

FEBRUARY 1, 2022  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

PRESENT: Mayor Bo Dorough  
Mayor Pro Tem: Vilnis Gaines  
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, Jalen Johnson, Chad Warbington and  
Demetrius Young  
Virtual Attendees: Bob Langstaff, Jr.  
City Manager: Steven Carter  
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Dorough called the meeting to order at 8:32 am, asked the Clerk to call the roll for attendance.

**ADOPTION OF THE WORK SESSION AGENDA**

Commissioner Warbington objected to the speaker appearance today due to this being a solicitation. Mr. Carter advised that he communicated to Mr. Wise that he could not make a solicitation/sales pitch. Commissioner Warbington moved to remove Mr. Wise from the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Johnson. Mayor Dorough suggested Mr. Wise restricting his comments. The motion failed 3-3. Mayor Dorough asked Mr. Wise to limit his comments.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – (Speaker Appearance)**

Dennis Wise, VP of Sales, At-Home Recycling, discussed information regarding the recycling program (at-home/curbside) and explained the process.

Commissioner Young asked that Mr. Wise keep his comments to how recycling will benefit Albany and to not focus on his business, which is a form of solicitation.

Commissioner Howard clarified the recycling process/pick-up of items and asked if drivers will be identified. Mr. Wise advised that badges are worn by those servicing customers.

At 8:43 it was noted that Commissioner Langstaff was on the virtual call.

Mayor Dorough expressed concern regarding whether recycled items are thrown away and asked Mr. Wise who they contract with. Mr. Wise explained the recycling program their company provides, adding that they recycle materials that are collected and mentioned that Valdosta uses this program. Mayor Dorough commented on remarks from retired KADB Executive Director Judy Bowles who advised that cardboard and Aluminum are the only items with economic value. Mr. Wise stated that glass also has monetary value. Additional discussion followed regarding what is picked up to be recycled, etc.

**REPORT OF THE CITY CLERK**

The Clerk reminded the Commission of the upcoming retreat that begins on Friday.

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## **REPORT OF THE CITY ATTORNEY**

### EASEMENT AGREEMENT re: ASU TO DOWNTOWN ALBANY

Mr. Davis discussed information (copy on file) regarding the purpose of the easement agreement.

Bruce Maples, Interim Asst. City Manager, provided additional information regarding the location of the trail.

In reply to Commissioner Howard regarding the time frame of the project starting with Mr. Maples advised that it is currently out for bid, adding that if normal procedures are followed, construction should begin late spring/early summer. In reply to Commissioner Howard, he advised that GDOT will work with the construction once the Oglethorpe Bridge is closed for repairs.

Commissioner Warbington asked Mr. Maples if he is clear on their scope of work, with Mr. Maples advising that lighting and security issues have been discussed. A brief discussion continued regarding fencing, ATV's, etc., with Mr. Maples stating that he will pass the concerns on to the County.

Commissioner Young stated that ASU students asked for a trail to get to downtown and suggested that this is a safe pathway to walk from campus. Mr. Maples stated that GDOT accommodated and provided a wider trail/sidewalk with there now being two access points to get to downtown.

### BID ACCEPTANCE re: SURPLUS REAL PROPERTY/LILY POND SITE

Mr. Davis discussed information (copy on file) regarding property as noted.

In reply to Commissioner Johnson, Mr. Davis explained it was originally constructed as a proposed entrance to the site; however, an entrance was located elsewhere and the property is not used for anything and is a piece of property the City maintains.

Commissioner Warbington spoke in favor of putting this property back on the tax roll.

### EASEMENTS re: ROSEBRIAR GARDENS, LLC

Mr. Davis discussed information (copy on file) regarding the easements.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Maples commented on the retention pond in the area that overflowed a few years ago, containment of water and not being able to anticipate all situations.

Commissioner Warbington clarified the area with Mr. Maples stating that it is in the city limits.

Regarding ASU, Commissioner Howard asked for an update on the lawsuit with Mayor Dorough stating that he was re-served on Friday regarding Rails to Trail and that he will distribute the information. Mr. Davis gave additional comments regarding the time limits, potential grant money, drawings having to meet GDOT specifications, etc.

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**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

CHARTER REVISION re: PURCHASING AUTHORITY FOR UTILITIES

Mayor Dorough recognized Mr. Wright, who discussed information that he distributed (copy on file), adding that this appears to be a backdoor way of creating another layer of government having no check/balances or disclosure of information when spending \$1 million. In reply to Mr. Wright, Mayor Dorough explained the process of having two readings of the ordinance (February 22 and March 22 meetings) with the vote at the March 22 meeting.

Mayor Dorough discussed information regarding the request to consider increasing the spending authority of the Utility Board. He gave a brief history of the processes when utilities operated as WG&L vs the current process of utilities falling under the finance director, the City Manager serving as the director of the Utility Board and having one budget. He explained that it does not operate separately as it did in the past and suggested that the limit be increased and said it could be increased to \$500,000 instead of \$1 million.

Mr. Carter agreed with Mayor Dorough's comments adding that this will streamline the process of approval levels.

Commissioner Howard stated that he thinks it should remain at the \$200,000 level.

Commissioner Johnson questioned giving up oversight, however agreeing that an increase could be in order. He mentioned the Commissions' accountability and said he will vote no.

Commissioner Warbington asked if there is an example of a missed opportunity/financial impact or of the process slowing down. Mr. Carter stated that he can give examples of processes being slowed down, i.e., recent tree trimming, adding that items are already budgeted and are approved when the budget is approved annually. Agreeing with Commission Johnson regarding oversight, Commissioner Warbington said that he also opposes this. A brief discussion followed regarding having special called meetings, emergency purchases, etc.

The consensus was to not put this on the agenda due to there not being support for this item.

**MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

Mr. Carter stated that employee COVID numbers are declining and reminded all of the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast on Thursday morning.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:02 a.m.

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SONJA TOLBERT, CMC  
CITY CLERK