

JULY 25, 2017  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100

PRESENT: Mayor Dorothy Hubbard  
Mayor Pro Tem Roger Marietta  
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, Bobby Coleman, BJ Fletcher, Bob Langstaff,  
Jr., and Tommie Postell  
City Manager: Sharon D. Subadan  
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Hubbard called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., and recognized State Representative Mable Thomas who is present. She reminded the audience of the process to address the Commission (Citizen Comments/Speaker Appearance Forms).

### SPEAKER APPEARANCE

Tom Swain, Founder/President, GA State African American Chamber of Commerce, spoke briefly on the entertainment industry in Georgia and introduced Lydia McGee, CEO of Cinedome Studios, to make a brief presentation.

Using a power point presentation (copy on file) Ms. McGee introduced Jason Benson, CFO of Cinedome studios, stating that they are interested in coming to Albany to grow the local economy by providing jobs. She thanked Mr. Swain for his assistance in bringing this forward and discussed the entertainment/film industry in Georgia, adding that Atlanta gets a lot of this business and SWGA should also be part of this growing industry. Discussing Cinedome Studios, she commented on the eco-friendliness of the business, adding that students will be hired and, she listed statistics from the Motion Picture Assoc. of America as it pertains to the economics growth, job creation, etc., of the filming industry. She briefly discussed the economic impact on Senoia, Georgia where *The Walking Dead* is filmed and said they would like to work with City/County officials to build a studio in Albany/Dougherty County. She advised that they have already identified a location/land

Commissioner Postell asked how much funds will need to be appropriated. Ms. McGee explained that to build the studio will take \$7.5 million with more expected when films are made. Commissioner Postell asked how much was invested in Georgia already with Ms. McGee stating that the company is new and this is the first studio build for Cinedome.

Commissioner Fletcher clarified the partnership structure with Ms. McGee stating that she would like for it to be inclusive of a City/ County partnership with half being investments/investors.

Mayor Pro Tem Marietta asked if access is needed for rail and airport. Ms. McGee explained that having access to the airport is very important to bring in A-listers. In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Marietta, she said they made a presentation to the EDC.

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In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Ms. McGee advised that the property identified is on Lockett Station Road and agreed with Mayor Hubbard on the partnership being 1/3 each (City/County and their investment).

Commissioner Postell asked Ms. McGee to be sure and speak with the City Manager regarding the presentation and her proposal.

APPOINTMENTS

1. Four appointments to Chehaw Park Authority for two-year term expiring July, 2019 and one appointment to Friends of Chehaw for two-year term expiring July, 2019
2. Two appointments to the Aviation Commission for three-year term expiring July, 2020
3. One appointment to Animal Control Board for two-year term expiring June, 2019

Commissioner Postell questioned whether or not Dr. Gillespie had resigned/retired from the Aviation Commission with Mayor Hubbard stating that she was not aware of this. The Clerk advised that Dr. Gillespie and Ken Hodges returned their letters indicating their desire to remain on the Aviation Commission and both were recommended to be reappointed by the Aviation Commission.

TRAVEL

Commissioner Howard moved to approve the following, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher; the motion unanimously carried.

1. Mayor D. Hubbard, 2017 GMA Annual Training Convention; Savannah, GA; June 21-27, 2017; \$2,599.57
2. Commissioner J. Howard, 2017 GMA Annual Training Convention; Savannah, GA; June 23-26, 2017; \$1,524.90
3. Commissioner B. Coleman, 2017 GMA Annual Training Convention; Savannah, GA; June 23-25, 2017; \$1,407.07
4. Mayor Pro Tem R. Marietta, 2017 GMA Annual Training Convention; Savannah, GA; June 23-26, 2017; \$1,608.21
5. Commissioner T. Postell, 2017 GMA Annual Training Convention; Savannah, GA; June 23-26, 2017; \$1,095.63
6. City Manager S. Subadan, 2017 GMA Annual Training Convention; Savannah, GA; June 22-27, 2017; \$2,849.71
7. City Manager S. Subadan, 2017 MEAG Power Annual Convention; Amelia Island, FL; July 9-12, 2017; \$1,145.84
8. City Manager S. Subadan, 2017 GA City-County Mgmt., Assn., Fall Conference; Jekyll Island, GA; September 20-23, 2017

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9. City Attorney N. Davis, 2017 GMA Annual Training Convention; Savannah, GA; June 23-26, 2017; \$1,561.20
10. City Clerk S. Tolbert, 2017 GMA Annual Training Convention; Savannah, GA; June 23-26, 2017; \$1,961.80
11. City Clerk S. Tolbert, 2017 Annual IIMC Conference/Training; Montreal, Canada; May 19-25, 2017; \$2,287.61
12. Asst. City Clerk S. Kelly, 2017 GMA Annual Training Convention; Savannah, GA; June 23-26, 2017; \$1,359.46

