

FEBRUARY 20, 2024
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100 (Virtual and in-person Meeting)

PRESENT: Mayor Bo Dorough
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, Vilnis Gaines, Chad Warbington and
Virtual: Jalen Johnson, and Demetrius Young
City Manager: Yvette Fields
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 Mayor Pro Tem Warbington, the roll call vote unanimously carried. In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. Davis opined that at least four Commissioners must be present for there to be a quorum. Commissioner Gaines stated that he is on the way, with Mayor Dorough stating that the meeting will resume at 8:45.

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

Terry Lucus stated that people assigned to his case have done nothing and provided information regarding who he has been in communication with at APD, adding that those who assaulted him have threatened his life.

Mayor Dorough stated that APD Chief Persley will look into the matter.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Public Safety

1. Junk Car Presentation

Using a power point presentation (copy on file), Chief License Inspector Marshal Walter Norman discussed information and provided a project overview, benefits to the city, definition, the process, and status from 2023.

Commissioner Howard suggested that one day a week, (especially Saturdays), an officer ride areas in Wards 1, 2, 3 and 6 since vehicles stored behind houses cannot be seen, asking the procedure if a ‘No Trespassing’ sign is posted. Marshal Norman discussed having to be able to see the junked vehicles from the right-of-way, they cannot peek over/through fences. Commissioner Howard referred to ‘shade tree mechanics’ stating that the system must be revised and mentioned 709 Moultrie Road as an example. Vehicles have been stored there for over 20 years, the owner was taken to court, got slapped on the wrist, but vehicles are still there; this should not be allowed within the city. He stated that Volkswagens are being stored at 500 Moultrie Road in the backyard. In response to his question about inoperable cars, Marshal Norman discussed cars that can be moved vs. those that cannot, with citations being issued also discussing vehicles with flat tires, which indicate that they are inoperable. Commissioner Howard mentioned other areas of concern (Mock Road and Clark Avenue -

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untagged/inoperable truck; 301 Flint Avenue – cars destroyed by fire, he named other streets with similar conditions regarding junked cars: 104 Lexington; 2606 Sylvester Road; 1541-1542 and 2701 E. Broad; 1329, 1328 E. Broad; 1111 Mulberry Street; discussion followed. He suggested that Commissioners ride the areas in question.

Commissioner Gaines mentioned his areas of concern (Avalon and Gillespie), agreeing with Commissioner Howard's comments regarding junked cars; however, he added, some people cannot afford to put their vehicles in a shop and have no other options.

In reply to Mayor Dorough, Marshal Norman stated that there 21 budgeted positions and there are six vacancies. Mayor Dorough commented on having more enforcement to assist, stating that he will provide information when he see areas of concern and suggested citizens call anonymously to report issues/violations.

B. Public Administration/Finance

1. FY23 Audit Results

Derrick Brown, CFO, acknowledged the finance team for their hard work and the outstanding job that they do. He recognized Hope Pendergrass, Partner with Mauldin & Jenkins to discuss the audit.

Using a power point presentation (copy on file), Ms. Pendergrass commented on the audit opinion, advised that the City received clean opinions in the various types of audits conducted and discussed required communications (accounting policies), management judgment accounting estimate, relationship with management, management representation, consultations, accounting recommendations regarding capital asset reports, workers compensation reserve, general fund revenues/fund balance history, enterprise fund and new GASB pronouncements.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Brown stated that they have been the auditors since he came to work for the City in 2010.

Commissioner Warbington noted page 8 and commended staff for ending the year with an increased fund balance and asked if this included the \$5.0 million transfer for the Pension Fund, with Mr. Brown explaining the process and other funds that were affected.

Mayor Dorough mentioned fund balance and during the election it was noted that the fund balance is not cash money asking how much cash the City has; Ms. Pendergrass stated \$31.3 million. Discussion continued regarding transfers (general fund to light fund, etc.) with Ms. Pendergrass providing the number of transfers. In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. Brown noted that the Stormwater Fund is now operating in the black. Discussion continued regarding with Mayor Dorough referring to recommendations asking about the Health Literacy Grant, Worker's Comp Reserve, and Capitol Asset Report, with Mr. Brown explaining each Ms. Pendergrass noted that nothing was a major concern, adding that the Finance Department does a great job.

