

FEBRUARY 27, 2018
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100

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

Mayor Hubbard called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m., and reminded the audience of the process to address the Commission (Citizen Comments/Speaker Appearance Forms).

APPOINTMENTS

The Clerk read the following; there were no comments on these items.

1. One appointment to Albany Housing Authority for one-year term expiring Nov. 2018 (Mayor's appointment)
2. Two appointments to Citizens Advisory Committee to fill an unexpired term ending Jan. 2020 (Ward II & V)
3. One appointment to Community Development Council to fill an unexpired term ending June 2018

TRAVEL

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

1. City Clerk S. Tolbert; GMA 2018 Annual Convention, Savannah, GA; June 22-26, 2018
2. Asst. City Clerk S. Kelly; GMA 2018 Annual Convention; Savannah, GA; June 22-25, 2018
3. City Attorney C.N. Davis; GMA 2018 Annual Convention; Savannah, GA; June 23-24, 2018

APPROVING PROTECTIVE COVENANTS

Mr. Davis discussed information as noted (copy on file) and advised that in compliance with federal law, protective covenants must be recorded on City-owned parcels. He explained that specifically the properties that were federally funded to acquire are 302 Wells Ave., 310 Barton Ave., 300, 302, 304 and 306 Gowan Ave. In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Mr. Davis explained the process, adding that the recorded covenants are in place to prevent someone claiming ignorance if they purchase the property and attempt to build a structure on one of these properties.

INDEPENDENT AGENCIES REPORT

Commissioner Howard asked that each agency give a report after the budget process is over. There were no other comments on this item.

Commissioner Marietta commented on Chehaw meetings that he attends and stated that he has learned a lot and feels that they are moving in the right direction. Mayor Hubbard said this will be one that will be looked at especially as it pertains to the contract and asked that minutes be pulled for review. Commissioner Howard asked if we are in the last year of the agreement with Ms. Subadan advised that they are not in the last year, but there is a reduction [of funds] each year.

Commissioner Marietta mentioned comments from the retreat regarding a plan and giving the EDC something to work with from the City.

PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS

ALCOHOL LICENSE APPLICATIONS – TRANSFERS OF OWNERSHIPS

The Clerk read the following:

1. Shradha 2317 Inc, d/b/a R & M Grocery #2; 2401 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.; L. Davis/Agent; Beer Package; Transfer of Ownership from M. Shah; WARD 6
2. RAO'S Exxon LLC, d/b/a RAO'S Exxon; 1701 E. Oglethorpe Blvd.; N. Mobeen/Agent; Beer Package; Transfer of Ownership from M. Shafi; WARD 1
3. Rite Aid #11854 - 300 S. Slappey Blvd., (Ward 3), Rite Aid #11855 – 2425 N. Slappey Blvd. (Ward 3), Rite Aid #11856 – 2400 Sylvester Road (Ward 1); Rite Aid #11857 – 2400 Dawson Road (Ward 5); J. Davis/ Agent; Beer and Wine Package; Transfer of Ownership to Walgreen Company

SAFE CITY COALITION PLAN

APD Chief M. Persley stated that the report is based on the recommendations of the Safe City Coalition in addressing crime/concerns in Albany. He briefly discussed the executive summary (copy on file) and advised that the full report is on the website. He gave a brief overview that included the path of progress/timeline, development, five focus areas (including developed strategies) and advised that priorities will be formulated. He then asked Coalition members to stand.

Mayor Hubbard thanked the Commissioners for their support of the Coalition and the initiative, as well as assisting with getting citizens involved and willing to serve on the committee. She thanked Dr. M. Ramsey and Chief Persley for their work in pulling this plan together.

Commissioner Marietta stated that this is a potential historic document and asked if there is a mechanism to ensure that there is a follow through with the recommendations. Chief Persley explained that the next step is to discuss priorities as they move forward, adding that there will be costs and it will take time and resources. The plan is to meet quarterly to assess results.

PUBLIC FUNCTION MATTERS

ZONING APPLICATIONS

The Clerk read the following:

1. Zoning Case #18-001 - Hospital Authority of Albany/Dougherty County, GA/Owner; Brad Hallford/Applicant; request to rezone property located at 417 W. Third Ave. (NW Quadrant of W. Second Ave. and N. Jefferson St.), from C-5 to C-2. PC approved 7-0. Ward 2
2. Special Approval Case #18-002 - Tommie F. Terrell, Jr. & Tiffany M. Terrell/Owner/Applicant; request for Special Approval for property located at 422 Odom Ave; to establish a Child Caring Institution for six residents in the R-3 District. PC approved 4-2-1. Ward 3
3. Zoning Case #18-003 - C. Herschel Darsey Estate/Owner; Shreyeshkumar K. Patel/Applicant; requests to rezone property located at 401 Johnny W. Williams Rd. from R-3 to C-1. **PC Denied** 7-0. Ward 6

In reply to Commissioner Marietta, Commissioner Fuller commented on #1, adding that he supports the rezoning

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS

SPLOST VII PHASE 1 STREET RESURFACING IMPROVEMENTS

Yvette Fields, Central Services Director, discussed information (copy on file) and asked that consideration be given to Oxford Construction to perform street resurfacing, Phase 1 of the SPLOST VII Street Resurfacing Program (52 streets to be completed in 180 days), for an estimated expenditure of \$4,811,197.40.

