

MARCH 7, 2023

SPECIAL CALLED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF ALBANY, GEORGIA
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person)

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

Mayor Dorough called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

The Clerk read the call as follows:

Mayor and Board of Commissioners
P.O. Box 447
Albany, GA 31702

Dear Mayor and Commissioners:

There will be a special call City Commission meeting on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at 8:30 am in Room 100 of the Government Center Building located at 222 Pine Ave. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and/or adopt the following resolution:

- Authorizing execution of a Letter of Intent with CL Real Estate Development, LLC re: Hotel Gordon

The Clerk advised that notices were emailed to all.

Sincerely,

/s/ Steven Carter
CITY MANAGER

Notified via email
BO DOROUGH, MAYOR

Notified via email
JON HOWARD, WARD I
CITY COMMISSIONER

Notified via email
JALEN JOHNSON, WARD II
CITY COMMISSIONER

Notified via email
VILNIS GAINES, WARD III
CITY COMMISSIONER

Notified via email
CHAD WARBINGTON, WARD IV
MAYOR PRO TEM

Notified via email
BOB LANGSTAFF, WARD V
CITY COMMISSIONER

Notified via email
DEMETRIUS YOUNG, WARD VI
CITY COMMISSIONER

Mr. Davis briefly discussed information (copy on file) regarding the letter of intent with CL Real Estate Development to assess the Hotel Gordon, which is not a binding document, adding that after the 90-day period, an offer to purchase may be forthcoming.

In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Warbington, Mr. Davis confirmed that the Downtown Development Authority owns the property; the Director will be involved and at the end of the 90 days we will have information regarding moving forward

Commissioner Young expressed concern regarding the property not being owned by the City of Albany, the previous owner will be the one to turn over the hotel to the City or turn it over to the developer. He questioned why this is being voted on and suggested that the process should be open to other potential developers, adding that no presentation was made to the Commission by CL Real Estate with their intentions, adding that he will not support this item.

Commissioner Warbington moved to adopt the following resolution, seconded by Mayor Dorough.

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A RESOLUTION NO. 23-R119

Authorizing execution of a Letter of Intent with CL Real Estate Development, LLC re: Hotel Gordon

Commissioner Howard commented on the process and putting the bid out later if it does not work out with CL Real Estate Development with Mayor Dorough agreeing.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Davis advised that CL came to Albany a few months ago and showed interest in making a presentation to the Commission.

Mayor Pro Tem Warbington stated reasons that the Gordon Hotel has been challenging, i.e., with COVID setting the process back and the prior developer having health issues, etc., suggesting giving a 90 day opportunity for CL Developers to assess the property, adding that Mr. Benedict, who holds the deed/owns the building and is willing to allow the 90-day opportunity with CL Development being allowed to make a proposal if possible, adding that Mr. Benedict is the one that will be working on ownership with CL Development.

Commissioner Young countered that the City does not own the building and expressed additional concerns regarding the process, adding that there is a duty to be fair and open, which did not happen with this project.

Mayor Dorough commented on the project let for bid in 2018-19 and gave the history of events preventing the project moving forward. A new construction schedule was discussed in 2021, with the contractor failing to meet benchmarks. Discussion continued regarding the history of the property and the 90-day request being legitimate with the City not obligated to accept proposals.

Commissioner Howard stated that the City Manager and Downtown Director should vet proposals/ check backgrounds, etc., adding that he will vote for this item.

Commissioner Johnson thanked Mayor Dorough for his insight into the property and process and stated that he will vote for this item to move forward.

Mayor Pro Tem Warbington agreed with Mayor Dorough's comments and his attempt, via letters, to let everyone know what was going, adding that everything was done above board. In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Warbington, Mr. Davis gave the next step which is, if this is not approved today, litigation with 207 Pine, LLC will begin with a cost upward of \$50K.

Commissioner Young challenged claims of 'an open process' by dealing with only one company and recapped concerns he expressed earlier i.e., having an open process, etc., suggesting that the Commission cannot pick a developer when the City does not own the property.

At 8:57 am it was noted that Commissioner Langstaff had joined the call.

Discussion continued with Mayor Dorough explaining that the extension is not a contract; it was a 90-day period offered in an attempt to motivate developers and, with no one being interested, the execution of a contract must be approved by the City and DDA which is essential for downtown redevelopment.

Hearing no additional comments and following a roll call vote, the motion carried 6-1 with Commissioner Young voting no.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:59 a.m.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK