

MAY 17, 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 Attendee: Bob Langstaff, Jr.
City Manager: Steven Carter
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Dorough called the meeting to order at 8:36 am, followed by attendance roll call.

AGENDA ADOPTION

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

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

1. Umarhasan Abdalaquil - Neighborhood improvement (was not present)
2. Terry Lucas - Pedestrian traveling; racial discrimination in African American businesses

Mr. Lucas addressed the absence of businesses within the black community, crime rate, and the need to have a ‘meeting of the minds’ to solve problems. He suggested that E. Albany is in ruins and that the only thing African American men benefit from is gun violence and jail. He commented on investing in the city and questioned those in the ‘hood’ not having opportunities with politicians not bringing these type issues to the table to address. Regarding pedestrian traveling, he suggested having traffic lights within cross walks so that people will be safe.

Commissioner Young thanked Mr. Lucas for his comments and advised that Samuel Young, a relative of his, was the person who died due to being hit, adding that Commissioners are in tune to the issues that were raised.

REPORT OF THE CITY CLERK

KEEP ALBANY/DOUGHERTY BEAUTIFUL INTRODUCTION

Jeanette Henderson, Chair of KADB, introduced Jwana Washington as the new Executive Director. Ms. Henderson noted that former Executive Director, Judy Bowles, was the director for over 30 years; she

MAY 17, 2022
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

retired and is greatly missed, adding that they were proud of her and want to publicly acknowledge Judy's leadership of KADB.

Commissioner Howard welcomed Ms. Washington and gave comments regarding his meeting her.

Commissioners Johnson and Mayor Pro Tem Gaines welcomed Ms. Washington.

Commissioner Warbington welcomed Ms. Washington and mentioning illegal dumping, asked for assistance with keeping wards clean, adding that last night he had ten tires dumped on his business property.

Commissioner Young welcomed Ms. Washington, adding that they have worked on projects in the area and thanked Ms. Bowles for her years of service.

Mayor Dorough also recognized Ms. Bowles for her years of service and welcomed Ms. Washington. He asked to meet with her regarding issues at the recycling center

EXPENSE REPORTS

Mayor Dorough recognized Dr. James Pratt who said he will make comments after the report is presented with Mayor Dorough advising that the report is for information only. Dr. Pratt withdrew his request to speak.

REPORT OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

Mr. Davis reminded the Commission of the hearing on May 31 at 9 am regarding the alcohol license that was denied. In reply to Commissioner Howard, he discussed the process. Commissioner Johnson stated his reasons for denying the application.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

I. Planning/Engineering

RENEWAL OF GDOT PROCUREMENT POLICY

Joshua Williams briefly discussed the following: (copy on file)

1. Renewal of GDOT Procurement Policy

Robert Griffin, Asst. Director of Engineering, and Interim Asst. City Manager/Director of Engineering Bruce Maples, gave comments regarding the reason to have the policy approved by the Commission.

MAY 17, 2022
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

Mr. Maples explained the requirement to be certified for LAP (Local Administered Project) in order to qualify for federal grants, with the City in the process of being recertified.

Mayor Dorough recognized William Wright who signed to speak on this item. Mr. Wright discussed the policy and its worthlessness, noting Title 6, money and receiving federal monies. He referenced page 3 of his information (copy on file) stating that the 1964 Civil Rights Act must be followed; page 4 references a new airport being built that the public is not aware and in summary, he referenced the Juneteenth Holiday.

II. Public Administration/Finance

HENDERSON GYM

Craig Potter, Interim Director of Recreation, discussed information (copy on file) regarding suggestions for Henderson Gym and noted three diagrams by Ron Huffman to reconfigure the park

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Potter stated that a decision was not made to rehab the facility or to build a new one, agreeing that it is in the floodplain. In reply to Commissioner Johnson, Mr. Potter explained that the options noted are for a re-build. Commissioner Johnson asked when the decision was made to rebuild and stated that he would recommend rehabbing. Mayor Dorough interjected that the issue is Henderson is in the floodplain. Commissioner Johnson questioned the process with Mayor Dorough explaining that he asked staff to bring the items to the agenda to take action. Discussion followed regarding the process, discussing the gyms individually and having an organized way of making decisions.

Mayor Pro Tem Gaines agreed with comments from Commissioner Johnson and, referring to Carver Gym, he asked the cost to build a new gym and/or the cost to renovate.

Commissioner Warbington agreed with comments and suggested an implementation plan. Regarding Henderson, he stated that it is hard to decide what to do there until decisions are made about Bill Miller. He questioned the plans with Mr. Potter explaining the separate, breakout rooms that are proposed, i.e., computer/technology room, afterschool tutoring, etc. Discussion followed regarding having one/two gyms, the proposed multipurpose field, plans for two fields, activities for senior citizens and walking trail(s). Commissioner Warbington asked if the plans are to expand toward the undeveloped property in the rear; Mr. Potter agreed.

