

SEPTEMBER 21, 2021
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

PRESENT: Mayor Bo Dorough
Mayor Pro Tem Matt Fuller (virtual)
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, BJ Fletcher and Chad Warbington
(and Demetris Young - virtual)
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis
Interim City Mgr.: Steven Carter

Mayor Dorough called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. and opened the public hearings.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Zoning Case # 21-039 - Lavon Nichols/Applicant; MEME9 Properties, LLC/Owner, request to rezone a .253-acre portion of property located at 1104 N. Slappey Blvd from C-1 to CR. PC approved 6-1. Ward 2

Using a power point presentation (copy on file) Paul Forgey, Planning Director, discussed the application noting that the proposed use is for a personal care home. He outlined planning considerations including surrounding zoning, showing maps of the land use, traffic impact information, aerial map, future land use map and advised that the Planning Commission recommended approval.

Mayor Pro Tem Fuller noted the rezoning of only one parcel with the applicant wanting to rezone and sub-divide other properties with residential structures. Mr. Forgey agreed.

Commissioner Warbington questioned the definition of ‘family care home’ vs. the two other types of designations (group care/congregate care), asking if it is based on the number of residents. Mr. Forgey advised that it all falls under state regulations and is a generic definition of both and explained that this will be used for disabled people. Discussion followed with Mr. Forgey noting the number allowed under group care vs. family care/congregate with this change allowing more clients.

Mayor Dorough advised that no one signed up to speak on this matter.

2. Zoning Case # 21-041 - Colonial Town Center, LLC/Owner; Concept Companies/Applicant, request Special Approval to construct a new Car Wash located at 2828 Nottingham Way. PC approved 5-1. Ward 2

Mr. Forgey discussed information (copy on file) and explained the need for special approval of this property. He showed a map of the location and surrounding zoning, advising that the request is for a car wash. He discussed planning considerations, including traffic count, aerial map, future land use map and advised that the Planning Commission recommended approval. Noting that no conditions were set, he advised that the Planning Commission and explained that it should not impact the surrounding neighborhood, but if a problem arises due to sound it should be brought up during construction and a sound study can be conducted.

Mayor Pro Tem Fuller asked what is allowed in the C-7 designation, Mr. Forgey explained that C-7 is a difficult zone; formerly it was C-4 (commercial) with the City changing the definition of C-4 to C-7

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several years ago, and C-7 requiring use of both commercial and residential however, it is a planned development zoning and, the entire corner planned as a planned development. When zoning for the corner was approved, each parcel was indicated to be some type of commercial use. The Commission approved the entire development as commercial, without a residential component, which was allowed at that time. He reiterated that C-7 requires both – commercial and residential, adding that a new C-7 application would not allow a car wash by itself; however, the existing C-7 does because of being an overall plan. Mayor Pro Tem asked if a restaurant is allowed with Mr. Forgey replying in the affirmative. Mayor Pro Tem Fuller mentioned the calls and emails that he has received from residents who are opposed to this, adding and that he spoke with Mr. Dent who is working with the applicant, regarding this application. Mr. Forgey explained that in the past, it was considered to require a sound study to demonstrate the impact that a sound generated by a use would or would not impact the surrounding residential area. If it is determined that a negative impact is the result, a solution should be brought up during construction rather than having to deal with the issue after the fact. He advised that the City Commission could condition approval to include a sound study if they so desire.

Commissioner Warbington questioned why special approval was requested vs rezoning, with Mr. Forgey explaining that both require the entire process and are roughly the same and may potentially result in the same outcome. Commissioner Warbington disagreed, stating that a car wash may be borderline unsuitable and expressed concern of the noise and mentioned other car washes with noise issues in the city and asked if anything was done to mitigate the noise. Mr. Forgey explained that the owners put in new blowers and a wall was built behind the car wash to help mitigate the sound, additionally, a sound study was conducted after the carwash was built. Discussion followed on noise data, with Mr. Forgey advising that this is the responsibility of the applicant. Mr. Forgey advised that before it is built it can be conditioned as this is the responsibility of the applicant; however, as in the case of the car wash on Slappey, it was after the fact with the City being responsible for the sound study.