## **PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS**

### ALCOHOL LICENSE APPLICATIONS

1. Pretoria Fields, LLC; d/b/a Pretoria Fields Brewery; 120 Pine Avenue; J. Morgan III/Agent; Beer Consumption, Beer Package, and Beer Brewers; WARD 3
2. Havana Lounge; 234 W. Broad Avenue; A. Banks/Agent; Liquor, Beer and Wine Consumption; WARD 3
3. Crooked Lounge; 307 W. Broad Avenue; A. Banks/Agent; Liquor, Beer and Wine Consumption; WARD 3

Commissioner Postell questioned who named number 3 Crooked Lounge with Chief Marshall Walter Norman relaying the name of the applicant. In reply to Commissioner Fletcher, discussion followed on having a set number of alcohol licenses approved per block/radius area with Marshall Norman clarifying. Commissioner Fletcher also commented on how this will impact revitalizing downtown Albany and newer businesses opening. There were no other comments on this item.

## **PUBLIC WORKS MATTERS**

### UNUSED PROPERTY SALE

K. Bruce Maples, Director of Engineering, discussed information as noted (copy on file) and asked for approval to sell the property at the appraised price of \$5,200 to Kerry and Joy Reeves as noted.

In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Maples discussed the name and address of the purchasers, reason for sale, etc. He explained that the property is near Hillsman Park and the property is recommended for sale because it is an open driveway/unopened alley/roadway and is no longer being used. The City maintains a storm drainage easement on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, as well as an east-west 3' alley (3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Alley). In reply to Commissioner Coleman, Mr. Maples explained the expansion of Mr. and Mrs. Reeve's property, which will put it back on the tax roll. He stated that the property is basically a driveway that has never been opened or used and is not a lot that can be

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developed. The Reeves goal is to prevent anyone from using it as a driveway and/or encroaching onto their property. There were no other comments on this item.

## **PUBLIC FUNCTION MATTERS**

### APPOINTMENTS TO ALBANY/DOUGHERTY LAND BANK AUTHORITY

Ms. Subadan recommended Donald Butts, Debbie Sutton, Eddie Dean Brown and Jamye Jaycox Cobb, who all live within the city limits. She gave a brief update on each and in reply to Commissioner Postell she stated that they are all property owners.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Ms. Subadan provided information on those who are realtors. Commissioner Howard asked if resumes were provided; Ms. Subadan stated that she can provide additional information during the break. In reply to Commissioner Howard she explained that a vote is needed tonight on the appointments.

In reply to Commissioner Coleman, Paul Forgey, Planning Director, stated that the terms are staggered two/one year terms. Commissioner Coleman asked if the Board reflects the general population of the citizens of Albany. There were no other comments on this item.

## **PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS**

### PUBLIC HEARING - FY 2018 MILLAGE RATE ADOPTION

Mayor Hubbard stated that the public hearing was advertised for 6:30 and we will suspend the work session at this time for the public hearing.

Derrick Brown, Finance Director, discussed the current millage rate with the proposal to carry the same millage rate forward. He explained the process, which includes advertisements for a tax increase and public hearings, which are contingent on whether or not property values increases. Using a power point presentation, he explained the millage computation (copy on file), and explained that Dougherty County reassessed 1,667 properties this year, with the value increasing on some properties while decreasing on some; the result was a net increase of \$639,000 in the reassessed value of those properties. Regardless of how miniscule the increase, he advised that the State requires the millage to be rolled back from its current rate of 9.808 to 9.804 or a tax increase advertised and public hearings held.

In reply to Commission Howard, Mr. Brown discussed the number of properties that were looked at, which was a very small number that was selected to sample and compute the rates. Commissioner Howard stated that there is a spike in commercial growth with Mr. Brown agreeing

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and advising that residential properties have decreased, as well as a large decrease in motor vehicles ad valorem tax, which was replaced by titled ad valorem taxes resulting in a \$15.5 million decrease in ad valorem taxes on vehicles

Commissioner Postell clarified the county rolling back with Mr. Brown agreeing that they have rolled back for the last several years and explaining again the process of rollback, which includes three public hearings to comply with state requirements. Commissioner Postell stated that people owning land should get a tax break and should not be penalized. Mr. Brown explained that the City will make \$2.55 from the reassessment and, to roll back will be an approximate \$6,000 impact to the City. In response to Commissioner Postell, he advised that the rollback would save property owners \$0.75 on property assessed at \$500,000.

Commissioner Langstaff explained that the \$6,000 is total, not per property and commented on the total tax digest as noted for the City from 2012-2017. He suggested that the exercise that we are going through is due to state law. The \$6,000 is the difference in whether to roll back or not and tonight the vote will be to roll it back so as to not have a property tax increase.

