

DECEMBER 13, 2016
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100

PRESENT Mayor Dorothy Hubbard
Mayor Pro Tem BJ Fletcher
City Commissioners: Jon Howard, Bobby Coleman, Roger Marietta, Bob
Langstaff, Jr., and Tommie Postell (arrived at 8:47 am)
City Manager: Sharon Subadan
City Attorney: CN Davis

Mayor Hubbard called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and advised that citizens desiring to address the Commission regarding items listed on this agenda must fill out the Citizen Comment form and submit it to the City Clerk.

APPOINTMENT

1. One appointment to the Albany/Dougherty Joint Board of Registration and Elections for two-year term ending December 31, 2018

Mayor Hubbard stated that Fredrick Williams indicated he wishes to remain on the board.

2. Homeless Coalition Appointment of Officers

There was no discussion on this matter. Mayor Hubbard said the vote will be taken at the business meeting.

3. One appointment to Albany Housing for one year term ending November, 2017 (Mayor's Appointment)

Mayor Hubbard stated that she will reappoint Barbara Jackson.

TRAVEL

1. Commissioner J. Howard – NLC 2017 City Summit; Pittsburg, PA; Nov. 15-20, 2017 - \$2,458.35
2. Asst. City Clerk S. Kelly – IIMC Region III Conference; Birmingham, Al; Feb. 14-17, 2017

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

PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS

ALCOHOL LICENSE APPLICATION

DECEMBER 13, 2016
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100

1. Savoy's Bistro & Lounge, 704 Radium Springs Rd. T. Fletcher/Agent; Liquor, Beer and Wine Consumption

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Marshal Walter Norman advised that this was the former "Somebody's" establishment. There were no other comments on this item.

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT – ALBANY/DOUGHERTY SWAT TEAM AND MCLB

In reply to Mayor Hubbard regarding a prior agreement, Chief Persley explained that there was a prior agreement; however, this agreement puts the SWAT Team in the secondary position as noted in the agenda item (copy on file).

There were no further comments on this item

CONTRACT WITH GA DEPT. OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND APD

Chief Persley presented information as noted (copy on file) as it pertains to the contract, adding that this is grant funded and is a collaboration with APD/Albany Housing to have officers on hand at the McIntosh Housing, i.e., two officers are adopted by the neighborhood.

Dan McCarthy, Director of Albany Housing Authority, explained that the grant was received two years ago from the Georgia Department of Health for public safety improvements in this area.

Commissioner Coleman asked the reason McIntosh Housing was chosen and whether the program will expand to other areas. Mr. McCarthy gave a brief summation of the Choice Neighborhood Plan Initiative that was started in 2010, which targets high poverty/crime rates, adding that McIntosh Housing was chosen at the time for this program. He said that he hopes the program will move into other parts of the, city but additional grants/funding is needed.

Commissioner Howard agreed that the program needs to be expanded, particularly in the Clark Ave/E. Broad area. Mr. McCarthy explained the program as it pertains to funding, adding that local funds and private investments are needed to match federal funds. Commissioner Howard asked Mr. McCarthy if he had heard of federal funds being targeted for the chopping block, and asked if there is anything that can be done to prevent losing federal funding. Mr. McCarthy agreed, stating that funding for public housing has been reduced over the past ten years, so there is a distinct possibility, adding that it is a challenging situation. Commissioner Howard congratulated Mr. McCarthy on his upcoming retirement next year and commended his tireless dedication.

Mayor Hubbard said she has seen firsthand the relationship between APD and Albany Housing residents, adding that officers are embraced by the neighborhoods. She thanked Mr. McCarthy for the job that he has done and for standing up for residents; he will be missed.

Commissioner Coleman again asked if the program will be expanded beyond McIntosh, which is greatly needed. Mr. McCarthy declared that if the initiative is successful, with continued funding the program will be able to expand.

APD GANG UNIT UPDATE

In his updated summary of the Gant Unit, Chief Persley stated that the unit is not fully staffed; however, two officers were transferred to the Unit with both bringing their expertise and years of policing experience. He discussed crime stats and said there is a need to use social media to be proactive. He mentioned the nine hybrid' (small) gangs that sprang up in the city and discussed how the gang unit handles them. He then discussed arrests stats.