In reply to Commissioner Young, Mr. Forgey noted the hours of operation; Monday – Saturday 7 am-8 pm and Sunday 8:00 am – 6:00 pm.

In reply to Mayor Dorough regarding the sign ordinance and when the Director of Planning was delegated with granting a variance, Mr. Forgey advised that it was at the last meeting when the amended sign ordinance was adopted. Mayor Dorough said his concern is also on the noise and suggested ascertaining the level of noise that will be generated prior to construction beginning.

Discussion followed on ingress/egress based on the site plan, with Mr. Forgey advising that the entrance will be an access road that will have suitable stacking to prevent cars from clogging the right of way.

Mayor Dorough noted page 19 and the public hearing notice being at 10 am advising that if anyone shows up at 10 to speak, he will allow the person to speak.

Joe Dent, representing the applicant, noted the site plan in the information that provided additional information (copy on file) regarding the carwash, advising that there should be ample space He distributed information, including photographs, regarding state-of-the art Caliber Carwash, adding that the noise concerns are the vacuums, blowers and loud music, with the applicant addressing all three, which he briefly discussed.

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Commissioner Howard verified that residences with the noise concerns are behind Buffalo Wild Wings; Mr. Dent concurred. Commissioner Howard asked if the hotel across the street a problem with Mr. Dent will be mentioning factors that he feels will buffer the noise. Commissioner Howard asked if the ingress/egress will come off of Ledo or Nottingham; Mr. Dent explained that the proposal is to come off of Nottingham, but that is subject to Traffic Engineering and DOT.

Mayor Pro Tem Fuller confirmed that information he emailed the Clerk from citizens opposing the application (copy on file) was distributed. The Clerk confirmed and gave Mr. Dent a copy of the information.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that the carwash concerns, including loud music and other disruptions, make the decision tough regarding this application. Mr. Dent commented on the required landscaping plan having been submitted, having a clean/friendly business and the owner's desire to be neighborhood friendly and advised that the owner/operator will have the posted signs prohibiting loud music enforced.

Commissioner Warbington asked if there is any scientific data; the ordinance states 60 dBs as the limit. Mr. Dent stated that he has not been provided this information but will try to get it to have something to all before the next meeting. Commissioner Warbington noted noise decimals in the area as it would relate to the carwash area. Regarding fencing, Mr. Dent advised that it was not included due to aesthetics reasons.

Mayor Dorough asked if the property has been purchased already with Mr. Dent stating that this is part of the purchasing process and he has not seen the contract. Mayor Dorough suggested having a sound study using equipment Chick-fil-Lay uses to determine sound levels. He asked Mr. Davis if letters that were submitted can be considered by the Commission, with Mr. Davis agreeing.

Lisa Edwards spoke in opposition, saying she submitted a letter and listed other concerns for opposing, including safety and wellbeing, buses traveling the roadway, accidents that occur at the light, increased traffic, sustainability of the business in the area, a hand-detail car wash across from the proposed new carwash, noise, traffic that goes into the daycare, currently left turns prohibited and suggested having a more viable business in the area.

Commissioners Howard and Fletcher asked where Ms. Edwards lives, with Ms. Edwards stating that she lives off Ledo Road, approximately three blocks away.

Commissioner Warbington agreed with Ms. Edwards' concerns.

There was no one else desiring to speak on this matter.

3. Zoning Case # 21-044 - Jakendrus Harris and Lakeshia Harris/Owners; Jashoundrous Martin/Applicant; request Special Approval to operate a daycare for no more than 18 children at 2510 Hilltop Road. PC approved 7-0. Ward 2

Mr. Forgey discussed information (copy on file) regarding the request to operate a childcare facility and showed a map of the surrounding zoning and discussed: the criteria for special approval, including traffic

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generation, fencing, outdoor lighting, hours of operation, noted the future land use map, aerial use map and planning considerations. He advised that the Planning Commission recommended approval.

