

JULY 16, 2024
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVERNMENT CENTER BUILDING
ROOM. 100

PRESENT: Mayor Bo Dorough
Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff (joined and was recognized at approx. 11:40 am)
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, Vilnis Gaines, Chad Warbington,
Demetrius Young
Interim City Mgr. Derrick Brown
City Attorney: Michael Custer

Mayor Dorough called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m., followed by attendance roll call.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Commissioner Warbington moved to adopt the agenda with the addition of an executive session to discuss pending litigation and personnel matters, seconded by Commissioner Howard, the roll call vote unanimously carried.

PUBLIC HEARING (Zoning Matters)

1. 24-036 Rezoning 1706, 1708, and 1710 N Slappey Blvd

Using a PowerPoint (copy on file), Mr. Forgey discussed the application to rezone from C-2 to C 2c and explained the particulars of this City-initiated rezoning, which is to have the same conditions as placed on 1010 N. Slappey. He provided overview maps of the property, adding that all four will be voted on at the business meeting next week and discussed sanitary sewer, aerial photo, surrounding zoning, surrounding land uses, provided the zoning history, traffic considerations and the future land use map. He advised that the Planning Commission recommended conditional conditions as follows: **1) An 8-ft opaque fence or wall and a 10-ft vegetative buffer must be installed along the eastern property line abutting the C-R District; 2) If a drive-through that includes a speaker system is to be installed, a sound study must be performed to ensure it does not negatively impact the C-R District; 3) No bars or nightclubs; 4) No car sales or car wash.**

Discussion included types of restrictions (convenience store not prohibited), use of the properties, and consistency regarding a sound study (could speakers be prohibited).

Hearing no additional comments, Mayor Dorough closed the public hearing for this application and opened the public hearing for the following:

2. 24-029 Rezoning 2325 Gillionville Rd.

Mr. Forgey used a power point (copy on file) to review the application and discussed: use as an auto repair shop, Planning considerations, showed aerial view, maps of surrounding zoning, surrounding land uses, zoning history, trip/traffic considerations, land use map and advised the Planning Commission recommended approval.

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Discussion included the previous owner using the property for auto repair, and the new rezoning being in compliance and installing a buffer, which is required under most conditions; Ms. Custer provided information regarding what is legally required for auto repairs. Discussion continued regarding the property complying vs the previous business operation of the subject property with new rules in place from when the original owner had the property.

Bobby Donnally, Lanier Engineering, signed up to speak on behalf of Mr. Patel (the applicant) and said the property was purchased in 2022 and provided additional information regarding the previous owner vs new owner.

Hearing no additional comments, Mayor Dorough closed this public hearing and opened the public hearing for the following:

3. 24-030 Special Approval 2601 Dawson Rd.

Mr. Forgey used power point (copy on file) to discuss the special approval request for a hotel, showing aerial view, zoning map, the site plan, surrounding land uses, special approval criteria, traffic considerations, ingress/egress and advising that the Planning Commission recommended approval.

Discussion included whether additional rezoning will be forthcoming with Mr. Forgey replying affirmatively, with the hotel brand noted on page 43.

Bobby Donnally, Lanier Engineering, said that the 160-room Hilton brand hotel (HOME 2 and TRUE) is four stories, location of the front of the building, plans for the other parcels at this time, cost for the hotel, explanation of 'dual hotel', status of the Albany Mall and if it is in foreclosure, with it noted that the bank is holding the property.

Hearing no other speakers, Mayor Dorough adjourned this public hearing and opened the public hearing for the following:

4. 24-031 Special Approval 1701 Stuart Ave.

Mr. Forgey provided a power point (copy on file) regarding the request for special approval for an assisted living facility, showed maps of the property, aerial view, surrounding zoning, special approval criteria, including traffic count, ingress/egress, parking, future land recommendations and advised that with the Planning Commission recommending approval.

