

FEBRUARY 7, 2023
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

PRESENT: Mayor Bo Dorough
Mayor Pro Tem: Chad Warbington
City Commissioners: Jon Howard and Jalen Johnson
Virtual Attendee: Vilnis Gaines (Commissioner Young was on/off the call)
City Manager: Steven Carter
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Dorough called the meeting to order at 8:34 am, followed by attendance roll call.

AGENDA ADOPTION

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

REPORT OF THE CITY CLERK

A. Travel

The Clerk advised that an email was received this morning which changed the hotel, adding that this could also change the total cost.

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

1. Commission Travel:
 - Mayor Dorough; Albany-Dougherty Day at the Capitol; Atlanta, GA; Feb. 15-16, 2023; \$667.85
 - Mayor Pro Tem C. Warbington; Albany-Dougherty Day at the Capitol; Atlanta, GA; Feb. 15-17, 2023; \$1,050.85

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

2. Staff Travel:
 - S. Carter, City Manager; Albany-Dougherty Day at the Capitol; Atlanta, GA; Feb. 15-16, 2023; \$663.66

B. Commission Expense Report (First & Second Quarter, FY 2022-23)

The Clerk advised that information was put in notebooks for review, adding that the upcoming MEAG Tour in March is not in the projected calculations through the end of the fiscal year.

There were no questions/comments on this item.

REPORT OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

1. Alcohol Ordinance Evaluation

Mr. Davis discussed information (copy on file) regarding the alcohol moratorium, adding that a meeting was held with the Mayor, Commissioners Howards and Young. He advised that a search firm may be utilized to assist with language regarding granting alcohol licenses, i.e., density in neighbors, etc.

Commissioner Johnson stated that he would like to see a list to evaluate, with Mayor Dorough and Mr. Carter agreeing that an RFP will help in getting vendors; however, this will take more than 45 days as noted in the moratorium. Commissioner Johnson stated that he did not vote for the moratorium with Mr. Carter stating that a spreadsheet will be provided regarding other cities to review/compare requirements/policy.

Mayor Pro Tem Warbington asked to review the RFP before it goes out.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Community & Economic Development

1. Proposed HOME-ARP Allocation Plan

John Hawthorne, Director, April Mahone, Deputy Director and Orson Burton, Public Service Manager, were present to discuss information (copy on file). HOME-ARP funds were discussed as it pertains to the homeless, affordable housing, rental assistance, supportive services, and acquisition/development of shelter units.

Using a power point presentation, Mr. Hawthorn, referred to the Executive Summary in the Commission packet and discussed the \$1,798,393 million federal HOME ARPA funds that was awarded to the city, the HOME allocation plan and the consultants that were involved in the process, adding that the recommendation is to change the proposed use of funding for affordable rental housing to assist the homeless population. He explained the cost to administer the project (approximately \$250,000 annually) for the next 15 years, reviewed what the costs covers and advised that with the support of community sponsors, the cost of operations offset the City's obligation. He commented on the project to be developed at potential locations (Broadway and Carrol Street), the allocation plan schedule and advised that the plan must be submitted by March 30, after which a cost analysis, construction planning/program design will take place.

Mr. Burton discussed options/potential strategies of the HOME-ARC program and advised that Broadway and Carrol Streets are potential locations, with Carrol Street being the recommended site for the development. Additional discussion included the revised allocation plan schedule, 2022 Homeless Point in Time data, public comment period, and public hearings. He reemphasized the deadline for submittal (March 30th) with the recommendation to adopt the resolution authorizing the change.

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Commissioner Howard commented on the 15-year construction of houses that will be maintained for this period of time with the housing being converted into regular housing for anyone to rent.

Additional discussion continued regarding HUD regulations.

Commissioner Johnson stated that he met with staff and asked if any unforeseen cost is expected, with Ms. Mahone explaining that families are required to pay rent, etc. Commissioner Johnson commented on maintenance of the units, with Ms. Mahone stating that some funds may be requested from the City above the rent received. Discussion continued on the preferred site at 108 S. Carroll St.

Commissioner Gaines stated that he supports the recommendation.