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Commissioner Howard asked about fraud with Ms. Pendergrass stating that audits do not cover this; however, if something is detected, it is reported.

Mayor Dorough introduced Mark Campbell to discuss the following:

2. CFI Discretionary Grant Program Application

Mr. Campbell provided a power point presentation (copy on file) regarding the CFI Grant Overview, no-risk/no-cost program, benefits received and the Albany assessment. He stated that there is a 20% matching request and his company will provide the match, showing photos of the charging stations, noting benefits (free infrastructure, training/education, etc.), and explained options for the City (number of chargers/charging levels/cost).

In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. Campbell stated that the host is wherever the equipment lands, on public and/or on private property, and explained hosting/network/operation/operators. s.

In reply to Commissioner Warbington, it was noted that there are approximately 200 electric vehicles in Albany, with discussion following regarding money. Mr. Campbell explained that profit is between \$10-12K per year depending on charging amounts, infrastructure needed, etc.

Mayor Dorough mentioned use of EV chargers, cost, use for City fleet, obstacles to transition by not having infrastructure, with this program providing funding to put infrastructure in place. Mr. Campbell agreed with Mayor Dorough's comments and, level 2 vs. level 3 was discussed regarding length of charging times and the price difference between the two.

Commissioner Warbington asked if charging stations on Front Street belong to the City, with Mr. Carter stating that they are managed by someone else and that revenue is shared. Commissioner Warbington asked for a report on the use of the charging stations for past years. Discussion continued regarding the number of charging stations within the city.

Using a PowerPoint presentation, Jeff Hughes, Sewer Maintenance Engineer, and Joshua Williams, Procurement Manager, were present to discuss the following (copy on file).

3. 8th Avenue Basin Phases 2 & 3 CSS; Jim Boyd Construction, Albany, GA Total Exp. \$4,497,873.25

Mr. Hughes discussed the project overview (showing a map of the area), timeline and milestones, budget overview (funding: GEFA Loan), vendor selection (Jim Boyd) and next steps if approved.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, it was noted that Ardurra is handling the project, providing funding amounts, DBE participation, etc.

In reply to Commissioner Warbington, 8th Avenue was discussed, with Mr. Hughes advising that 8th Avenue, 3rd Avenue and Brooker must be separated and the map of streets that are affected was viewed.

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Mayor Dorough asked if the \$1.0 million addition to the 8th Avenue ballpark is for renovating the ballpark. Mr. Hughes explained his description was meant to indicate that the additional funds were ‘in the ballpark’ of \$1.0 million.

Using a power point presentation, Mr. Hughes discussed information (copy on file) regarding the project overview, budget overview (funding summary: GEFA loan and SPLOST 8), vendor selection (Ruby Collins) and next steps.

4. Joshua Street Overflow Bypass Modifications, Ruby-Collins, Inc., Smyrna, GA
\$13,440,858.75

In reply to Commissioner Howard, bidders interested in the project were discussed, with it noted that only a few responded. Discussion continued regarding the Constatine Master Plan (which was modified to meet the new conditions as required by EPD) and the possibility of the treatment plant lasting another 30 years, with Mr. Hughes noting the three projects that were identified.

Commissioner Warbington commented on the deadline to complete, with Mr. Hughes discussing the immediate goal (infrastructure), Mr. Carter explained using SPLOST and exhausting the GEFA Loan for the project.

Mayor Dorough commented on ignoring the project for years and having a list of projects 1-3, stating that he would like to have something written in laymen’s term regarding the three projects.

Robert Griffin, Interim Director of Engineering, and Mr. Williams were present to discuss the following regarding two projects being considered.

5. Engineering Services

Using a power point presentation, E. Broad sidewalk project and N. Washington Street extension projects were discussed along with the benefits to the City, budget overview (SPLOST VII), vendor selection with Kimley-Horn and AE Engineering being selected.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, it was noted that engineering is short by one engineer. with Mr. Carter explaining that these are contractors who will be working on the projects. The N. Washington Street project was discussed regarding the location of the work to be completed.