In reply to questions regarding personal vehicles, etc., speaking on behalf of the applicant, Richard Walker, was present to discuss the assisted living facility, with this being their first to operate. He said residents will not have personal transportation and one parking space is designed for use by the owners, meals will be prepared, and employees will have a knowledge of the medical field, people over the age of 59 will reside there, and fencing is in place. He stated that this is a positive investment of the property with the tax roll listing as three bedrooms with modifications in progress.

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Hearing no additional comments, Mayor Dorough closed this public hearing and opened the public hearing for the following:

Mr. Forgey advised that he will be discussing applications together (four separate), two for each with one for rezoning and one for special approval.

5. 24-034 Rezoning 420 South Mock Rd.
6. 24-032 Special Approval 420 S. Mock Rd.
7. 24-035 Rezoning 416 South Mock Rd.
8. 24-033 Special Approval 416 South Mock Rd.

Using a power point (copy on file), he discussed information regarding the development of a solar farm, showing maps of the property, providing acreage, surrounding zoning, zoning history, developer information, buffering, planning considerations, surrounding land uses, traffic impact, transportation, and the future land use map. He advised that the Planning Commission recommended **conditional approval as follows: The use restricted to a solar farm only with no access to Brierwood.**

Discussion included the southern zoning (M-1) with it not being a consideration at this time or proposals for additional properties (all would come back for review of the Commission), vegetation buffer (information can be brought back), and connecting to the city grid with Kendall Hodge, Director of Utilities Operation, stating that the City has not been contacted by the owner.

Don Wallace, applicant, was present to answer questions. Discussion included buffering height, new access road possible vs existing entrance road, and there being no start date at this time regarding the project, Mr. Wallace commented on his connection to Albany with the Mock family owning the land and explained the 4.9 megawatts project, adding that the off taker is unknown (whether it will be the City, GA Power or MEAG). Ms. Custer provided information regarding whether Albany Utility can handle the project and other projects along Mock Rd., which is inclusive of solar panels.

Hearing no additional comments, Mayor Dorough closed the public hearing.

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

Rance Pettibone with South Albany Housing Pettibone provided a history of the area due to the flood of 1994, including displacement of citizens and the need for affordable housing in S. Albany, specifically regarding the River Road area.

Commissioner Howard thanked Pastor Pettibone for his comments regarding housing on the east and south side of Albany.

Commissioner Young questioned issues of those needing houses with Pastor Pettibone explaining that it appears Albany is divided and those on the south side are in distress and need to be lifted up.

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Mayor Dorough mentioned not having enough single-family homes in Albany is a challenge and said he will provide additional information. He discussed COVID and new houses on Gillionville that cost upward of \$200,000, ARPA funds, etc., with discussion continuing regarding the building homes on the west side of Albany and not on the east/south side.

Commissioner Warbington stated that he has put forth efforts in S. Albany, as well as his ward, and mentioned a project being voted down, adding that a DCA Grant was recently applied for, which is \$10+ million housing project near Gordon, stating that he agrees with the comments of Rev. Pettibone with discussion continuing regarding the housing shortage.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

I. Public Administration/Finance

Sewer Maintenance Engineer Jeff Hughes and Sales Project Manager Scott Tennison were present to discuss the following (copy on file):

A. Purchases

1. GEFA Loan re: CSS Projects

Mr. Hughes discussed information (copy on file) regarding the GEFA loan for the CSS project/treatment plant and advised that the request is to authorize staff to proceed with the application for another \$12.0 million loan, with the possibility of principal forgiveness.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Hughes discussed issues bidding out the project. Commissioner Howard asked what happens if the City is not approved for the loan. Mr. Brown noted Mr. Hughes comment about this specific project having no impact on the 85% separation; however, he recalled Asst. City Manager Bruce Maples sending an email regarding problems at the plant, adding that this project cannot be delayed as it is critical to the operation of the plant.

