob Langstaff, Jr.,) Interim City Mgr.: Steven Carter

Mayor Dorough called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

Former City Commissioner Robert Montgomery spoke to issues in East Albany and 1. stated that he used to be President of the E. Towne Neighborhood Watch. He advised that the previous City Manager was scheduled to meet with him before she moved but the meeting did not happen, adding that he has three minor issues: 1) calling Animal Control to pick up a stray cat, he was informed that Animal Control does not pick up cats and to call The Humane Society. When he left messages with the Humane Society, he never received a call back; 2) the cat was killed and remained in the street until it decayed, adding that when he called he was told by APD that the cat would be picked up after July 4th with him picking up the cat himself 3) dangerous/vicious dogs in the back yard and after calling the non-emergency number, he was told Animal Control cannot pick up any more dogs because the Humane Society is filled up; however, in a few minutes, two Animal Control units showed up. He stated that these concerns are what brought him here today. E. Towne Neighborhood Vice President Deloris Barnes spoke to speed bumps for Don Cutlet Drive since February of 2020 with nothing being done so far. She mentioned the dangers of speeders in the area and asked that a precinct be manned 24/7 in E. Albany and security cameras installed. Mr. Montgomery spoke on having a neighborhood watch not being a social gatherings and asked for support from the Commission to do something about the issues that are raised.

Commissioner Howard thanked Mr. Montgomery for coming to present the issues adding that he shares the concern. He told Mr. Montgomery that he has started a 'Walk with the Commissioner' to tour areas to see what is going on. Regarding neighborhood watch groups, he suggested that most have retired individuals in the group and that worldwide, there is a problem with instilling in people the seriousness of issues. He asked Mr. Montgomery to continue calling the Ward II Commissioner to address concerns and suggested that Commissioners to go into his neighborhood to address problems.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that she gets the same complaints in her Ward with speed bumps lacking in a lot of areas. She mentioned having a community neighborhood watch to get the groups back up, adding that Judy Bowles is working with them. She assured Mr. Montgomery that the City is concerned about all problems. In reply to Mr. Montgomery, she commented on the process to get speed bumps installed, etc.

Commissioner Warbington stated that he started neighborhood watch meetings in Ward VI with 40-50 people being engaged. He suggested that the watch groups organize again and engage by

inviting staff to be on hand to address issues. Mr. Montgomery stated that when they have meetings, people address concerns to him, and he calls department heads and the Ward II Commissioner. Commissioner Warbington asked Mr. Carter if the Humane Society was closed in July with Mr. Carter stating that he is taking notes and will follow-up with Mr. Montgomery.

Commissioner Young thanked Mr. Montgomery for his presence and encouraged him to keep advocating for the community, adding that he also has Town Hall meetings to engage citizens with City department heads.

Mayor Dorough noted the issues and asked Mr. Carter to look into speed bumps regarding his concern of the process and the issues on Don Cutler, Sr., Drive. He asked why this has not been moved forward and stated that people are frustrated and unfairly want to blame the City, which is understaffed. Regarding precincts, the City had them throughout the city, but when the LEC was built, the idea was to consolidate everything, which in retrospect was a bad decision. Regarding Animal Control, he stated that this is complicated due to a change in leadership and that they may be in a transitional phase. Mr. Montgomery elaborated on his concerns regarding Animal Control with Mayor Dorough stating that these issues will be looked at. Mr. Montgomery suggested that City employees have City cells and can contact the right person to address issues, i.e., dead animal on side of the road.

2. Terry Lucas – stated that he supported Mayor Dorough during his election and spoke on police brutality with issues not being addressed and the news not going outside of Dougherty County. He spoke to a recent issue that happened and the lack of concern and/or information not being brought forth for the public to be aware of, adding that he has brought these issues to Commission Fletcher.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that she has been in communication with Mr. Lucas and asked Chief Persley to give her an update, adding that reports given indicate that no one has been killed by police officers in the past ten years, with four officer-involved shooting, and, people shoot at officers more than at civilians. She suggested that the facts do not agree with his comments. Mr. Lucas stated that incidents should be brought to light more and information should go worldwide. Commissioner Fletcher stated that most of his comments are pertaining to the media not reporting and explained the process of the media reporting news, i.e., whether the report is local or from the associated press.