In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Fuller, Mr. Forgey stated that he does not know how long it has been since the property operated as a church.

In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. Forgey stated that it is his understanding that the property no longer operates as a church, adding that he will provide additional information on this.

Mayor Dorough advised that no one signed up to speak on this item.

Commissioner Warbington stated that the information indicates that the owner purchased the property from the church in February.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Dorough closed the public hearings.

APPOINTMENTS

1. Downtown Development Authority: One appointment
2. Albany/Dougherty County Land Bank: Three appointments

Mayor Dorough advised that the appointments will be made at the regular meeting next week. The Clerk advised that there is another person interested in being on the Land Bank Authority that she will submit for consideration.

LAKE CORNELIA PROPERTY ACQUISITION

Bruce Maples, Engineering Director, discussed information (copy on file) regarding use of Eminent Domain to acquire Lake Cornelia, advising that this is connected to Lake Loretta and is now considered a ‘dry lake’ located in the Lake Park subdivision. He commented on the pond and storm drainage concerns, the analysis that was done, negotiations with Lake Park Homeowners and Recreation Associations with the plan to provide area for increase in the volume of water that will be due to pipes that will be laid, etc., adding that it is an approximate \$1.5 million CSO project. He explained that the holdup has been the inability to obtain the right to discharge into and improve the Lake Cornelia pond.

Commissioner Warbington commended staff for their work on the design and sustainability of this project.

Mr. Davis explained the legal process regarding Eminent Domain, filing with Superior Court, the property owner’s right for a jury trial, etc., adding that with it being for public use, the City is comfortable with the AMI appraisal

Additional discussion followed regarding ownership in the area, the Lake Park Recreation Club, Inc. involvement (owning the property), etc. Mayor Dorough asked if it was originally a group of homeowners around the park/lake. Mr. Davis replied affirmatively and advised that attorney Gary

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Lamar, Asst. City Solicitor, and Wallace Bonner have cleared any issues, adding that Lake Park Recreation Club, Inc. is the owner.

Commissioner Warbington commented on the legal process and use of public funds with further discussion following on the monies with the appraisal being \$84,500.

PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS

ALCOHOL LICENSE APPLICATIONS

Marshal Norman discussed the following:

1. Food for Less Albany, Inc; d/b/a Piggy Wiggly Food for Less; 1032 W. Gordon Avenue; H. Ball/Agent; Beer and Wine Package; WARD 3

Commissioner Young noted the map and six licenses within an approximate three block radius and asked if this was considered when approving the license. Marshal Norman explained that they do not consider this and what is allowed to be considered. Commissioner Young noted category nine of what can be considered regarding negative impact and asked Mr. Norman if this was considered; he agreed. Commissioner Young commented on crime in the area and disagreed with Mr. Norman's assessment regarding crime in this area and mentioned recent events. He also expressed disappointment with the owner, who pledged not to seek the license, adding that the community does not need additional access to alcohol. He said he will speak with the owner about this decision.

Mayor Dorough stated that he was at the meeting and does not recall the owner making a statement to this nature; Commissioner Young countered that the statement was made. Mayor Dorough asked Marshal Norman if most grocery stores in Albany have alcohol licenses? Marshal Norman agreed.

Commissioner Warbington asked if this business has a store not selling alcohol with Mr. Norman stating that he is not aware, however he agreed that most stores in the area sell alcohol, adding that he was at the meeting also and he, too, did not hear that statement, unless it was a private conversation. He remembers Commissioners present at the meeting being happy that the store was coming to Albany and he wants it to know that he is grateful that they are coming here.

Commissioner Howard stated that Rubo's in Albany does not sell alcohol with Mr. Norman agreeing.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that she remembers the group coming to Albany and asked if they would sell alcohol, with them confirming that they will.