Commissioner Warbington asked the status of the chain, based on Mr. Maples email. Mr. Hughes reported that currently they are functioning and hope they can continue until the new one is built. Other options were discussed should the loan not be awarded.

Mayor Dorough asked for 1) summary of the recommendations made by Constantine for the water treatment plant; 2) when bid out, the numbers that came back and modifications made to bring it within the final figure under discussion now. In reply to Mayor Dorough, Mr. Hughes advised that with the additional funding, they are looking at doing Project II and III.

In reply to Commissioner Howard regarding the age of the Joshua Treatment Plant and the reason why the Commission did not take advantage of the financing available at the time. Mr. Hughes explained that part of it was because of financing; the City would be hard pressed to repay \$300.0 million, as well as the prospect of continually raising rates to generate revenue. Due to costs, everything cannot be fixed

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at once; priorities need to be set to move forward. That is the focus of staff based on EPD's requirements, keeping facilities in operating condition and maintaining a reasonable rate structure.

Mr. Maples discussed the treatment plant, which created concerns from the beginning and commended this Commission, as it has done more than any prior Commission, in its support and efforts to rectify the issue. He expressed support for the loan and urged Commissioners to consider approval.

Josh Williams, Procurement Manager, discussed the following (copy on file):

2. Billing Software Maintenance; Tyler Technologies, Dallas, TX - Total exp. \$305,897.27

There were no questions/comments on this item.

Scott Tennison discussed the following (copy on file):

3. Lift Station 1 Rehabilitation; Popco Inc., Sylvester, Ga - Total exp. \$1,189,680

There were no questions/comments on this item.

Lequrica Gaskins discussed information (copy on file):

4. Reimbursement re: 4C Academy Architect Fees

Michael Eaton, Interim CFO, stated that the money is in the budget.

Commissioner Langstaff entered the meeting at (11:40) and asked the amount in ADICA's account (approximately \$100,000, fund balance set aside for this year's budget). Discussion continued regarding the amount, with a request that the information be sent to the Commission.

Commissioner Warbington expressed the importance of the project. Mr. Eaton stated that there is \$293,000 in ADICA's account.

Discussion continued regarding the total amount due with it noted that the amount requested covers the cost of architectural services (approximately \$77,000 for two buildings).

Mayor Dorough expressed concern regarding reimbursing ADICA with discussion continuing on when the project will begin.

Steve Belk, Recreation Director, and Melissa Cosby, WSP, presented information as follows (copy on file)

5. Henderson Park Design

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Using a power point presentation (copy on file), information was discussed regarding the 35% park design and the the 65% (architectural rendering that is up for vote), Options I and II.

Commissioner Warbington said he supports the project; however, he does not feel we are at the 65% voting point yet and he but hopes that his comments will make the project better, as he is speaking from his skillset. He mentioned that this site is 35 acres for the project, asking the possibility of green space/walking trails in the back funding options, etc., loose ends.

Commissioner Young commented on cosmetic changes with the building being functional to lock in the 35% design, adding that it is not a big issue to match what other facilities look like (noting the differences in Driskill vs. Henderson). He mentioned the floor plan, which eliminated the kitchen/concession area and referred to a full kitchen as was noted when the Commission toured a rec facility in Tallahassee. Leasing rec facilities and what people ask for when leasing was discussed along with going over the budgeted amount with Mr. Brown noting the \$9 million or \$480,000 over what was approved. Melissa Crosby, WSP Project Manager, provided requested updates regarding Option II (the stone façade, equipment, lighting, surface of the walking trail, etc. Ms. Crosby suggested coming to Albany to sit down to hear and understand issues regarding the 65% if time permits. Commissioner Young suggested no brick façade to remain in budget and deal with other details moving forward. He asked if this includes fencing, with Ms. Crosby explaining the design around the playground only.

