

AUGUST 24, 2021

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF ALBANY,
GEORGIA
GOVT. CENTER – RM 100

PRESENT: Mayor Bo Dorough
Mayor Pro Tem Matt Fuller (attended virtually)
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, BJ Fletcher, Chad Warbington and Demetrius Young
(Virtual participant: Bob Langstaff, Jr.)
Interim City Mgr.: Steven Carter
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Dorough called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m., and the invocation given by Pastor Joshua Bower, First Presbyterian Church of Albany, was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Commissioner Howard moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher and, following a roll call vote, the motion unanimously carried.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Purchase:

Yvette Fields, Central Services Director, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the request to identify another firm to conduct the Downtown Master Plan and Market Analysis, adding that the cost for the number three firm from Raleigh, NC (Design Workshop, Inc) is \$103,000.00 and the number two firm is from Atlanta with a cost of \$102,500.00 (TSW).

Mayor Dorough commented on TSW (the number two firm) and confirmed that they have worked with the City of Albany in the past with Ms. Fields and Lequrica Gaskins, Downtown Director, agreeing. Commissioner Warbington then moved to approve the selection of TSW, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher and, following a roll call vote, the motion unanimously carried.

Alcohol License Applications:

Marshal Walter Norman, Business License Director/Interim Code Enforcement Director, discussed the following alcohol license application/transfer of ownership.

1. Lil Whiskey River, Inc., d/b/a Lil Whiskey River Lounge; 2900 Sylvester Rd., D. Hart/Agent; Liquor, beer and wine consumption

Commissioner Fletcher moved to approve the application, seconded by Commissioner Warbington and, following a roll call vote, the motion carried 6-1 with Commissioner Howard voting no.

Marshal Norman discussed the following alcohol license application/transfer of ownership.

2. Sheree Dhan Investment, Inc., d/b/a Save Rite; 427 S. Westover Blvd., B. Porter/Agent; Beer and wine package

Commissioner Warbington moved to approve the application, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher and, following a roll call vote, the motion carried 6-1 with Commissioner Howard voting no.

ORDINANCES

Paul Forgey, Planning Director, briefly discussed changes as noted (copy on file) regarding the following ordinance amending the sign ordinance.

In reply to Commissioner Warbington, Mr. Forgey advised that the Planning Commission approved the amendments 6-0 and advised that there was little participation at the public hearings that were held.

Commissioner Young asked if the covering of convenient store windows wrapped completely with advertisements, etc., is included in the ordinance with Mr. Forgey stating no and explaining that if the windows are covered more than 50%, it is a code violation.

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Commissioner Fletcher introduced

AN ORDINANCE NO. 21-124

Amending Article IV of Chapter 4 so as to revise the Sign Ordinance to include text amendments regarding total number of allowable multi-message signs to the variance process and to adjustments in maintenance standards

Commissioner Fletcher then offered the ordinance and asked for consent to dispense with the second reading and asked for its adoption, seconded by Commissioner Warbington and, following a roll call vote, the motion unanimously carried.

RESOLUTIONS

A brief discussion followed with Ms. Fields' discussing the following resolution and explaining information (copy on file) regarding the request to submit a grant application and to accept the grant if it is approved. She advised that they are applying for three areas 1) sewer /engineering services in the amount of \$9.7 million; 2) broadband expansion in the amount of \$5 million and 3) economic impact regarding the downtown area in the amount of \$5 million for the enhancement and expansion of cultural tourism.

In reply to Commissioner Young, Ms. Fields explained the application process that includes staff efforts and background information regarding the projects.

Mayor Dorough questioned whether the Civil Rights Museum is part of the plan with Ms. Fields stating that it is included as part of the Harlem Business District. Mayor Dorough then moved to adopt the following resolution, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher.

A RESOLUTION NO. 21-R162

Authorizing submission of a Grant Application for the Governor's Fiscal Recovery Fund Grant Program

Commissioner Young stated that this is part of the American Rescue Plan and that there are available funds for infrastructure as he has discussed in prior meetings, adding that this frees up monies for assisting the community due to COVID-19, etc.

Hearing no additional comments and, following a roll call vote, the motion unanimously carried.

Commissioner Warbington moved to adopt the following resolutions, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher, and following a roll call vote, the motion unanimously carried.