Mayor Pro Tem Warbington stated that he also supports the recommendation and confirmed that this will be less than what was previously presented. Mr. Burton explained that a cost analysis will be conducted after approval and an amount will be provided based on projections (approx. \$50,000 annually). Mayor Pro Tem Warbington commented on having a 12-month process and questioned whether residents will stay for an indefinite time. Mr. Hawthorne advised that the process, includes meeting HUD requirements to determine how long tenants can stay in the housing units with the goal to get them back into standard rental housing, adding that HUD checks to ensure proper housing. Regarding payment of utilities, Ms. Mahone explained that each household will not pay more than 30% of their income for rent minus utilities. Mr. Hawthorne interjected that this may be a cost that the City will be asked to assist with. Additional discussion continued regarding utility bills/rent. Mayor Pro Tem Warbington asked if more lots are available for additional duplexes with Mr. Hawthorne agreeing, adding that they have looked at the Arcadia area, which has additional land for development. Mayor Pro Tem Warbington suggested mixed income uses to have various levels and asked that this comes back to the Commission for consideration.

The Clerk advised that Commissioner Young is no longer on the call but will return if possible.

Mayor Dorough mentioned the hidden cost of approximately \$3.5 million if the \$250,000 annual expense continues. He explained concerns that he anticipates with ‘wrap-around’ services and suggested that if security is provided at the proposed areas, the City may have liability issues. He commented on residents getting crossed-up with the City; transitional housing leading people to have no incentive to better their lives if their rent/utilities are being paid, which causes others having the same issue to not being served, etc., issues created if the City is responsible for management, etc.

In reply to Commissioner Howard regarding those making application who have no income and/or suffer with health/mental health issues, Mr. Hawthorne explained HUD regulations with the City being able to refer to other agencies. He agreed with Commissioner Howard that this would include sending people to other agencies outside Albany/Dougherty County if necessary.

B. Public Administration & Finance

Ricky Gladney, Central Services Buyer I, Don Gray, Facilities Director and Chad Arnold, Facilities Management Superintendent, were present to discuss the following (copy on file):

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1. Design Services re: Golf Course Maintenance Buildings; YWM Architects - \$71,800.00

Mayor Dorough asked to see photos to show what will be demolished and replacement structures. Mr. Gray stated that this can be provided. In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. Gray stated that they have known for approximately one and a half years that the building will be torn down.

Mr. Gladney, Mr. Gray, Tripp Swilley, Facilities Superintendent, and AFD Chief Cedric Scott were present to discuss the following (copy on file):

2. Fire Station #7 Bay Repair; Newell Construction of Albany, GA - \$156,777.00

Mayor Pro Tem Warbington asked the location with Chief Scott stating that it is on Leonard Ave., in E. Albany.

Mayor Dorough questioned the concrete and supporting trucks, with Mr. Swilley explaining the process of excavations, concrete pouring, etc. Discussion continued regarding determining whether the soil is sufficient to support the weight with Mr. Swilley stating that it was built to specifications at that time vs. new specifications (new fire trucks are 50,000 pounds). Mr. Carter discussed funding for the project.

Using a power point presentation, Derrick Brown, Chief Financial Officer, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the following:

3. Contribution to Pension Fund

Mr. Brown discussed actuarial open-group projections options through FY 2033 and recommendations to stabilize the plan this fiscal year with a \$5 million contribution due to the fund's 13.8% loss, adding that this may not be a one-time contribution. The presentation included options to keep the City's Plan compliant with State regulations i.e., to be 80% funded and stay within the 30-year amortization timeframe.

Discussion included this being a requirement to stabilize the plan per guidelines, options not including creating a defined contribution plan, instead of the City's defined benefit plan and implementing a defined contribution plan for new employees to reduce liability for the City, which will be an added cost, 401 (K) plan to appeal to younger employees. Mr. Carter advised that this will be discussed at the upcoming retreat.

At 9:52 it is noted that Commissioner Young was back on the call.

Mayor Dorough discussed the volatility of the market and asked to look at bonds and equity instead of the stock market, adding that he would like additional information and/or presentation. Mr. Brown shared Mayor Dorough's concerns regarding the plan and explained the rationale for the \$5 million recommendation.