Commissioner Young stated that with everyone present, he asked the owners at the meeting, their intentions about selling alcohol and that they said they would not be seeking a license. He spoke to the ills of alcohol including crime, poor conditions in neighbors, the need for good businesses which care about the community, adding that he will have another conversation with the owners and that his

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comments are not to say that he is not appreciative of a grocery store in the area, but to look at ways to stop negatively impacting neighbors. He asked if Save-a-lot sells alcohol on the East side, with Mr. Norman stating that he is not certain but will check.

Marshal discussed the following (copy on file):

2. Pitts Bros. Convenience Store Inc; d/b/a Apple Express; 418 N. Slappey Blvd; L. Pitts/Agent; Beer Package; WARD 3

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Marshal Norman advised that it is his understanding that Albany High School is being used as a training facility/office use and is no longer operating as a school

Marshal Norman discussed the following (copy on file):

3. Big Reds Eggs LLC; d/b/a Eggs Up Grill; 2818 Old Dawson Road, Suite 12; M. McNeal/Agent; Wine Consumption; WARD 5

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Marshal Norman stated that to his knowledge, the church is still open.

TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP

Mr. Norman discussed the following (copy on file):

1. The Rocket Burger Group LLC; d/b/a La Luna; 1935 Dawson Road; W. Henry/Agent; Liquor, Beer and Wine Consumption; WARD 4

There were no questions/comments on this item.

Mr. Norman discussed the following (copy on file):

2. Shahaj LLC; d/b/a HRH Mart; 1608 S. Jefferson Street; N. Nichols/Agent; Beer and Wine Package; WARD 6

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Marshal Norman explained that the establishment is the same and that there is a new owner this year.

Commissioner Young asked if convenience stores have a certain percentage of sales regarding alcohol vs. groceries; Marshal Norman stated that there is nothing on the books regarding this and explained the rule applying to restaurants regarding the sale of alcohol. Commissioner Young commented on the alcohol and gambling machines in this store, which leads to the poor quality of neighborhoods. He asked to look at the location in terms of how much alcohol is sold vs groceries, similar to the requirement for restaurants regarding the sale of alcohol and asked Mr. Davis if it can be looked at for consideration.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS

PURCHASES

Shaun Cookson, Airport Superintendent of Operations, discussed the following purchase and explained that the lights on the runway is for safety and will be used when a runway is closed.

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

1. Lighted Runway Closure Markers - Hali-Brite, Inc., Brainerd, MN.
Total exp. \$41,380.00

In reply to Commissioner Young, Mr. Cookson stated that the lights are portable and fueled by generators.

In reply to Mayor Dorough, he advised that there are four runways. Mayor Dorough commented on the pros as noted on the agenda item.

AFD Chief Cedric Scott discussed the following (copy on file) and explained the use of the breathing apparatus.

2. Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus - Fireline, Inc., Winder, GA.
Total exp. \$209,330.00

In reply to Commissioner Warbington, Chief Scott discussed the process including the initial purchase last year for 25 units, with the last requesting to purchase being in 2025 when all SCBA are set to expire. He explained that this allows them to be phased in and spreads the approximate \$1.0 million cost over five years. Commissioner Warbington asked if Dougherty County purchases this equipment for the stations in the unincorporated area or does it fall within the agreement of the Service Delivery Strategy; Chief Scott agreed that it is in the agreement between the City and County. Discussion followed with Chief Scott addressing questions from Mayor Dorough regarding personnel, engines, tanks, large ladder trucks, reserved units, etc., explaining that the initially request was for 145. Mayor Dorough asked to get the number on how many per year will be purchased.

GDOT SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT

Mr. Cookson discussed information (copy on file) regarding the authorization to approve a supplemental grant agreement.

In reply to Mayor Dorough, Transit Director David Hamilton stated that the City's local match is \$130,000 and there will be a local match for the grant as well.

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Mayor Dorough recognized William Wright to comment on this item. Mr. Wright distributed information (copy on file) regarding reverse Robin Hood and GDOT as it pertains to DBE participation and the airport project.