Commissioner Young stated that the question of police brutality is a question of justice and finding the 'right' in a situation with the right thing being done. He encouraged people to speak up to find justice and making situations right and asked to speak with Mr. Lucas off-line. In reply to Mr. Lucas, Mayor Dorough told him that his time has run out.

TRAVEL

Commissioner Howard moved to approve the following, seconded by Commissioner Warbington and, following a roll call vote, the motion unanimously carried.

- 1. Nia'ja Bridges, Public Defender; 7th Annual DUI Super Symposium; Savannah, GA; August 25-27, 2021; \$1,279.84
- 2. Gary Lamar, City Solicitor; 7th Annual DUI Super Symposium; Savannah, GA; August 25-27, 2021; \$1,279.84

WALMART SOLAR INITIATIVE

Mr. Carter discussed information (copy on file) regarding the request to accept the Utility Board's recommendation to approve the Walmart Solar Initiative (solar energy). He explained the process, including credits; purchases from the City which gets the energy from MEAG with the agreement between the City and MEAG being 20 years and the agreement between the City and Walmart being 15 years. He discussed Walmart's option to opt out after the 11th year, adding that if this happens Walmart will continue to pay for the full 20 years so that the City is not responsible. He advised that if approved, a special call meeting is needed due to the deadline of August 13th.

Mayor Pro Tem Fuller questioned whether there is an upfront cost, with Mr. Carter advising that the agreement is paid monthly and there is no upfront cost to the City. In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Fuller, Mr. Carter also advised that there is no construction cost.

Commissioner Warbington asked if there are other cities with this type of agreement, with Mr. Carter explaining the process as it pertains to cities which have the capability to have this agreement (more than 20 cities). He advised that this is a good neighbor type agreement, etc., with Commissioner Warbington suggesting that more requests of this nature will come. He thanked staff for working through the process to meet the needs of customers.

Commissioner Langstaff asked if staff has a recommendation and have spoken with other cities to ascertain those engaged in this endeavor and those which are not. Mr. Carter stated that his recommendation is to enter into the agreement even though there is not a lot of revenue to be made and gave other pros to approving the agreement. He said he spoke with several of the participants last month while at the MEAG Summit with many being on board (Thomasville, Adel, Marietta, Ft. Valley, etc., which were favorable), adding that Thomasville is the largest purchaser.

Commissioner Young commented on power purchased from MEAG, not using it all and reselling to the open market. He stated that this does not make sense and is not a good business plan. Mr. Carter explained that this is supplemental, it is sold on the open market with Walmart making the City 'whole' should they opt out with there being no downside to this. Commissioner Young asked the benefit to citizens/rate payers with Mr. Carter stating that this makes the City a good corporate partner with Walmart, adding that when Walmart considers building stores, it will show that the City is participating in supplemental utilities. In reply to Commissioner Young, he stated that two of the four Walmart's are served by Albany utilities. Commissioner Young expressed concern of entering into another agreement with minimal gain and tying up the City long term. In

reply to Commissioner Young, Mr. Carter reiterated the pros of entering into the agreement. Commissioner Young expressed concern regarding the 20-year agreement and suggested more information is needed.

Mayor Dorough expressed concern regarding the demand from corporations - to expand and/or utilize renewable energy, renewable energy credits and his concern of purchasing solar power from a farm in Wilcox County with the response being this is the long-term plan for MEAG to purchase properties. He agreed that this will be seen more by larger corporations to generate their own electricity, etc., adding that he thinks MEAG is late to the game and that there are businesses that are exploring the possibility to generate solar power on premises. Mr. Carter stated if renewables are not added to the City's portfolio the companies will go and add their own; if we can provide that to them, it gives them a reason to stay with the City versus creating their own.