Mayor Dorough expressed concern, regarding eliminating the shelter on the basketball court (option 2), not eliminate playground equipment and the appearance of what is done at Driskill, Carver and E. Albany is complimented. Discussion continued regarding Mayor Dorough's opinions including the lack of a health program for seniors, classrooms with staffing requirements for afterschool programs (including type of programs), keep walking track, but no concrete surface, and postponing multi-purpose field, having a generator, not postponing playground equipment.

Commissioner Young countered that there is no playground equipment there now; Henderson has always served children, and was primarily used to play basketball and suggested it does not make sense to put baseball fields or playground equipment there; however, there was discussion to tear down the Bill Miller Center and making a community adult center for fitness, artistic interests, and having other programing including funding for more staff, etc., comments regarding what should be/should not be at the various parks, functionality and what is needed. He asked for confirmation that the roof is included in the 35% design that was voted on; Mr. Brown said that Ms. Crosby confirmed that on the call.

Mayor Dorough countered that having playground equipment is necessary.

Commissioner Warbington asked to move the holding pond to the back with Ms. Crosby discussing the re-design and overall grading, the roof sloping to the back and having a fencing package as an alternate, i.e., fencing options, playground and having the same as Driskill, including shading and, having bleachers for basketball courts which are re-tractable and having bleachers on the right/left side.

Discussion continued regarding voting on the options next week with Mr. Brown suggesting funding be voted on last and questioned if the Commission is ready to make a decision. He suggested taking a vote and working out the process after the vote for the 65%. Continuing to change options was discussed and voting on Option I or II next week.

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MEMBER COMMENTS / ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Commissioner Howard questioned the appearance of the parking deck and who is responsible for it, with Stacy Rowe, Public Works Director, stating that this is a function of the County. Regarding sidewalks, it was noted that Don Gray, Facilities Director, is responsible for this, including locations of sidewalks.

Commissioner Gaines suggested sticking to the subject when conducting public hearings, adding that he will call a point of order when this happens.

In reply to Commissioner Warbington regarding the Billows alcohol license, Ms. Custer advised that it will be on the agenda and will not be up for discussion. Regarding the Garbage contract, Ms. Custer said once she gets the attorney's opinion, it will be on the agenda. Regarding ADICA, he asked Mr. Brown to move forward with additional information to have an agenda item on 4-C.

Commissioner Young said that he will hold a Town Hall meeting on the Henderson development and invited the public to attend Thursday at 7 pm at Henderson.

Mayor Dorough mentioned the construction to four-lane SR 133 from Valdosta to Albany and Mr. Forgey's advising that completion is February 2025. He asked for confirmation on the completion of the entire project with Mr. Forgey stating that he will provide the information. Mayor Dorough referred to the weatherization program, requesting a presentation of the proposal.

REPORT OF THE CITY MANAGER

Mr. Brown mentioned:

- The first B5 Safe Campaign Town Hall meetings is scheduled for Saturday, 11:00 am., Westtown Library and the second one will be Monday, at 6:00 pm., at the Northwest Library, with more to be scheduled.
- The required three public hearings re: the millage rate; however, the Tax Digest has not been received from Dougherty County and advised of the public hearing dates (August 6 and August 20th (at both August work sessions).
- Discussion continued with it noted that the last public hearing will be the night of August 13.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (pending litigation and personnel matter)

At 11:39 a.m., Commissioner Warbington moved to enter executive session to discuss pending litigation and a personnel matter, seconded by Commissioner Howard, the roll call vote unanimously carried as follows:

Ward I	yes
Ward II	absent
Ward III	yes
Ward IV	yes

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Ward V	yes
Ward VI	yes
Mayor	yes

As the City Attorney was excused from executive session, there were no notes taken and the motion to exit and time were not noted.

At 11:51 a.m., Mayor Dorough reconvened the meeting, announcing that no action was taken in executive session regarding the pending litigation and personnel matter and adjourned the meeting.

CITY CLERK

DRAFT