In reply to Commissioner Young, Mr. Wright suggested that representation and manifestation should be commensurate and mentioned the five experts sent by GDOT explaining that the trade-off should benefit the people it was designed to benefit, adding that GDOT said they have found money for this project. He contended that they did not ‘find’ the money, they already knew the cost of the project and had the funds and suggested that the law was not followed (i.e., notification to the public of the project [30-day notice required]).

ALBANY TRANSIT DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY UPDATE

Mr. Hamilton discussed information (copy on file) regarding the adoption of a revised Policy for Transit as required by the Federal Transit Administration.

In reply to Mayor Dorough, HR Deputy Director Towanna Howard, discussed being the Drug and Alcohol Program Manager for the City of Albany and the FTA Transit System and explained the FTA guidelines regarding random drug testing (annually for safety sensitive personnel and quarterly for Transit personnel), etc.

In reply to Commissioner Warbington, Ms. Howard explained the CDL guidelines and pre-employment testing, adding that elected officials are not drug tested.

SWGA PROJECT UPDATE

Amber Bell, Project Manager, SWGA Project, gave a brief update on the Winn Dixie Building and discussed funds received including a request for a resolution of support for a grant they will be applying for that will be submitted by/before October 31.

Commissioner Young thanked Ms. Bell and SWGA Project for their work on this and mentioned renderings that he has shared with citizens in his ward.

In reply to Commissioner Warbington, Ms. Bell discussed the multi-purpose facility known as the ‘community hub’ which will contain a farmers’ market, food distribution center serving the school system; space for a commercial kitchen for caterers to obtain licenses for their businesses, business incubation, and health/wellness opportunities. She mentioned plans for Phoebe Putney’s involvement, that was stalled due to COVID and said she is uncertain of this phase. Commissioner Warbington asked if the money already received is part of the capital to build-out the spaces, equipment. Ms. Bell agreed. Commissioner Warbington referred to fund being sought from the State...Ms. Bell interjected that there is a huge renovation cost associated with the 1989 building, being in the flood plain and having to raise the floor one foot; new wiring, new roof, etc. In response to Commissioner Warbington, she explained that raising the building can be done.

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Mayor Dorough commented on letters of support that have been submitted with applications and questioned the design of the building with fundraising being ongoing. Ms. Bell explained the process, cost, business plan, applying for New Market Tax Credits, etc. Mayor Dorough agreed that there is a need and it should be supported. He asked for the design, schematics, and business plan, etc., with Ms. Bell stating that she will provide this information. Ms. Bell mentioned other entities coming to the table; Mayor Dorough stated that she can provide the information he requested if she has another vision, adding that the hospital needs to be involved because of the health of Southwest Georgians and helping them change their habits. Discussion followed on wording of the resolution.

BUDGET AMENDMENT

Mr. Carter discussed updated information (copy on file) regarding necessitated adjustments to the FY22 adopted budget, with the original anticipated amount of approximately \$3.9 million. That amount was modified and is now \$2.9 million; the funding sources are fund balances from last year's general fund, mainly through the CARES Act for COVID related purchases and Enterprise funds. He explained that there is no request for an increase in rates/taxes and commented on incentives (partnerships with Thronateeska, RiverQuarium, Dougherty County School System, ASU etc.), that have been put in place and discussed:

1) Covid duty-pay to those who qualify

Commissioner Howard questioned the one-time pay that was discussed, with Mr. Carter stating that the amount is \$1500 based on the consensus of the whole group. Commissioner Fletcher spoke on hazardous pay for any work performed under such conditions, what qualifies as hazardous, upgrading pay for departments, importance of CSO project, and not making a move until talks are finalized regarding public safety pay/departmental pay. Commissioner Warbington asked if this is the first of COVID hazard pay with Mr. Carter agreeing. Additional discussion followed regarding those who have continued to work through COVID i.e., trash pickup, other services, etc. and expressed concerns on drawing the line and clarification on the proposed pay process. Mr. Carter explained the monthly stipend for six months, one-time payment of \$1000 max in addition across the board, and his recommendation that this should not be across the board. Commissioner Warbington asked for additional information to determine who qualifies for COVID hazard pay, with Mr. Carter stating that it would be the difference in communicating directly or from a desk when dealing with COVID. Commissioner Young asked if the hazard pay policy, as written in the HR manual, is being used with Mr. Carter agreeing, adding that there are 627 with 30 part-time employees and that the number will be looked at diligently before issuing checks. Regarding the payment amount, he explained that it still at \$1500. Mayor Dorough noted the impact on the budget, other cities providing incentives to employees, agreeing with departments which come in direct contact with COVID, etc., regarding the definition of what is included as a hazardous situation. He asked to get the actual numbers of the COVID bonus pay. Mr. Carter stated that 627 is the initial number qualifying for the \$1500 range; 30 qualify for the \$500 range and said he will provide the numbers for the remaining employees qualifying for the \$500 range.

Mayor Dorough stated that before this is approved, he would have to know how many employees are in each category, including numbers if the one payment is \$1000 for full time and \$500 for part-time and other employees. Mr. Carter agreed to provide the numbers. Mayor Dorough suggested putting this

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off for a month so that everyone understands. Commissioner Fletcher asked who, not just the number, of people in the categories. Commissioner Young commented on the hazard policy that was discussed, suggesting that politics be kept out of it. Mr. Carter stated that the numbers will be provided and spoke in favor of sticking with the policy that is in place, adding that he will make the decision of who does/does not qualify.

Finance Director Derrick Brown advised that the total amount for COVID pay is \$1,251,516; 626 will receive the \$1500 payment; 30 employees working in a hazardous environment will receive the \$750 payment; with 341 employees receiving \$500, for a total of 997 employees. Mayor Dorough asked for the total for the 626 employees receiving the \$1000 payment and the 341 employees receiving the \$500 payment.

2) Vaccination incentive

Mr. Carter discussed the one-time incentive for employees in the amount of \$300.00, retroactive to those who were previously vaccinated with an end date of November 15 at 5 pm and proof of vaccination. Commissioner Fletcher questioned having funds, i.e., Care's Act and if this will be used. Mr. Carter compare the American Rescue Plan vs. the Care's Act, which is reimbursement of funds the City has spent. Commissioner Warbington mentioned the cost and discussed the pros to employees getting the vaccinations with healthcare cost being less. He suggested adding the financial component/investment that will be made to this as it reduces healthcare costs/issues. Mr. Carter agreed with Commissioner Warbington asking if the data can be provided. Mayor Dorough asked the total bill for City employees who required ventilation, with Mr. Davis agreeing that the information should be available and said he will check with HR. Regarding HIPPA, Mr. Carter cautioned violating the privacy issue.

3) College education incentive

Mr. Carter explained the one-time stipend incentive for employees wanting to further their education, provided the proposed amounts (\$500/associate degree; \$1000/Bachelor Degree; \$1500/master's degree) and advised that the degree must be in a field which the City uses.

4) Rewarding employees with certain certificates

Mayor Dorough mentioned departments requiring certifications (utility department, etc) and compensation for obtaining them. Mr. Carter explained that there are certifications the City prefers and those that are required. Additionally, there are other governing agencies requiring the City to have someone maintain certain certifications. He advised that because older, certified employees are retiring, to incentivize younger employees to become certified, a maximum of \$750 is being offered. The date of July 1, 2016 (five years) entitles individuals having obtained certification. Those with multiple certifications will receive 1.5 times the value of the highest certification. Commissioner Warbington expressed support for the incentive and agreed that employees willing to take the initiative to further their education deserve to be rewarded, as they are the kind of employee the City wants to retain. Commissioner Young expressed concern regarding employees being 'poached' once they have gained the education/certification. The City's investment to retain these employees will be futile if they are lured to another job. He asked how to ensure an employee's obligation to the City making them more

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apt to stay. Mr. Carter stated that standards can be set and implemented, as well as other incentives enacted that will prove to employees that the City of Albany is a valuable place to work, aiding retention efforts. Mayor Dorough asked for a list of different positions and how the City benefits from the employee's certification, i.e., list of certifications eligible for the payment with Mr. Carter stating that job descriptions will include degree/certification required for a particular position.