Commissioner Howard asked if Mr. Sumner can attend the retreat to explain, with Mr. Carter stating that this can be arranged. Commissioner Howard asked that information be provided regarding

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employees with 25+ years of service. Mayor Dorough stated that Cavanaugh/McDonough should be brought in for discussion rather than Mr. Sumter (Morgan Stanley).

Discussion continued regarding voting on this item at the end of the month or at the retreat, elected officials not making investment decisions, etc., with Mayor Pro Tem Warbington suggesting that a vote be taken this month.

Commissioner Young agreed with Mayor Dorough's recommendation to discuss this at the retreat.

Mayor Dorough said he will not vote on this item this month without additional information. The consensus was to hold the item for discussion at the retreat.

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

Mr. Carter advised that the FY 2023-24 budget process has started, explained that the transportation grand opening is delayed; however, David Hamilton, Transportation Director, is available to do tours; noted that this is Black History Month; advised that he has been appointed to NLC Technology Committee, and thanked the Commission and staff for the support during the loss of his brother.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA(S) / MEMBERS COMMENTS

Commissioner Howard gave a history of the establishment of Black History Month, asking that citizens research various people instrumental in Albany Black History, including Horace King, Phillip Rainey, C.B. King, Dr. Jacob Shirley Dr. Carl Gordon, Charles Sherrod, Joseph Holley, Alice Coachman, Mary Young Cummings, and Robert Montgomery. He credited them with paving the way for Blacks to be able to participate in local, state and national politics.

Commissioner Johnson mentioned the Jefferson St. area and stated that business owners are establishing a 'neighborhood'. He stated that the issue of panhandling is a matter that they are trying to police themselves, but need help/advise. APD Chief Michael Persley advised that an aggressive panhandling ordinance has been discussed and noted 1) some people give money and some do not, adding that when he spoke with the Bread House, he advised that they can ask panhandlers to leave and if they refuse, they can call APD. 2) Rather than incarcerating someone for asking for money, determine what other community partners we have (Salvation Army, Rescue Mission, etc.) in the city that can help divert people from panhandling in the downtown area. 3) Seek other resource and community support to also divert, and stop giving them money. Commissioner Johnson said the complaints also come from attorney offices, etc., in the area with Chief Persley providing information regarding discussions with the Salvation Army, etc. Commissioner Johnson stated that this could be a topic for the Public Safety Task Force to discuss.

Mayor Pro Tem Warbington stated that he has a neighborhood watch meeting and asked about speed tables and if there are funds, with Mr. Carter stating that he will prepare a statement for him, adding that this can be on the work session. Regarding the retreat, Mayor Pro Tem Warbington asked to have an agenda item to prepare for the retreat to vote up or down what goes on the retreat agenda. Mayor

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Dorough commented on the letter he sent to encourage Commissioners to voice their opinion and suggested the City Manager solicit information by the end of the week so that the item can be on the next work session agenda.

Commissioner Young commented on changing the process of preparing the Retreat agenda and suggested continuing with the current process to have the facilitators assist with preparation of the retreat agenda.

Mayor Dorough commented on an email he received from Former Rep. John White who was in town and had concerns regarding the Ray Charles Plaza, etc., adding that he will send a copy of the email to all. Mr. Gray provided comments regarding the statute not rotating, etc., and plans to make repairs to other items that were in the email. Mayor Dorough commented on the Ritz Theatre and the \$2.3 million received from Congressman Bishop, suggesting commissioning a historic renovation of the Theatre (to not include the Cultural Center) and asked that this be put on the agenda. He also commented on Turner renovations and damages at Carver Gym asking that this be an agenda item to vote on allocations. Discussion continued Yvette Fields, Asst. City Manager, advising that a bid was let yesterday and that they will have cost numbers within 30 days from a contractor. Mr. Carter suggested receiving bids for Carver.

Commissioner Howard asked Mr. Carter to call Public Health re: CDC discontinuing giving free shots and that information be provided to the public to be aware that there will be a charge for shots in the future.

In reply to Mr. Carter regarding the retreat agenda, Mayor Dorough stated that the discussion should be at the table to come up with a consensus. Mayor Dorough asked the Clerk for the process, which she explained that the facilitator determined the items on the agenda based on comments/discussions with each of the elected officials. Discussion continued regarding the process and whether or not the facilitator should manage the agenda.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

SONJA TOLBERT, CMC
CITY CLERK