

MAY 3, 2022
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

PRESENT: Mayor Bo Dorough
Mayor Pro Tem: Vilnis Gaines (virtual)
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, Jalen Johnson
Virtual Attendee: Chad Warbington, Bob Langstaff, Jr.
City Manager: Steven Carter
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Dorough called the meeting to order at 8:32 am, followed by attendance roll call.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Commissioner Howard moved to adopt the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Johnson; the motion unanimously carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

1. Gail Davenport - Mt. Zion Mental Health Awareness Community Fair

Ms. Davenport introduced Debbie Richardson, advising that they represent Dougherty County on the Behavioral Health Regional Advisory Council, serving as citizen advocates and introduced Kim Dandridge, Mt. Zion Mental Health Ministry Director. Briefly discussing her role as an advocate, she noted that a priority is early intervention/prevention especially for children. She stated that the fair at Mt. Zion is scheduled for May 14th and encouraged Commissioners to attend and extend an invitation to others in the community. Ms. Richardson added that several local leaders will be speaking, booths will provide information, with the fair being an opportunity to learn more about available help/resources. Ms. Dandridge encouraged everyone to attend and noted that a joint city/county proclamation will be presented, adding that the fair on May 14th, is from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 901 S. Westover Boulevard.

(Commissioner Young had joined the virtual meeting by this time.)

2. Frank Wilson - Juneteenth Weekend Celebration

Mr. Wilson briefly discussed Juneteenth having been locally celebrated by various organizations for many years. With the event being named a national holiday last year, the intent is to conduct a collaborative celebration of these organizations on the weekend of June 17-19th. Referring to a packet that was distributed (copy on file), he asked for financial support for the activities.

In reply to Commissioner Young, Mr. Carter advised that the City Manager's office has not participated in or sponsored any Juneteenth celebration/events over the last couple of years.

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Mayor Dorough noted the in-kind services and monetary requests being made. Mr. Wilson stated that the money is greatly needed, but whatever the City provides will be greatly appreciated. Mayor Dorough recommended that Mr. Wilson contact the City Manager to iron out the details.

Presentation(s) re: Government 101 Certificate Presentation

Mr. Carter explained that the program provides an overview of all City departments to help familiarize staff and the public with the operations of the City, adding that the first class to graduate, staff employees, are here today. He stated that his request is that Mayor Dorough participate through the graduation of the next class, which begins May 16th and presented certificates to the graduates, noting that going through these classes allow participants to be advocates for the City, which is often disparaged by the less informed.

Commissioners thanked Mr. Carter and participants. (Mayor Pro Tem Gaines had joined the virtual meeting by this time.)

REPORT OF THE CITY CLERK

STAFF TRAVEL

1. Municipal Court - W. Weaver, Chief Judge; Georgia Institute of Continuing Judicial Education, Jekyll Island, GA; June 14-18, 2022; \$1,561.25

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

REPORT OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION: PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES

Mr. Davis thanked those who helped his office with the Eminent Domain procedure regarding Lake Cornelia. He advised that Dougherty County Superior has entered a judgment in favor of the City, which has paid funds into Superior Court and now has fee simple title to the property and reviewed information (copy on file).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Competitive Public Service Grant Awards for FY 2022-2023

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Director John Hawthorne stated that the request is for Commissioners to accept the recommendation from the Community Development Council to award the Public Service Grants with CDBG funds. He briefly reviewed the information (copy on file), noting that nine applications were received, with the Council recommending Albany Housing Authority, Communities in School of Georgia, Eat Well, Be Well, Liberty House and Open Arms with each being awarded \$25,000. The recommended action is to approve the 2022/23 grant awards and authorizing resolution.

Commissioner Howard asked that a list of the five awardees with their location and mission statement be provided before the May 24 regular meeting.

Commissioner Young thanked Mr. Hawthorne and Community Development for this vital program.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE

Corey Gamble, Materials Specialist reviewed information on the following (copy on file):

1. Mobile Column Vehicle Lifts - One set of four mobile column vehicle lifts – Steril-Koni USA, Inc. Total expenditure - \$53,731.86

Fleet Asset Supervisor Dale Henry reported that only one corded set of lifts is left; all others, once this set is replaced, will be wireless.

In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. Henry agreed that there will be surplus value of those being taken out of service.

Kimberly Allen, Buyer, discussed information on the following (copy on file) and advised that Kenneth Davis, Good Success Company, Inc., is present to answer questions. Mr. Davis provided a brief bio of the 24-year old company.

2. Janitorial Services, Law Enforcement Center (LEC) - Good Success Company, Inc. of Atlanta, GA; Total exp. \$64,825.00

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Davis agreed to provide additional information about his company before the May 24th meeting.

Commissioner Warbington clarified that City employees were providing this service prior to contracting with Facilities Maintenance Director Don Gray replying negatively. He explained that Bishop Clean Care previously had a contract but are now working month-to-month until execution of the contract with Good Success.