Commissioner Young echoed sentiments of those speaking before and gave a brief history of Henderson Gym, i.e., talks of remodeling and/or rebuilding, etc. He spoke to the three gyms being important to the community and the need to upgrade, adding that staff works with the children daily and know the needs, i.e., mentorships, etc., suggesting that their input is vital and should be considered. He also suggested that due to the circumstances in Albany, Carver, should not be looked at until later since it has been closed for five years and should not be viewed as a priority. In reply to Commissioner Young, Mr. Potter stated that information in the agenda packet was taken directly from the master plan this week, adding that last week the info was from staff.

MAY 17, 2022
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

Mayor Dorough stated that recreation discussions have been ongoing since he was a City Commissioner and commented on previous discussions and comments that he received from those assisting with recreation matters.

Commissioner Johnson again asked for a uniformed way to sit down and make decisions.

Commissioner Warbington clarified that no action is being taken and that the item was for information only; Mayor Dorough agreed.

Commissioner Young suggested finding a consensus on priorities and commented on previous discussions regarding Henderson, items being fast tracked and/or being added to the master plan, etc. He stated that a fair and equitable process is needed for making decisions so that citizens do not feel left out and that their ward(s) are being ignored.

Mayor Dorough agreed that priorities should be identified to move forward and asked that staff provide a cost to renovate/rebuild Carver Park. He then recognized Dr. James Pratt for his comments.

Dr. Pratt commented on recreation being scattered, racial discrimination and suggested using data to determine the wants/needs of the community and talking to the community, especially the youth who will be using the facilities. He suggested that the approach to recreation should be comprehensive, data-driven, etc. He stated that ‘as a board committed to racism, as a board that has demonstrated themselves to be committed to classism’ they must reckon with that legacy and the harms that existed, or these issues will continue.

III. Outside Entities

CHEHAW/FLINT RIVERQUARIUM

Tommy Gregors, Director, discussed information as noted (copy on file) regarding the extension of the two contracts, adding that funds go through the hotel/motel tax and are funneled to the entities.

Commissioner Warbington clarified that there is no change in amounts from last year with Mr. Gregors agreeing. Regarding SPLOST VIII, Mr. Gregors stated that he has submitted information in the amount of \$9 million for consideration.

Commissioner Langstaff mentioned Sect. 2.1 AZA accreditation, for Chehaw, with no such requirement for RiverQuarium and asked how the guidelines will be adopted and why did RQ not apply for accreditation. Mr. Gregors discussed the process for both Chehaw and RQ (with RQ never being accredited), adding that they continue to follow AZA at Chehaw. He discussed means to become accredited, with a projected date to apply in the fall of 2023 and aiming to have both accredited.

Regarding funding, Mayor Dorough asked why the City no longer has a contract directly with the Authority, but rather goes through the CVB and if this is to create a barrier between the City and Authority; Mr. Davis replied that he cannot answer that. Mayor Dorough requested background information that led to this arrangement. Mr. Gregors stated that this was done approximately three

MAY 17, 2022
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

years ago and was a decision of the then City Manager. Mayor Dorough asked Mr. Carter for a summary of the explanation given by Mr. Gregors (funds shifting to CVB) and asked if the City gets a copy of the budget of the RQ. Mr. Gregors advised that it is sent with his quarterly reports. Mayor Dorough asked how many members are on the RQ board with Mr. Gregors stating approximately 17. Mayor Dorough suggested that if the City provides funding, the Commission should have a representative on the board. Mr. Gregors explained the appointment process and advised that they are reviewing the bylaws.

Commissioner Young asked for an organizational chart of boards that have contracts with the City. Mr. Carter clarified the request with Commissioner Young restating he would like for all entities that are being funded with City funds.

Mayor Dorough recognized Dr. Pratt to make comments. pants ordinance and suggested having funds set aside to assist those to get belts, etc. Regarding technology, he suggested that removing meetings from FB/social media platforms is discrimination and, regarding public safety, he suggested using other methods for mental health, i.e., social workers etc., with the City committing to a broader range of public safety apparatus with solutions that deal with the root of the criminal issues. Noting tickets for saggy pants, he suggested that this is geared towards black men.