Mayor Hubbard commented on the budget that was adopted with Mr. Brown stating that to roll back will not have much of an effect.

Commissioner Coleman commented on the utility rate increase and perception as it pertains to rolling back or rolling up.

Chad Warbington stated that the process is complicated and commended Mr. Brown for his explanation. He asked why go through bad publicity, public hearings, advertising, public outcry, etc., for \$6,000 – which he suggested was not worth the cost for such a minimal amount. There would have been positive publicity and a good will gesture if the rollback had been implemented from the beginning. The damage has been done at this point with a negative perception already formed.

Ned Newcomb thanked the Commission for the thankless job that they do and thanked Commissioner Fletcher for her efforts during the recent storms. He also said this has been an educational process and agreed this is ‘a lot ado about nothing’. He addressed SPLOST, T-SPLOST, E-SPLOST, gas tax and questioned the need for another government building in addition to this one, etc. He asked for responsible government, and to stop spending money and fighting amongst ourselves. He mentioned properties he has sold with not one being sold at tax value resulting in him losing substantial amounts of money and agreed that the numbers should be looked at to determine whether or not a tax increase is needed.

Julie Miller thanked the Commission for taking the time to look at this closer and asked that everything be looked at, including the decline of dollars and to devise a plan to ‘fill the gap’. She suggested pulling in citizens to share knowledge and concerns and asked the Commission to do the right thing by property owners.

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Commissioner Fletcher discussed her previous suggestion of getting the word out to concerned citizens and those on social media and asked again that the City put together a simple website where people can ask questions and get answers. Regarding nasty posts that are made, she said they will be blocked on the website; Commissioners have feelings, too and some of the things posted are uncalled for and are inappropriate.

Mayor Hubbard agreed that the City can work on getting a website for citizens to share and receive information. Commissioner Fletcher encouraged citizens to take advantage of the website which will make it easier for them to use and stay informed. She referenced Stuart Avenue and lamented that it is quickly becoming blighted property.

Hearing no further comments, Mayor Hubbard declared the public hearing closed.

PURCHASES:

Yvette Fields, Central Services Director, discussed the following, adding that it is a contract renewal with the option for two year renewals.

1. Office Supplies, Staples Advantage  
Estimated annual expenditure \$90,000.00

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, she advised that \$89,000 was spent last year. There were no other comments on this item.

Ms. Fields discussed the following (copy on file).

2. Consulting Services, Denovo Ventures  
Estimated annual expenditure \$61,500.00

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, she advised that this company has been used before. Commissioner Langstaff asked about the County's part with Ms. Fields explaining that it is part of the service delivery strategy.

In reply to Commissioner Postell, Ms. Subadan stated that reimbursements from FEMA/GEMA are ongoing; the first check was \$1.5 million with an anticipation of being approved for additional reimbursements. Regarding the County, she explained that they are expected to be approved for more reimbursements as well, in addition to the \$3.1 million that they recently received from GEMA. There were no other comments on this item.

Ms. Subadan commented on the following, stating that the current facilities building is outdated, small and not environmentally compliant and that equipment cannot be worked on in the shop (trash truck/fire trucks/dump trucks, etc). The new location will be CNG compliant and, SPLOST VI had monies set aside for facilities improvements.

3. Consolidated Fleet Facility, Ram Construction & Development, LLC  
Expenditure not to exceed \$1.4 million

Commissioner Postell commented on other locations (Public Works/Lily Pond) and asked if another building is being built. Ms. Subadan explained that a building was purchased recently to service heavy equipment and CNG equipment. In reply to Commissioner Postell, she explained that the Blaylock facility was purchased for \$1.0 million to make it CNG compliant vs. \$7-80 million to build a facility. She briefly discussed not being able to retrofit current buildings because of ceiling heights and not being able to accommodate the buses when they need repaired.

Mayor Hubbard asked how long renovations will take to complete the Blaylock building; Ms. Subadan replied that the bid is before the Commission now and it could be 7-8 months before it will be ready. She briefly discussed additional renovations/upgrades she foresees in the future.

Regarding various projects that come before the Commission, Commissioner Fletcher mentioned additional funds being requested for repairs and asked that there be no surprises to the citizens. Everything should be brought up front to help citizens understand the operation of local government.

Commissioner Howard asked that we not exceed the \$1.4 million with Ms. Subadan stating that the \$1.4 is to bring the building up to date for CNG compliance; paving the parking lot and IT will be brought back in the future for consideration. Commissioner Howard asked for clarification on how bids were scored; Ms. Fields explained the process of the RFQ pertaining to CNG shops, which accounts for choosing RAM over ET. A brief discussion followed regarding building versus buying and the age of the building being renovated (ten years).

Discussion followed with Commissioner Langstaff asking how the bid pricing was figured; Ms. Fields explained that the budget was set at \$1.4 million; price was not set as a criteria, but qualification was.