5) Public Safety/Utility Operations pay

Mr. Carter noted departments in public safety, etc., (AFD, APD, specified Utility positions) which have difficulty recruiting/retaining employees. He mentioned AFD's pay study, which is a pay increase with a long-lasting effect on the budget. An increase of 3/2.5/2% was looked at and, being able to sustain the increase for policemen and firemen, a 2% increase over what has already been allocated is proposed, along with certain Utility positions, affecting approximately 300 employees with the direct pay increase, putting many at or above a mid-level salary. Commissioner Fletcher agreed with getting the pay corrected, mentioning the hard work of Public Works employees during Hurricane Michael, which underscored the importance of that department, and asked that this be done across the board. Commissioner Warbington commented on shortages of teachers/nurses and incentives being offered to them; for municipalities statewide and across the nation the focus is public safety, which forces competition in salaries for those positions. He relayed a personal experience that shed light on the plight and challenges of police officers; agreeing that there is a need to increase their pay. Commissioner Young noted opportunities regarding pay with education incentives. Having good positions within the City and creating career pathways for youths, i.e., educational requirements being an incentive, etc.

A brief discussion followed with Mayor Dorough stating that Commissioner Howard suggested, and he tends to concur, to go through the list and vote on 1) COVID pay, 2) vaccine incentive and 3) item # 7 next week and continue discussions on the other incentives. Commissioner Howard explained reasons for acting only on the three items mentioned. The consensus was to continue discussions.

6) Longevity pay:

Mr. Carter stated that this proposal will have a lasting effect on employees for life with the proposal being a one-step increase on the pay scale for every five years of service. This will go far in helping employees who feel stuck at a certain level to move along the pay scale. He mentioned high achievers every organization desires to employ, but it is as important to employ those who come to work each day and perform their duties. In reply to Commissioner Warbington, Mr. Carter stated that a step increase is between 5-7%. Commissioner Young agreed with the increase and mentioned a conversation he had with an employee who had been with the City for eight years, when step increases were halted, she was still earning the same pay; however, new employees were paid the same pay she had been making for eight years. He said he supports reinstatement of the step/pay increases. Mayor Dorough asked if this becomes effective July 2021; Mr. Carter agreed. Mayor Dorough asked if it is retroactive; Mr. Carter stated no. Mayor Dorough stated that he foresees this becoming an issue among long-term employees who will feel they were denied a step increase when the practice ended and now the step increase is being reinstated. Even so, he feels that the City cannot pay for this incentive plus the problems it will create in respect to long-term employees. Mr. Carter advised that the City cannot afford to retroact this incentive; it will be available only to those employed as of July 1, 2021. Mayor Dorough stated that

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some of the proposals should be vetted more fully and recommended to move to the budget amendment of \$35,000 for the Master Plan for the Civil Rights Institute.

7) Contingency Funding

Mr. Carter noted that the Contingency incentive was skipped, advising that staff worked realize that the numbers are estimates only therefore, there is a need to ensure there is some wiggle room in the numbers in order to sufficiently allocate the money required.

Regarding longevity pay, Mr. Carter advised that it is impossible to go back to the beginning of time; any date set will result in winners/losers and stated his reasoning. Mayor Dorough reiterated his concern of employees who have been with the City less than 20 years missing out on this benefit. Mr. Carter advised that it will be made known that ‘this is the rule and you do not qualify’. Mayor Dorough again stated that further thought and discussion is needed on this incentive. Commissioner Young discussed this being a starting point and moving the City in the right direction.