Commissioner Young questioned the credits with Mayor Dorough explaining that they are not tax credits; the corporations are committing 100% to renewables and to meet their commitments to citizens and customers to decrease their carbon footprint. Mr. Carter stated that corporations are not consuming the energy but by buying the credits, they are offsetting the energy that they use. Commissioner Young again asked how does this benefit ratepayers, with Mr. Carter explaining that this is normally not a residential concern. Commissioner Young asked for information explaining whether or not citizens in Albany can get energy credits for the City of Albany, adding solar to its portfolio and how this will benefit ratepayers.

Commissioner Warbington stated that both MEAG and Walmart are great businesses with one selling/supplying power and one purchasing/using power and this is a good thing to meet the needs of one of the corporations in Albany.

Commissioner Young asked to also consider what is best for citizens and how decisions will affect the city long-term.

OPIOID ABUSE IN ALBANY

Phyllis Rolle, GA DPH asked to be rescheduled and, in reply to Mayor Dorough, Commissioner Howard stated that he distributed pamphlets and hopes to get more to distribute.

CHEHAW SPORTS COMPLEX INTRODUCTION

Mayor Pro Tem Fuller introduced Foy Shemwell to present information (copy on file). Mr. Shemwell discussed information regarding the establishment of a local group of volunteers last year who determined that there is an issue regarding youth participation/ team sports in the area. Having a hub/central location was noted as a good idea with Chehaw Park being suggested as a possible location, with the Park Authority considering adding this to their long-term master plan. He stated that plans include softball, baseball, football, soccer, having eight fields (six turf softball/baseball fields and two multipurpose soccer, football, La Crosse fields), using 15 acres of the Park, with the cost being approximately \$4.5 million. The targeted age group is 5-14 with

High School students also having access. He mentioned regional cities (Columbus, Warner Robbins, Dothan, Al, et al) which have seen success locally and regionally, but the intent is to get this to the citizens of Albany. APD's Cpl. Dramoski Franklin stated that he runs a program, Limitless Boundaries, coaching football, basketball, soccer, baseball, and track/field for youths and spoke of the benefit this will provide to the city. Aly Joslin, Deerfield-Windsor Athletic Director and Head Soccer Coach, also spoke in favor of the complex. Mr. Shemwell stated that he has been on the leadership committee with Albany League Baseball and thanked Director of Facilities Don Gray, Firefighter Trainee Cary Grant and Interim Park and Recreation Director Craig Potter for their help. He gave statistics of Albany baseball since 2019, with numbers dwindling due to COVID resulting in conversations to get something started that will benefit youths. He asked the Commission to approve/support the endeavors and said additional data can be presented, adding that they have been in contact with different people who manage complexes similar to this, etc. Mentioning tournaments, he said it is a way to bring revenue to Albany, as well as having people coming nationwide and helping pay for the facility.

Commissioner Howard commented on the cost with Mr. Shemwell stating that the number is not definitive at this time. In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Shemwell stated that he spoke with the City Manager and Recreation Director. Commissioner Howard questioned using Paul Eames complex and asked Mr. Carter if it is being used. Mr. Carter stated that they are looking at revitalizing it; however, it is being used sparingly. Commissioner Howard stated that a real estate broker donated property in that area to be used with Mr. Carter stating that he is not aware but will check. Commissioner Howard expressed concern of Chehaw being further away, with Paul Eames Park being more suitable.

Mayor Pro Tem Fuller thanked all for their presentation, their time spent with the youths, etc. He asked how many total programs will be using the facility right away. Cpl. Franklin stated that he has 150 youths in his program, Mr. Shemwell said Albany League Baseball has 300 youths and Coach Joslin stated that the soccer program has between 170-200 families, with 85% being female players.

Commissioner Fletcher commented on growing up in the Valdosta area and having recreational facilities. She agreed that we have 'good' but we do not have 'great' and this presentation is 'spot on'. She suggested having a central place in the community catering to those between 3-16; if that is not possible, she feels that Transit Director David Hamilton can put something together to transport players and their families, adding that she hopes this will be looked at in addition to all the other gyms that are in the area.