Commissioner Postell clarified the process of the budget being \$1.4 million and whether staff is comfortable with this, adding that this information helps the Commission to evaluate the best way to spend taxpayer's money. In reply to Commissioner Postell, Ms. Fields stated that some minor improvements are needed for some of the offices; there is painting, pressure washing, moving IT, etc., to do before moving. Commissioner Postell asked the cost of the roof; Ms. Fields replied that estimates are much less than \$1.0 million with a lot of the work being done over time. In response to Commissioner Postell, Stephen Collier, Asst. City Manager explained that an inspection on the infrastructure revealed that no electrical or plumbing work was needed on the building. He mentioned lifts, generators, etc., that will be moved to the new shop. Ms. Subadan interjected that she made it clear when the building was purchased, there would be costs to renovate and make it CNG compliant; there will be future costs for other renovations/upgrades and are well under \$1.0 million. She added that the future expenses are discretionary and will be done only if the cost is not prohibitive. There were no other comments on this item.

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONTRACT BETWEEN THE ALBANY/DOUGHERTY INNER CITY AUTHORITY (ADICA), DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA) AND THE CITY OF ALBANY

Downtown Director Latoya Cutts discussed information as noted (copy on file) as it pertains to the agreement. Mayor Pro Tem Marietta and Commissioner Coleman both agreed that the contract should be no more than five years.

Commissioner Postell asked who makes the decisions on these Boards. Ms. Cutts explained that both Boards have voted and agree on working together in relation to projects. She stated that for projects in the Central Business District, the DDA will be the primary authority working on those particular projects. The reason being that the DDA is governed by the boundaries of the Central Business District and any project outside that District will be handled by ADICA. In response to Commissioner Postell, Ms. Cutts explained that the only funding controlled by the DDA is the \$50,000 the City provides to them annually for operating expenses, which in the past was allocated to ADICA, but is now allocated directly to the DDA. She added that any other funding/projects recommended by the DDA must be approved by the City Commission. In response to Commissioner Postell, Ms. Cutts reiterated that the DDA is the Authority the Commission has installed to handle all downtown redevelopment in the Central Business District.

Commissioner Langstaff commented on the five/ten year agreement and suggested tabling tonight to speak with the attorney (Mr. McCray) to determine the pros/cons of each. Mayor Hubbard suggested ascertaining what other DDA's in the state are doing. In reply to Commissioner Langstaff on whether a vote is needed expeditiously, Ms. Cutts explained the importance of approving the agreement due to the DDA being able to move projects forward that are on the table, etc. Commissioner Fletcher asked if Mr. McCray can be called on the break; Ms. Cutts stated that she can try to reach him.

Commissioner Coleman agreed that this item should be tabled and reminded Ms. Cutts that one Commission does not bind another and asked that a five year agreement be considered rather than ten years.

Commissioner Fletcher countered that tabling could create a lag in agreements and could jeopardize pending projects. Ms. Cutts agreed, adding that the DDA cannot sign documents on projects that are on the table and reminded the Commission that the next Commission meeting is on August 22. There were no other comments on this item.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mayor Hubbard reminded the Commission of the following:

1. Commission Retreat -Tues. Aug. 8, 2017; Lake Blackshear 9 am - 4 pm



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2. Only one meeting in August scheduled for Tues. Aug. 22, 2017 @ 6 pm

Commissioner Fletcher asked that the website information be put on the agenda with Ms. Subadan stating that she is working on it.

Commissioner Coleman stated that it is his fault that the Jackson Heights Fitness Center is not on the agenda; however, it will be on the next agenda.

Commissioner Howard mentioned discussion of 401 Pine Avenue and the service delivery agreement scheduled for the retreat's agenda; he asked Ms. Subadan to hold off moving until an agreement has been reached on the service delivery strategy. Commissioner Postell asked if furniture has been purchased; Commissioner Howard deferred to Ms. Subadan. Ms. Subadan stated that her decision to move her office to 401 has nothing to do with the service delivery strategy and that she will maintain an office in both buildings. Discussion followed with Commissioner Howard expressing his opinion that a move is not prudent at this time; he mentioned budget cuts made by former Interim City Manager Tom Berry and said he prefers to have the City Manager in close proximity when she is needed by a Commissioner. In the past a goal of the City and County was 'one stop shopping' for the convenience of citizens, this is a central location that helps accomplish that goal.

Commissioner Postell stated that he does not feel it makes a difference where the City Manager has her office. Commissioner Howard interjected that he does not want to be running from 222 Pine to 401 Pine if he needs to meet with her. Commissioner Postell maintained that he does not understand why Ms. Subadan shouldn't be able move as long as she stays within the corporate limits.

Mayor Hubbard asked Ms. Subadan to submit her plans and the names of those who will be moving.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

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SONJA TOLBERT  
CITY CLERK