A RESOLUTION NO. 21-R163

Adopting the Dougherty County Hazard Mitigation Plan 2020-2025

A RESOLUTION NO. 21-R164

Approving installation of traffic calming measures in the 2800 block of Phillips Dr; Authorizing the use of TSPLOST for such measures

A RESOLUTION NO. 21-R165

Approving installation of traffic calming measures in the 800 Block of Lippitt Dr; Authorizing the use of TSPLOST for such measures

A RESOLUTION NO. 21-R166

Authorizing submission of a Grant Application to the US Small Business Administration re: Shuttered Venue Operators Grant; should such grant be awarded to the City, such grant is accepted

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A RESOLUTION NO. 21-R167

Accepting Supplemental Funding from the US Environmental Protection Agency re: Brownfield
Revolving Loan Fund Program

A RESOLUTION NO. 21-R168

Authorizing use of SPLOST VII funds for the purchase of professional services and hardware for the
Technology and Communications Department

A RESOLUTION NO. 21-R169

Amending Resolution No. 18-R123 re: Procurement Policy for Albany’s Transit System

A RESOLUTION NO. 21-R170

Declaring 508 Pine Ave., to be surplus property and authorizing its disposition

At the request of Commissioner Young, Mr. Forgey discussed the following resolution and the process pertaining to collaboration between the City and County, having public comment sessions with few attending, and sending the document for review before adoption. He advised that comments can be received while the document is being reviewed before adoption in October. In response to Commissioner Young, Mr. Forgey explained that even before COVID, it was difficult to get public input adding that the pandemic impacted the ability to hold public meetings, further reducing citizen involvement. He advised that the official public comment period is over; however, comments can still be included in the document, since it will not be adopted until October.

A RESOLUTION NO. 21-R171

Transmitting an updated Five-Year Compensation Plan and Community Work Program for review to the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs prior to adoption

Hearing no additional comments, Commissioner Warbington moved to adopt the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher and, following a roll call vote, the motion unanimously carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

1.	Office Supplies – Staples Advantage	Estimated annual exp.	\$55,000.00
2.	Heavy Duty Lifts	Estimated exp.	\$47,559.83
3.	Alamo Tractor w/Boom – Flint Equipment, Albany, GA	Estimated exp.	\$172,599.52

OTHER BUSINESS

John Dawson, Interim IT Director, discussed information regarding the request for staff to research and recommend alternate streaming sources for the broadcasting of meetings. He advised that the new platform – Box Cast - is being used tonight and explained the process and options, including the capability to broadcast on the City’s website and links to FB and YouTube. Mr. Carter advised that this platform will be used going forward for all meetings.

In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Fuller, Mr. Dawson stated that it is subscription based with the cost being \$149.00 per month.

Detail discussed followed on 1) the platform being used on mobile devices, 2) ability to be watched on smart TV’s, 3) storage of recorded meetings and for how long, 4) the City being in control of the document, sharing, saving/broadcasting and ownership, 5) use of Box Cast in place of FB live

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streaming, 6) viewers accessing through the website or web browser, 7) disabling FB comments, 8) tracking viewership, etc.

Commissioner Young noted that this platform is similar to what was already in use (FB and YouTube); and suggested that the primary issue is where viewers can see it. He expressed his concern of hindering and questioned disabling FB comments. Mr. Dawson explained that there is no way to completely disable comments; however, there are options to moderate. Commissioner Young reiterated the need for citizens to be able to access meetings.

Mr. Carter interjected that the link will still continue to be on FB, unless the Commission decides to abandon that platform. He explained that it is not an app, but it is mobile-friendly (can be viewed on cell phones). Commissioner Young countered that his concern is not availability, but rather replacing what citizens have become accustomed to

Commissioner Warbington moved to have Box Cast as the exclusive broadcasting means for the City of Albany, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher. Commissioner Warbington suggested that this platform can be linked for meeting minutes, i.e., replacing written minutes.

Commissioner Young mentioned the features just discussed regarding Box Cast, stating that it is not a new solution, just something else with a different platform, nothing else. He added that when changing the process, viewers are lost. He stated that he feels further discussion is warranted and suggested it being an item at the retreat.

Mayor Dorough asked the Clerk if meetings were broadcast last year with the Clerk advising that FB Live Stream started after COVID. Mayor Dorough mentioned the need to have public access to meetings and noted that this is done by use of Channel 16, adding that comments (on FB) were baseless and nasty and agreeing that this is a proper platform. He agreed with Commissioner Young that this should have been discussed at a work session, etc.

Hearing no additional comments, and following a roll call vote, the motion carried 5-2 with Commissioners Howard and Young voting no.

Mayor Dorough commented on recent violent crimes in the community and asked the possibility of having a community meeting to partner and get people involved, specifically the clergy. A brief discussion followed regarding the date and time with the consensus to schedule the 'listening' meeting for next week.

Commissioners Howard and Fletcher agreed that a listening session is greatly needed.

Commissioner Young thanked Mayor Dorough for issuing a proclamation today for Black Business Month and advised that in addition to that proclamation, barbers Helen Young (Helen's Barber Shop) and Eddie Thornton (Thornton's Barbershop) were recognized individually as being the longest black-owned shops in Albany. He briefly discussed the need to recognize and support black-owned businesses, etc.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

MAYOR

ATTEST

CITY CLERK