Commissioner Warbington thanked the presenters for the proposal and for bringing the information forward. He asked Cpl. Franklin the value of having a mega facility vs. the equivalent of a mega facility spread throughout the entire community. Cpl. Franklin stated there are more pros than cons in having everything in one location, adding that tournaments will be interested in coming to Albany and gave additional pros to having a multi-purpose location. In reply to Commissioner Warbington, Cpl. Franklin stated that there is no turf facility and having a multi-complex will bring others from out of town. Commissioner Warbington mentioned a Dougherty

County football coach commenting on Dougherty High getting turf and a new field house, with numbers increasing from 30-40 to 70 due to the upgrade. He asked Mr. Carter where we go from here and if the recreation master plan will cover a 'hub/mega facility'.

Commissioner Langstaff asked staff to research and gather data. He mentioned the agreement with Chehaw whereby money is out there for the public, adding that Chehaw needs help regarding recreation and agreed that this may be a good idea to have athletics out there. He agreed with Commissioner Fletcher in having a bus that runs to assist youths to get there, i.e., from school, etc., adding that he feels this is a good idea to expand and not having a centralized mega facility as mentioned causes Albany to miss opportunities including the hosting of tournaments and more community involvement because they are spread all over the city.

Commissioner Young stated that he has spoken to others in the community who are looking for a mega facility. Regarding the recreation master plan, he asked how many children this will affect and be able to get into the programs and being mentored, etc., adding that he sees this in two ways, as we are talking about facilities and programing and asked if this will be a partnership with the City or will it be separate. Cpl. Franklin stated that the request is to partner with the City and commented on the benefits of this partnership. Commissioner Young asked if Chehaw is the only site that is being looked at and gave examples of other places that can be explored. Cpl. Franklin suggested that this is needed, and location should not be an issue.

Mayor Dorough thanked the group for their work with the youth, adding that \$4.5 million is a lot of money and it is unfair for the City to require a volunteer group to incur this expense. He suggested the group schedule an appointment with the master plan consultant to discuss and stated cons (Chehaw Authority owns the property and will not consider this unless the City commits to provide funding, etc.). He reiterated incorporating this proposal into the master plan and commented on reviving the City football program, spending public monies, having everyone participate, etc. He suggested that this [Chehaw] is not a compatible and suggested looking at other sites, i.e., YMCA Sports complex since it has the acreage. He discussed the issue of there being too many baseball and football fields that are not being maintained and the concern that atrisk youths will not have transportation to Chehaw. He mentioned the regulation football field that is being built at Driskell Park and referenced other City parks that are being looked at to renovate or close. He asked Mr. Carter to arrange a meeting with the group and the consultant and suggested this could be a SPLOST project to partner with Dougherty County.

Commissioner Howard asked if Interim Recreation Director Craig Potter could speak regarding recreation. Mr. Potter stated that they are partnering with the YMCA and explained the program (Y without Walls) at Grove Park that begins August 16, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. He advised that staff from Recreation and the Y will go to the park to run the programs, adding that there will be speakers, help with homework, etc., provided every Monday and Wednesday at the park.

Mayor Pro Tem Fuller asked for information to be provided on advantages of having turf with Coach Joslin stating that it [turf] survives weather, etc., pros to having turf for sports rather than wet ground.

Commissioner Fletcher agreed with looking to partnership with Dougherty County and addressed turf not being recommended (six years ago when she had discussions). Mr. Shemwell countered that a study was conducted in 2017 for Paul Eames and the impact to turf the infield was deemed fiscally irresponsible regarding the return on investment. The project was geared for 15-18 years old youth; however, this proposal is aimed at younger kids and a lot goes into consideration of using turf.

Commissioner Warbington suggested that building a mega facility will cost \$10-15 million and gave an example of the one built in Warner Robbins, which was in the \$20 million range, adding that it was a regional project with surrounding cities/counties supporting funding and suggesting that this should be a regional facility. He asked Mr. Carter if this can be considered for the next SPLOST (VIII). Mr. Carter stated that he will check and provide information on when the next SPLOST is up for consideration with Commissioner Warbington suggesting partnering with the County, Lee County, etc., to add to their SPLOST Funding. He also gave site locations that can be considered for the mega facility.

