

OCTOBER 17, 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, Jalen Johnson and Vilnis Gaines
Virtual Attendees: Demetrius Young
City Manager: Steven Carter
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Dorough called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m., followed by attendance roll call.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Commissioner Howard moved to adopt the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Gaines, the roll call vote unanimously carried.

SPEAKER APPEARANCES

1. Tracy Jones – was not present
2. Ben Roberts, President of Albany Symphony Board, and Judith Thompson, Board VP, discussed the 60th season of the Symphony with no charge for admission to concerts this year. Ms. Thompson stated that students attend through the school system, however, this year, there will be free admission for attending events. A handout of upcoming concerts was distributed/discussed (copy on file). Mr. Roberts introduced board member Dr. Jin Williams, Phoebe employee, to discuss her first experience attending a concert last year.

REPORT OF THE CITY CLERK

A. Commission Travel

1. Commissioner D. Young; 2023 Georgia ACT Fall Affordable Housing Conference; Atlanta, GA; October 3-5, 2023; \$801.61

Commissioner Howard moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Gaines, the roll call vote unanimously carried.

B. Staff Travel:

1. M. Custer, Asst. City Attorney; MEAG Power Participation Orientation Program; Atlanta, GA; Oct. 24 – 25, 2023; \$482.86

Commissioner Howard moved to approve, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Warbington, the roll call vote unanimously carried.

Commissioner Howard moved to approve, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Warbington, the roll call vote

unanimously carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Community & Economic Development

John Hawthorne, CED Director, and Dr. William Myles, CEO Albany Housing Authority (AHA) and Parick Johnson, CEO of PCJ, Inc., were present to discuss the following:

1. Disposition of DCED Owned Vacant Parcels

Mr. Hawthorne explained that regulations do not allow direct donations of properties to the Housing Authority, but properties can be made available to a separate, non-profit affordable housing developer of the Housing Authority, adding that 60 homes were completed subsequent to the '94 flood, with more than 115 parcels left, which are being conveyed today. This area of S. Albany was totally devastated by the flood and Federal funds were used to purchase those properties in the subdivisions of River Road and Charity Lane. His department has been working with Dr. Myles and his organization, adding that this was presented to the Commission earlier this year. The plan is to revitalize S. Albany as a fixed income neighborhood with 51% of homes for low-moderate incomes with the rest available for higher income residents.

Discussing the project, Dr. Myles addressed affordable housing within the city, low-income units and transitioning into homeowner opportunities. He advised that he met with HUD several months ago to discuss the changes within public housing, which results in entities being creative/innovative in order to stay in business and continue providing houses for the citizens that they serve. One mechanism HUD asked them to do is developing and establishing non-profits to increase housing portfolios. He referenced senior housing, i.e., Arcadia Commons/Arcadia Courtside, built with HUD funds through non-profits/development corporations, which is a requirement of HUD, and noted that Innovative Housing Solutions is a non-profit, subsidiary of the Albany Housing Authority and is the company used for both Arcadia developments and has established a record of accomplishments.

Patrick Johnson, PCJ Consultants, Inc., provided a presentation (copy on file), stating that he found the Houston based business, which was developed to serve disabled vets and/or small businesses. He stated that they have been providing project solutions to municipal and commercial entities (housing authorities, colleges/universities, etc.) and discussed developments in the Story Road area, the executive summary, project overview (address, site areas, dwelling units, sq. ft., site location map, color coded lots, design of single-family homes and floor plans (6 types). He introduced Christopher Hudson to provide more information, with Mr. Hudson discussing the six prototypes of development, reviewing floor plans, cost-saving measures, etc.

Mr. Hawthorne noted HUD regulations for sale of properties and asked to donate properties to IHI, which will be in control of sale and development of properties.

OCTOBER 17, 2023
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

Regarding funding, Mr. Johnson stated that Zion Bank has been funding his projects for over 40 years, with 100% of funds being provided, adding that revenues are from the purchase and leasing of properties. He explained the debt service and noted page 28 (frequently asked questions regarding funding, repayments, etc.), page 29 question/answer #6 was discussed regarding the amount of investment (\$26.5 million) and anticipated sales price (average \$218,000). Mayor Dorough noted that the cost to build is \$194,000 and sold for \$20,000 more than construction).

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Johnson commented on qualifications, i.e., the process for those who do not have income and working with HUD. Dr. Myles provided additional information regarding subsidy through a qualifying HUD voucher.

Regarding flood elevation, Mr. Hawthorne advised that housing will be constructed according to the flood plain and built to required elevations. Mayor Pro Tem Warbington asked the link this group has to this Commission. Dr. Myles stated that there is no link to the City; the link is through Albany Housing Authority, which is a non-profit subsidiary of Albany Housing. He briefly discussed HUD properties through the 202 HUD Program (senior/elderly development) in which a separate entity is created and qualifications established, i.e., the Arcadia housing development, adding that Albany Housing oversees IHI. In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Warbington, Mr. Carter provided information regarding accountability, the relationship between the City and IHI and the donation of the properties. The question of revising the resolution was discussed and references in the quit claim deed with Mr. Hawthorne noting that details are also in the MOU. Mr. Carter stated that information regarding the MOU will be brought back to the Commission and the building construction method was discussed (which is up to the developer).

Mayor Dorough commented on the one commercial property, inclusion of a reversionary clause, transitioning citizens from rental to homeownership and looking after the city and resident's best interests. He asked for explanations for questions 13 (lease/purchase) and 15 (homeownership) from the Housing Authority's perspective.