Commissioner Warbington asked if there are bike lanes in Albany and areas were noted. Discussion continued regarding construction projects/job creations.

In reply to Mayor Dorough, the bidding process was discussed along with matching funds and making the decision to hire the companies; the 10% fee being standard with 20% being given at this time with Mr. Griffin explaining the process for design work (10-15%). Discussion continued regarding the Washington Street project with Mr. Griffin noting the streets, rail track, etc. Bruce Maples, Asst. City Manager, discussed the history of the project, which began at the beginning of SPLOST monies being collected. Specifically, he commented on the railroad blocking traffic, etc., at 7th Avenue being closed

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and eliminating 3rd and 7th Avenue crossing. He explained that the purpose of this was to eventually eliminate the 7th Ave. crossing; provide continuous flow of traffic, with this being a Front/Washington Street project. In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. Maples agreed that Washington Street will not be closed.

Using a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file) Deputy Utility Operations Director Don McCook and Sales Project Manager Scott Tennison, were present to discuss the following:

6. TSPLOST II Alley Paving

In reply to Commissioner Howard regarding a timeframe, Mr. McCook stated that they are too far out and that he would have to see Engineering's schedule; otherwise, they will have to enlist the services of one of the identified engineering firms to do the engineering as was done with the last contract, adding that he believes it would take more than six-eight months to get the design.

Mayor Dorough asked if paving the alley is approximately \$400,000; Mr. McCook agreed and discussed the cost increases subsequent to COVID. In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. McCook mentioned using crushed asphalt in alleys, unless it is in low-lying areas and the crushed asphalt washes out, adding that paving the alley is the only option in those cases.

Commissioner Warbington interjected that citizens want their alley paved; the City's list is long, but funding is short. He mentioned having someone research for grant opportunities, Mr. Carter said he has not seen any grants for alleys, but it will be researched.

Mr. McCook advised that there are 90 miles of unpaved alleys in Albany with the most critical being first on the lists. Commissioner Warbington reported that paving all the unpaved alleys in Albany will cost \$166.0 million with only \$5.0 million allocated in TSPLOST.

Transit Director David Hamilton discussed the following (copy on file):

7. SWGA Regional Airport Parking Equipment Upgrade, Parking Boxx; Total exp. \$139,165

Commissioner Warbington questioned Mr. Hamilton's comment of 'being able to capture more revenue.' Mr. Hamilton explained that the current system is five years old with maintenance issues; the new system upgrades payment options, and the downtime for repairs will be eliminated. In reply to Commissioner Warbington regarding parking at the private terminal, Mr. Hamilton stated that it is free and to his knowledge charging a fee has never been discussed.

Using PowerPoint, Traffic Engineering Manager Ken Breedlove discussed the following (copy on file):

8. Traffic Control Center Upgrades, Kimley-Horn; Atlanta, GA. Total Exp. - \$66,400.00

In response to Commissioner Warbington, Mr. Breedlove noted the location of Traffic Engineering and reviewed the increased capability of the new system.

Mayor Dorough stated that Asst. City Manager Yvette Fields had told him of a Federal statute in which an entity makes selections regarding professional services and, the choice must be based on the most qualified firm. He asked for a legal opinion because an engineer he spoke with stated that it is not correct and advised that if the entity indicates from inception that ‘x’ number of qualified firms will be selected, a price is then negotiated

Recreation Director Steven Belk stated that Facilities Maintenance Superintendent Tripp Swilley and Buyer I Ricky Gladney are also present to discuss the following (copy on file), with Mr. Swilley explaining that staff recommended installing the infrastructure during construction; he reviewed the reasons and benefits of the recommendation:

9. Driskell Park Fire and Security Systems; Alarms Etc., Leesburg, GA \$84,797.83 and Cumberland Group, Atlanta, GA \$6,039.12. Total Exp. - \$90,836.95

Mayor Dorough mentioned the existing concession stand bathroom, asking if an architect is looking at its condition in order to make it operational. Mr. Swilley advised that existing restrooms around the ballfield/pool house were not a portion of the LRA contract; it was in the original documents reviewed by staff, with it being looked at now. Mayor Dorough urged that this be done correctly, adding that the public needs access to them and they need to be in a condition that will not embarrass the City.