8) Civil Rights Institute \$35,000

Mayor Dorough noted that this was discussed at the recent retreat regarding receiving an RFP for a revision to the Master Plan and review proposals for enhancing the exhibits or expanding the Civil Rights Institute. He advised that the \$35,000 requested amount be paid to the consultant, allowing the CRI to commission the Master Plan.

In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Fuller, Mayor Dorough stated that the RFP is out. Mayor Pro Tem Fuller asked if only one bid was received. Mayor Dorough replied negatively, explaining that the RFP states that the \$35,000 is the consultant’s fee.

Discussion followed regarding whether the administration will be by the consultant working for the City or will the City reimburse the Institute. Mayor Dorough clarified that it is an allocation with an agreement with the Civil Rights Institute selecting the consultant and managing the project. Additional discussion followed on managing/accountability; the City retaining the consultant or an MOU with the Institute to pay the consultant and be reimbursed etc., completing the work to the satisfaction of all parties. Mr. Carter stated that the terms of the agreement will have to reflect if it is a reimbursable structure, etc. He advised that the funds used will be through the Hotel/Motel tax, which works through the CVB, thereby moving the City back a level. Mayor Dorough stated that something will be put in writing regarding this. Commissioner Young questioned who let the RFP, with Mayor Dorough stating that the Board put it out. In reply to Commissioner Young, Mr. Carter explained the Hotel/Motel Tax process as to how this will be implemented. Commissioner Young noted that this will be in addition to the \$100,000 annually allocated to the Civil Right Institute.

Mr. Carter reported that changing the allocation of COVID duty pay with the cost being \$897,000 vs. the original \$1.2 million requested. Regarding healthcare expenditures, he advised that this was presented during the healthcare presentation and data was provided in the amount of \$1.2 million incurred based on COVID 19. The \$150,000 allocation is minimal vs. cost of COVID to date. He asked

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that nothing be delayed and commented on the amount of time staff has worked on presenting/executing this information, adding that staff is prepared to move forward.

Commissioner Howard stated that he expressed his concern and sticks by it.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that the process should be fair.

Commissioner Warbington suggested considering each item separately so that there may be consensus and suggested taking action next week.

Mayor Dorough noted costs that are not a one-time payment and suggested that the responsible thing to do is calculate a projection of the cost of the 2% increase year after year, adding that recurring expenses should have more definitive numbers before action is taken. He recommended moving on items 1, 2 and 7 and having more discussion, including more specific figures as well as ongoing expenses. Mr. Carter stated that on-going cost can be provided. Mayor Dorough asked that the information also include on-going expenses for the next five budget years. Discussion followed regarding the decision-making process/voting on the items with Mayor Pro Tem Fuller and Commissioners Fletcher agreed to vote individually; Commissioners Warbington and Young agreed to move forward with all seven.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Howard commented on car trailers, etc., parking at shopping centers that are closed on Friday and leaving early Monday morning. He asked if once a month Code Enforcement could work half a day to cite those doing this. Marshal Norman stated that weekend work is forthcoming.

Commissioner Fletcher asked to send Code to the church on Stuart.

Commissioner Warbington stated that it appears crimes for recycled material is on the rise, especially with catalytic converters being stolen from cars in broad daylight. He asked if recycled yards can be targeted per City code with Mr. Davis stating that he will check, adding that some have camera systems. Commissioner Warbington asked that this be looked into.

Mayor Dorough mentioned an issue regarding restaurants which are open until 2-3:00 a.m., playing loud music, groups getting out to talk/socialize, bright lights, which impact individuals' enjoyment of their property, stating that he will provide information to Marshal Norman and Mr. Forgey.

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

Mr. Carter stated that he is in Washington DC meeting with local delegations on important needs and advocating for COVID healthcare, broadband, etc., asking if there are any issues in particular that should be addressed that he be sent a text.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2021
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

EXECUTIVE SESSION (Pending Litigation)

Mr. Davis advised that this is potential litigation and that it can be discussed next month.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

SONJA TOLBERT, CMC
CITY CLERK