In reply to Commissioner Young, Mr. Hawthorne stated that DCED will be working/partnering with Albany Housing, assisting with downpayments/mortgage assistance through working in conjunction with IHI.

Kimberly Brooks, Community Development Planner, and April Mahone, Deputy Director, were present to discuss the following:

2. Amendment to FYs 2019-2023 Action Plans

Discussion included explanation of page 21 based on years as noted and the Section 108 Loan (the Hilton loan which was paid off in January 2023). Mr. Hawthorne provided additional information regarding downtown revitalization and access to funding opportunities for developers.

Mayor Dorough asked the amount of money allocated to Hilton and the amount of money satisfied. Ms. Malone stated that \$5.5 million was allocated and the loan was paid off early.

B. Public Administration and Finance Matters:

OCTOBER 17, 2023
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

1. AHA re: Hudson Malone Towers

Mr. Hawthorn and Dr. Myles were present to discuss information (copy on file) regarding the request for \$200,000 in CDBG Grant funds for Albany Housing to rehabilitate 12 units. Mr. Hawthorne stated that this will be their second appropriation for Housing Authority repairs. Discussion continued regarding the owners of Hudson Malone (Albany Housing Authority), code issues, ensuring properties are complying, addressing all issues which will require moving residents for renovations, with Mayor Dorrough asking for a list of the problems.

2. Utility Commission Expense Account

Michael Custer, Asst. City Attorney, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the three drafts presented for approval.

Mayor Pro Tem Warbington said he preferred D.2; Commissioner Young agreed with D.2; Mayor Dorrough agreed with D.2 and provided suggested wording

Discussion continued with the suggestion to have a Draft 4 with the Mayor's recommendation and Draft 2 as presented will be on the agenda for vote at the regular meeting.

Mr. Gladney and Tripp Swilley, Facilities Management Superintendent, were available to discuss the following (copy on file):

3. Microbusiness Center Repairs; JVS Assoc., Inc, Albany, GA; Total exp. \$135,216.00

Discussion followed regarding the damage, with Mr. Swilley explaining the leak, Don Gray, Facilities Director explained the risk fund which is the self-insurance that the City has and Mr. Carter advising that funds are collected from the departments to cover accidents; the City pays the cost, the amount is smoothed over a three-year period as the department repays the cost to the risk fund.

Mr. Gladney and Mr. Swilley discussed the following (copy on file)

4. Paul Eames Sports Complex Electrical Repair; MetroPower, Inc., Albany, GA – Total exp. \$264,000.00

Discussion followed regarding measures that can be taken to ensure safety and reduce theft with suggestions of adding additional camera coverage and/or a comprehensive security system.

5. Medical District Housing Plan

Mr. Carter discussed information (copy on file) regarding funding from the ARPA housing allocation and a set aside of \$1.0 million with \$34,785 instantly available for the next phases.

OCTOBER 17, 2023
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

Commissioner Young expressed concerns regarding housing assistance, homeownership and questioned the set aside without having a developer or plan.

Commissioner Johnson expressed concerns and agreed that housing is needed in the Phoebe area.

Discussion continued regarding staff's recommendation with Mayor Dorough expressing concerns regarding a demand for housing in the area, waiting for the recommendations, and completion of the report before allocating monies. Mr. Carter explained that it was proposed this way in order to ensure that funds are allocated to move the project forward. Mayor Dorough said he supports the project; however, the report is needed first and suggested the entire \$2.0 million be allocated, however he agreed that allocating the \$34,785 at this time to continue with the phases is appropriate. Discussion continued regarding the potential for development around the Phoebe area with approval of the \$34,785 now, revising the resolution and waiting to set an amount on other project amounts.

MEMBER COMMENTS / ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Commissioner Howard asked that Code Enforcement inspect the Scene at the Sand Hill; the apartments are an eyesore and has become a trashy area.

Commissioner Gaines commended Reps. Gerald Green and David Sampson for helping him to explain the reason public safety was in town during ASU's homecoming to citizens.

Mayor Dorough requested a detailed account of the City's relationship with the School Board regarding Eames Park and the school system to have an equitable approach to the operation of the facility, i.e., cost to maintain property, lights, who decides when the stadium is used vs the park, etc. He suggested moving forward with the design of Henderson Park and Carver Gym re: \$2.0 million and choosing an architectural firm or using Wood Consultant and asked if there would be an RFP process.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Carter congratulated the City's Water Department for being awarded the GA Assn. Water Professionals Golden Awards. He mentioned that open enrollment is in progress through Nov. 3rd with flu shots available on Lily Pond and discussed modification to the agenda item from the last meeting re: street resurfacing and a change to the amount that was presented with the Civic Center parking lot information being incorrect. He advised that the two bidders, Reeves and Oxford, were contacted with the correct lot size, Oxford declined to bid and Reeves' bid of \$1,250,170.75 – a difference of \$611,972 dollars, with the total bid package of \$6,859,481.75 for the entire parking lot and 4.85 miles. He stated that the corrected amount will be on the agenda for vote next week. Discussion continued regarding the amount in the Civic Center's budget (\$1.5 million), 1.5 inch of paving, milling at the curve line, repair holes, use of seal coat, which does not hold up for long periods of time, and this being the first time the entire parking lot has been refurbished.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 10:38 am.

SONJA TOLBERT
CITY CLERK