Fire Chief Cedric Scott discussed the following (copy on file):

10. Fire Department Uniforms

Mayor Dorough asked for more details regarding the reasons for choosing NAFECO rather than the previous vendor.

MEMBER COMMENTS / ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Commissioner Howard requested that Code Enforcement continues to monitor the auto repair shops and ensure the vehicles are not being left on lots for over 30 days. He announced that a Jack’s restaurant will be opening in March.

Commissioner Warbington commended today’s presenters and He mentioned the two appeals (HPC) asking to expedite them as they have been lingering for some time.

Mayor Dorough mentioned his request for the RFPs regarding the Ritz Theatre and Carver Gym. He was advised that the information had been sent; Mr. Carter stated that it would be sent again. He referenced discussion about properties adjacent to Carver Gym and Kalmon Malone Park, adding that the City needs to be talking to owners and gaining control of available properties. He reported that Ms. Tolbert provided retreat minutes to him regarding funding allocations for Chehaw Park, Flint RiverQuarium and the Civil Rights Institute in which a decision was made to transfer the funds to the Convention and Visitor’s Bureau and asked that this to be included on the Retreat agenda. He asked that a structural evaluation be conducted for Polecat Park so that the Commission knows the condition of the

park before spending any further funds. Regarding the Tennis Center, with ASU West being the preferred site, action is needed to avoid wasting any more time. He recommended that the committee take the lead and move forward or will need to come back to the Commission and staff to decide. He noted that the County Commission has agreed to transfer the \$1.2 million in hold for the Tennis Center to the City and said a resolution from the County is needed to confirm that agreement, as well as developing a plan for moving forward. He announced that Westover’s band has been selected to perform at the National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, DC, May 27, 2024 and are soliciting donations to help the band get there, suggesting that the City and its employees might consider donating to this worthy cause as it will be the memory of a lifetime for some of the students. He referred to an issue that arose this morning regarding the requirement to have a quorum of four members physically present to hold a meeting. Commissioner Warbington recommended that when Commissioners are not going to attend or plan to participate remotely, the City Manager’s/City Clerk’s office needs to be notified, recommending a policy be drafted for this.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

Mr. Carter advised that the search for employee Darrius Stevens continues; all resources available to the City are being used to help in the search. The family is contacted by the City every day to provide an update. Regarding Municipal Court, he stated that there is push-back by CED and other tenants, with other options being considered once a legal opinion has been rendered regarding the court being moved to that building. He announced: the retreat is scheduled for March 16, and asked that Commissioners alert him and/or Ms. Tolbert with topics to discuss to be put on the agenda; GMA has Newly Elected Officials Training in Tifton (March 20-22) and anyone who has not taken the required training must do so and Tifton is the closest; budget season is approaching and he is seeking 2025 initiatives or issues Commissioners want considered in next year’s budget; the clean audit the Finance Department received is testimony to their dedication; and April 6th is scheduled for the Blue/Gold Gala for Albany State University’s scholarship fund, if Commissioners plan on attending he needs to know ASAP in order to make reservations.

Commissioner Warbington asked the possibility of receiving a proposed retreat agenda by the first work session in March and that this request be an agenda item on the next work session.

Commissioner Howard stated that he is concerned about the path the City is on and suggested that Commissioners get together to flush out some issues. Regarding the Retreat agenda, asked to include discussion regarding the establishment of a minority procurement office. Mr. Carter advised that what has been discussed has a different name, but he feels it will meet Commissioners expectations.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (pending litigation)

At 12:04 p.m., Commissioner Howard moved to enter executive session to discuss information as noted, seconded by Commissioner Gaines, the motion unanimously carried as follows:

Ward I	yes
Ward II	absent

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Ward III	yes
Ward IV	yes
Ward V	absent
Ward VI	yes
Mayor	yes

At 12:55 p.m. Commissioner Warbington moved to exit executive session, seconded by Commissioner Gaines; the motion unanimously carried as follows:

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

Mayor Dorough reconvened the meeting at 12:56 p.m. announcing that there was no action taken in executive session regarding pending litigation.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m.

SONJA TOLBERT
CITY CLERK