Joshua Williams, Buyer II, reviewed information on the following (copy on file):

3. Cemetery Software - CemSites of Perryopolis, PA; Total exp. \$71,830.00

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Mr. Gary added that this software will help provide better customer service, adding that the public can go online and locate grave sites.

Mayor Dorrough reported that a few years ago, he visited the department to find a grave; staff was extremely helpful, but it was a time-consuming venture going through the card files.

Ms. Allen reviewed information on the following (copy on file):

4. Well #15 and #16 Rehab/Upgrades Contract: Woodrow Sapp Well Drilling, Inc.;
Brunswick, GA, Est. exp. \$518,955.62

Utility Operations Director Jimmy Norman explained that this is a capitol project and was slightly overbudget, which displaced a few other projects.

There were no questions/comments on this item.

Craig Potter, Interim Director of Recreation and Parks, reviewed information on the following (copy on file) and read a 2019 email from FH Passion regarding an inspection at the gym with an initial renovation budget estimate of \$1.65 million, which he will forward to Commissioners. He advised that the Board of Education owns the property directly across the street from the gym. He stated that once he receives a quote on the property, he will submit it to Commissioners, adding that he will also arrange a tour of the sites for Commissioners who want to look at the properties.

5. Carver Gym: Overview and Options

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Potter said that he would have to ascertain the number of acres owned by the School Board. Stating that he would like to tour the properties, Commissioner Howard recommended building a new facility rather than trying to renovate Carver.

Commissioner Johnson agreed with Commissioner Howard regarding the tour and constructing a new facility. He suggested that the cost to renovate may not be feasible and the kids deserve better.

Comments made by Mayor Pro Tem Gaines were difficult to ascertain.

Commissioner Warbington mentioned that many of the City's rec centers/facilities are in similar shape; however, he believes that Carver may be worth saving and he is more inclined to consider renovations. If the Commission is agreeable, he recommended that Mr. Carter and Davis have initial discussions with adjacent property owners to ascertain interest in selling their property.

Commissioner Young discussed growing up near Carver and spending time there in his youth. Even though he has nostalgic feelings about it, it should not be a priority at this time, explaining and suggesting that financial issues necessitate postponing this project. He stated that the last time he was in there (20 years) the condition was horrendous, adding that if rehabbing is pursued, he would consider it a vanity project.

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Mayor Dorough discussed the cultural/historic aspects of the gym and said he sees the gym operating in conjunction with Driskell Park, that lacks a gym. He suggested that until the City receives numbers for this project, it cannot make an objective decision and mentioned the character of the gym, adding that it could benefit the revitalization of the Harlem area. He asked for an updated report and proposed that next Saturday/Sunday afternoon, Commissioners set aside a few hours to tour Carver Gym.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Carter thanked the participants of the Government 101 class, with the public version now being advertised. He noted that last week was the GMA sponsored Georgia Cities Week, and thanked Lequica Gaskins and staff for making it a success.

MEMBER REQUEST/COMMENTS

Mayor Dorough asked that this section of the agenda be geared toward future agenda items; anyone wanting to make comments, can do so subsequent to that.

Commissioner Howard asked that the case regarding the old infirmary on McAdams Street be on the May 17th agenda.

Commissioner Johnson mentioned an email he sent to Mr. Carter regarding the Charter revision, stating that he feels it is a priority for the Commission. He asked to review Mr. Brook's work at the next meeting.

Commissioner Warbington asked if Carver Gym will be on the next work session or later. Mr. Carter advised that the plan is to bring all three before getting input from Commissioners and asking how to move forward. The gyms are Carver, Bill Miller and Henderson; once they are brought forward, staff needs to know priorities.

Regarding Carver Gym, Mayor Dorough recommended an assessment of the cost, drawings, etc. Mr. Carter stated that the intent is to bring all three gyms to the Commission for discussion and direction.

Commissioner Warbington asked the possibility of requesting Thronateeska to look into their archives for pictures of the gym. A brief discussion regarding Carver being used as Monroe High School's gym for a few years until the new school was built followed.

Commissioner Young mentioned the hit and run last week in East Albany shortly after the Commission meeting, involving Samuel Young, a beloved cousin. He spoke of Mr. Young making considerable contributions to this community, especially in the Civil Rights Movement. It is up to each of us, as a community, to look out for and protect each other. He discussed other fatalities in his ward, encouraging drivers to abide by the speed limits and observe all traffic laws to prevent this tragedy from happening to others and their families.

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Mayor Dorough stated that the City extends its condolences to Commissioner Young's family. He asked that Commissioners who are interested in touring Turner and Carver keep an eye on their email for information. He announced that Congressman Bishop will be in town this afternoon to present checks the City received for Driskell Park and Ritz Theatre here in Room 100 at 2:00 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

SISSY KELLY
ASST. CITY CLERK