Commissioner Young agreed with comments pertaining to economic development within the city, (families spending monies on hotels, restaurants, etc.) and asked that this be considered as well and to bring in EDC and Community and Economic Development to give their thoughts. Regarding the master plan, he stated that he sees this project as a larger scope than what the recreation master plan is considering, etc., and agreed to partnering with other communities.

Mayor Dorough thanked the group for the presentation and reiterated having the County to participate, looking at other sites, the contemplation of closing other gyms, etc.

PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS

"STORM READY" DESIGNATION

AFD Fire Chief Cedric Scott discussed information (copy on file) and announced that the National Weather Service – Tallahassee recognized Albany/Dougherty County as Storm Ready. In reply to Commissioner Howard, Chief Scott advised that the sirens are still in use and active when severe weather is indicated. In reply to Commissioner Howard, Chief Scott confirmed that all are working except for the one on Radium Springs/College Drive.

Commissioners collectively congratulated Chief Scott on this designation.

DOUGHERTY COUNTY 2020 (2025 HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN)

Chief Scott discussed information (copy on file) regarding the plan and asked for the Commission to review and adopt the revised Plan.

PUBLIC WORKS MATTERS

2800 BLOCK OF PHILLIPS DRIVE SPEED TABLES

Bruce Maples, Director of Engineering, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the request to approve the installation of traffic speed tables in the 2800 Block of Phillips Drive.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Maples explained the current process to request speed tables.

In reply to Commissioner Fletcher, Mr. Maples stated that he will provide information on when the process started for this area.

Commissioner Warbington stated that he is working with constituents to get the process started in a section of his Ward. In reply to Commissioner Warbington, Mr. Maples gave the location under consideration.

In reply to Commissioner Young, Mr. Maples commented on the servicing of the equipment used, repairs, etc., that puts the City behind, adding that the equipment is relatively old. Commissioner Young asked if more funds should be allocated with Mr. Maples explaining the process of having staff to use the equipment, time it takes, etc. Commissioner Young commented on this being a public safety matter (recognizing the problem of speeders), being low on police officers, number of requests for speed tables, etc., and noted deaths in his area due to speeders.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Maples confirmed that Commissioners can regulate installing tables and override the decision of staff.

Commissioner Young suggested bringing up speeders at tomorrow's public safety committee meeting.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

DCA EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Phyllis Brown, Interim CED Director, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the available rental and utility assistance programs for households financially impacted by COVID-19. She discussed the four programs including one federal and three City programs that are available to aid, and introduced staff present to answer questions. The power point

included points regarding: Emergency Rental Assistance Program, requirements for tenants and landlords, applying for assistance, 2020 HUD income limits (pertaining to eligibility), DCA applications and payments as of 7/14/21. Regarding City programs, she discussed the Eviction Prevention/Rental/Assistance Program with funding sources of CDBG/Cares Act, DCED Applications and payments, Tenant Based Assistance/COVID 19 program.

A brief discussion followed on the programs regarding: Section 8 program, notice in utilities bills and use of channel 16, number of those needing assistance in the upcoming months, etc., with Ms. Brown stating that she will provide extra information on items as requested. Additional discussion followed on reinstating the moratorium prohibiting evictions, other cities issuing an order to 'not evict', whether magistrate court can issue a moratorium, etc.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS

PURCHASE

Josh Williams, Buyer, discussed the following information (copy on file):

1. Office Depot Supplies, Staples Advantage
Est. annual exp. \$55,000.00

In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. Williams explained the process of utilizing the services as needed for office supplies that is paid by invoice or a City-issued purchasing card when ordering online.

SHUTTERED VENUE RECOVERY FUNDING (SBA COVID RELATED)

Craig Potter, Interim Recreation Director, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the request to authorize submission of grant application to SBA and if approved, authorize acceptance of the grant.

In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. Potter stated that the City owns the building and he is working with SPECTRA.

In reply to Commissioner Fletcher, Mr. Potter advised that there is no deadline on this.