Commissioner Howard stated that he asked for the update to inform the rest of the Board of recent activity throughout the city. In reply to Commissioner Howard, Chief Persley explained that the unit is authorized for 12 employees, however, they are currently only staffed with eight. Commissioner Howard expressed concern regarding 'hot spots', adding that the increase in crime could be gang related and asked Chief Persley if data is shared with other entities, i.e., ASU/Turner Job Corps/School System, etc.; Chief Persley replied in the affirmative, adding that everyone booked into the Dougherty County jail is monitored for gang affiliation. He briefly discussed collaboration with other agencies, especially the school system when juveniles are suspected of gang affiliation. He mentioned sharing of data with other areas when suspected gang activity crosses county lines. Commissioner Howard suggested that the Gang Unit be visible and active at sporting events. Chief Persley stated that some entities, i.e., Albany State University have their own policing unit at the school's sporting events, however, APD assists by patrolling outside the perimeter, etc.

Commissioner Coleman expressed concern about APD being fully staffed and asked about recruits that were to migrate into that system. Chief Persley stated that he hired eight, but four did not make it through the Academy; he briefly discussed recruiting efforts, especially more P.O.S.T certified officers and going outside Georgia to recruit. Additional discussion followed on recruitment/retention, bringing a new initiative to the Commission for consideration that will assist with technology, etc

Commissioner Marietta stated that another raise for officers could help benefit recruiting efforts because of the risk factors of being police officers. In reply to Commissioner Howard, Chief Persley commented on staffing of the Gant Unit.

Commissioner Postell asked APD's budget. Chief Persley stated approximately \$18.0 million; last year it was approximately \$19.0 million. Commissioner Postell asked if officers leave because of the pay. Chief Persley explained that there are many reasons officers leave including, returning to their hometown, less workload, interest in a particular area of law, promises made to them, etc., adding that Albany competes statewide with other police departments. Commissioner Postell briefly discussed establishing the gang unit in Albany with discussion including what was needed, the number of needed officers, etc., and also mentioned SRO's (school resource officers).

Regarding Commissioner Marietta's comment regarding giving officers a raise, Mayor Pro Tem Fletcher stated that first funding needs to be in place for this.

Mayor Hubbard asked the status of APD's re-certification process; Chief Persley advised that it will be complete next month. Mayor Hubbard said this will include salaries and as such, the report should be reviewed before discussing salaries.

Addressing the issue of giving officers a raise, Ms. Subadan said that, for the record, a pay study was completed that compared the South Georgia region. She said she asked that it also compare the Atlanta region and, based on the study, Albany's pay range is competitive. They are looking at recruitment and retention, but there has to be a balance throughout the City, additionally, public safety is properly compensated and the City is moving forward with the pay for performance to increase compensation to officers and other employees. Commissioner Marietta said that he was expressing what he was told by officers and he agrees with looking at other areas and suggested having a survey of officers to get their feedback.

Concluding his presentation, Chief Persley thanked the Commission for their continued support.

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

Ms. Subadan asked that everyone keep Americus in their prayers due to the recent event in which police officers were shot. At the request of former Deputy Chief Mark Scott, she said she allowed Ms. Banks to go to Americus to assist with public information. She also thanked staff for the good job they did on the Christmas Parade; there were over 60 floats with over 40,000 attending. She wished everyone Happy Holidays/Merry Christmas and thanked Commissioners for their support over the last 12 months. In reply to Commissioner Postell, she explained that Ms. Banks was paid her City salary while assisting the Americus PD.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Howard commented on the death of former County Commission Chairman Lamar Reese and asked that the Mayor and Commissioners send condolences to the family.

Commissioner Coleman asked the status of railroad repairs; he mentioned the terrible condition of those on Swift Street and Don Cutler Drive.

Commissioner Howard asked for a SPLOST 6 update as it pertains to moving projects, etc. Ms. Subadan advised that it will be put on an agenda for a meeting in January.

DECEMBER 13, 2016
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:19 a.m.

SONJA TOLBERT
CITY CLERK