BUDGET PRESENTATION

Mr. Carter invited all department heads to the front and stated that his comments are an introduction of the proposed budget. Using a power point presentation (copy on file), Mr. Carter discussed the theme of the year which is ‘finishing strong’ as the focus and discussed current assumptions in the budget, (revenues impacted/expense costs drivers) to include net 3% COLA for all personnel; 0.5% increase in employee Pension contributions; increasing headcount with seven new positions, citywide budget of \$298,836,339 (to include general fund, special revenue, utility and supplemented enterprise funds being up); General Fund Revenue of \$67.9 million with transfers from other sources being \$17.0 million, proposed tax rollback; major uses of expenditures in the general fund [expense breakdown]; special revenue funds to include SPLOSTS, DCED, CIP, GRANTS, etc., supplemented enterprise funds of \$25.7 million (revenues/expenses) including transit, airport and Flint River Entertainment Complex; Utility Enterprise Funds with the utility budget being \$156,765,989 (part of the \$298.0 million); Capital Improvement Fund (total of \$34,817,816) and the plans moving forward (public hearing June 7 and additional budget discussions with the budget being adopted at the June 29 meeting). He stated that funds were put in for ‘discretionary projects’ for Commission use and, money for building improvements and property acquisition.

Commissioner Johnson questioned not seeing line-items/explanations of expenditures. Mr. Carter stated that he will go into category details, i.e., personnel, supplies, etc., and suggested calling departments if there are questions. In reply to Commissioner Johnson, Mr. Carter explained that the numbers are individualize per department and again encouraged questions in advance. Commissioner Johnson asked to have the charter moved forward, with Mr. Carter making comments regarding municipal court and monies allocated and advising that the charter will be on a June agenda. A brief heated discussion followed regarding placing items on the agenda by the Mayor and some Commissioners vs response time of other Commissioner’s request to have items placed on the agenda.

MAY 17, 2022
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Gaines regarding the adoption of the budget, Mr. Carter explained the process and time frame of the budget adoption including having a special called meeting if necessary.

Commissioner Warbington commended staff on proposing on no tax increase and, regarding recreation, he asked if this will be in SPLOST projects. Mr. Carter explained the process pertaining to use of SPLOST funds with additional discussion on adopting the budget on June 29th and the suggestion from Commissioner Warbington to discuss the utilities budget on June 7, etc.

Commissioner Young commented on ARPA funds with Mr. Carter stating that this is outside the City's budget and is a decision of the Commission on how to spend.

Mayor Dorough agreed that the schedule is tight to have budget discussions, adding that today was an overview, adding that the budget book will be detailed with an option to contact department heads to answer questions in advance of meetings, however, he suggested having additional meetings. Mr. Carter gave suggested ways to have additional discussions outside of adding meetings with Mayor Dorough suggesting in the future having a tentative budget by April 30. He mentioned hybrid vehicles, gas cost and asked to see current computations to look at transferring to electric vehicles for all fleet.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Carter mentioned the Gov. 101 class yesterday evening with citizens and advised that it was productive with many questions being answered, etc., and stated that the next meeting is next Monday at the LEC. He noted interns who are working with City staff regarding the alcohol license initiative that is funded by GA Tech.

MEMBERS REQUEST/ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA(S)

Commissioner Howard commented on calls he received yesterday and asked if public safety (Code Enforcement) can go to the Roses Shopping Center in E. Albany.

Commissioner Johnson reiterated that the City charter, specifically Municipal Court, be on the next agenda.

Commissioner Warbington stated that Code Enforcement shut down the Treeside Apartments, which is unprecedented and gave additional information regarding the process and a crisis being averted. He asked how we can prevent this from happening again, adding that Metro Atlanta has an inspection for multi-unit apartments, suggesting that the City look into this and that it be an upcoming agenda item.

Commissioner Young agreed with Commissioner Warbington, adding that Albany has a housing crisis and commenting on slumlords and tenants living in horrendous conditions. He mentioned that some residents from the apartment complex appeared before the Commission giving feedback of living conditions and suggested holding people accountable when creating these type situations for our citizens.

MAY 17, 2022
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

Mayor Dorough asked that Mr. Potter get with the Clerk to provide dates to look at Carver and Turner Gyms on a Saturday/Sunday afternoon. Regarding sidewalk funding, he noted sidewalks on Magnolia, Turner and Pinecrest; his concern is E. Broad from Broadway to Five Points needing sidewalks, suggesting that this be a priority.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - Pending Litigation

At 10:29 a.m., Commissioner Howard moved to enter executive session to discuss pending litigation, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and following a roll call vote, the motion carried as follows:

Ward I	yes
Ward II	yes
Ward III	yes
Ward IV	yes
Ward V	yes
Ward VI	yes
Mayor	yes

At 11:45 a.m., Commissioner Howard moved to exit executive session, seconded by Commissioner Johnson and following a roll call vote, the motion carried as follows:

Ward I	yes
Ward II	yes
Ward III	yes
Ward IV	yes
Ward V	yes
Ward VI	yes
Mayor	yes

At 11:46 a.m., Mayor Dorough reconvened the meeting, announcing that pending litigation was discussed in the executive session with no action taken.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

SONJA TOLBERT, CMC
CITY CLERK