In reply to Commissioner Young, Mr. Potter advised that employees are employed by SPECTRA at the Civic Center and that funds are for loss revenues, adding that he will check to see if a PPP loan was received.

Mayor Dorough stated that when the Civil Rights Museum received notice of receiving PPP funds, the funds were depleted. He mentioned that the Civil Rights Museum did not qualify due to not having permanent seating and asked Mr. Davis to check whether there is miscommunication, etc.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING FOR BROWNFIELD RLF

Paul Forgey Planning and Development Director, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the request to accept an award of \$480,850, which is supplemental to the \$800,000 the City was previously awarded.

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

Mr. Carter mentioned Town Hall Meetings held by Commissioners that staff was able to attend and suggested inviting staff for any other meetings. He advised that a special called meeting is needed to vote on the Walmart solar initiative as the deadline is August 13.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA(S)

Commissioner Howard asked if Mr. Carter and Code Enforcement can visit the E. Lake Apartments with Mr. Carter confirming that he will arrange.

Commissioner Fletcher commented on looking at changing one of the names due to having an EDC (Economic Development Commission) and CDEC (Community and Economic Development Council). She mentioned calls from people wanting to serve on boards and asked the City Clerk to provide information on vacancies. She referenced problems in the Albany Housing area, i.e., speed bumps, etc., and if bypassing the signatures for speed bumps is permissible. She stated that Lippett Ave., at Monroe HS is having issues as well with speed bumps and the Barnesdale and 12th Ave area. She asked Mr. Maples to get with Chief Persley and Dr. Miles to look at other areas and said she will provide names of the streets.

Commissioner Warbington commented on scheduling the special call meeting to address Walmart and mentioned that he just received an announcement that the State of Georgia is releasing monies for sewer infrastructure, etc., with a 30-day window. Regarding the demo list, he said that the three properties being sold today are tax delinquent. He asked that an agenda item be prepared to involve the Commission when there are tax delinquent properties being sold at auction and asked Mr. Forgey to present information regarding this with Mr. Davis making recommendations on how to handle delinquent properties being sold.

Commissioner Young asked to begin the process of preparing a committee to review/revise the alcohol license process. Regarding speed bumps, he showed a photo of a motor bike jumping a speed bump and asked that this be looked at immediately due to it being a public safety matter. He commented on having the state patrol and/or APD police the areas of concern and suggested doing a PSA on the dangers of speeding and partnering with other public safety entities.

Mayor Dorough asked to see pros/cons of merging the Drug/Gang Units and monies set aside for EV infrastructure and asked to transition to an electric fleet, adding that federal funding is available, and a request should be made to add charging stations citywide. Mr. Carter stated that he had conversations regarding transitioning to electrical charging and gave suggestions.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Howard asked if a press release is needed to advise the public that masks are required in public buildings. He also suggested releasing information to make the public aware that dirt bikes are not permissible on city streets as well as alerting citizens that putting basketball goals on city right-of-way is illegal.

Commissioner Warbington stated that EDC announced another job expansion in Albany, i.e., Pratt Industries with 30 jobs and an \$18 million expansion, etc., which is good news for Albany.

Mayor Dorough mentioned the \$4.8 billion the state has and that state lobbyists be contacted to assist with the separation project. Commissioner Young suggested also sending a letter to Senator Freddie Sims as well with Mayor Dorough stating that he will sign the letter. He mentioned that former Commissioner Arthur Williams called and reminded him that when temperatures rose, the Civic Center would be open for citizens to find relief and the community should be aware. In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. Carter advised that press releases are posted on Facebook, Twitter, etc. Mayor Dorough mentioned crime, vicious dogs, etc., that were discussed today and advised that City employees do not throw out trash/litter, APD is not the reason people speed and animal control is not in control of vicious dogs being on the streets. He asked citizens to report information to be addressed.

Mr. Carter asked if Wednesday or Thursday of next week will be ok for the special call meeting with Mayor Dorough asking that everyone check their calendar and report to the City Clerk.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

SONJA TOLBERT, CMC CITY CLERK