Commissioner Howard clarified the time of completion with Phil Roberson, Asst. City Manager, advising that the additional \$20,000 ensures completion within six months as opposed to nine months; start-up is in March and completion in September. In reply to Commissioner Howard, Mr. Roberson stated that discussions will be held individually with each Commissioner when construction begins, etc., and noted that the project was split equitably among all the wards (45,000 tons per ward). He mentioned the goal to have resurfacing projects frequently, which depends on SPLOST allocations, etc., adding that every January, for the next five years, a project list will be presented to Commissioners, with the goal of resurfacing year-round and a six-month contract beginning every spring.

Commissioner Fuller asked if night work is included, with Mr. Roberson replying in the affirmative.

Ms. Subadan stated that the zoo parking lot at Chehaw and the fleet facility parking lot are included.

There were no other comments on this item.

COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REVIEW

Finance Director Derrick Brown gave a brief summary of the financial review and stated that the policy covers general government and utilities. He advised that Davenport & Company completed a financial review and recommendations may be inclusive in the financial plan. He then introduced representatives from Davenport & Company (Courtney Rogers, Sr. VP and Douglas Gebhardt, Assoc. VP) and stated that Davenport was requested to perform a comprehensive financial review of the City's overall financial position to include recommendations to enhance credit ratings, update financial management policies, quantifying debt capacity, comparative analysis and other data.

Copies of the report were distributed (on file) and Mr. Rogers briefly commented on his credentials, noted information pertaining to the company, states they serve, companies in Georgia they work with and gave the presentation overview. Reviewing the report, he discussed current credit ratings (general obligation, sewer and water ratings), key drivers to credit ratings, importance of a credit rating, revised methodology of Moody and S&P; goals and objectives as noted in the Executive Summary and encouraged the Commission to review the Appendix. He explained that they look at debt capacity, etc., including the demographic profile of the City as noted on page 18. His observations included the following: General Fund (page 19); Water/Sewer funds (page 20); Gas/Light funds (page 21); Job Investment Fund (page 22); Debt management (page 23).

Commissioner Marietta asked if there had been a comparison of gas and light rates, with Mr. Rogers stating that they did not look at those, but they can.

Continuing with the presentation, the Demographic Profile was discussed (pages 25-30 and comparisons with other cities as noted. Additional discussion included: Historic General Funds results/fund balances (page 32); budget vs. actual results (page 33); millage rate comparison with other cities (page 34); unassigned fund balance (page 35) comparisons and policy recommendations (page 37); outstanding debt as percentage of full value (page 40), i.e., debt service paid from operating budget; key debt ratios (page 42) comparisons; debt capacity vs. debt affordability (page 44); global observations/recommendations (page 46).

Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff asked if a look was taken at investments/cash in the funds and what the City can do to increase returns. Mr. Rogers explained state codes and having to know when the money is needed, increasing federal interest rates, etc. Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff mentioned that the Pension Plan is limited to having a certain level of fixed income investments, which keep the total return down, based on the percentage. However, the way around that was using convertible bond funds, which has been useful. Mr. Rogers said that they did not look at the Pension Fund and advised that law prohibits using General Fund/Utility funds.

In reply to Commissioner Marietta regarding the City recently finance of the Job Investment Fund, which is at a rate of 1.39%, Mr. Rogers explained that the stock market is helping a little on the Pension side, but the increasing interest rates, helps the 'overnight' rates .

In reply to Commissioner Fuller's question regarding interest rates a brief discussion followed on the City's recent action to finance its Job Investment Fund, now at 1.39% and the effect of increasing interest rates.

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

Ms. Subadan said that Ward 4 is requesting to put a 4-way stop sign at Pheasant/ Partridge Drs., but speed studies does not meet the warrants for the signs; however, the 'eyeball test' lends itself to some latitude by the board.

Commissioner Marietta explained that issues have been going on for a while and people want a stop sign in the area, especially with Lake Park Elementary being one block away, which interferes with parent pick/up-drop/off. He said stop signs will be helpful and APD officers suggested that it will be useful as well especially in the morning and afternoon when school is in session. He moved to put the 4-way stop in, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher.

Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff stated that this process is different from what he is familiar with and asked how it was done in the past, especially regarding the wishes of residents. He asked if a survey was done or did he miss it. Commissioner Marietta stated that there is almost universal support with most wanting the stop sign and some not wanting speed humps.

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Ms. Subadan stated that a speed study was done. Bruce Maples, Director of Engineering, explained the process of conducting the study, traffic count, and looking back one year at accidents, (however, they went back five years) with there being only one accident in five years. He advised that this is the third time the intersection has been analyzed since 2008, and that it has never met the warrants for a stop sign. Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff stated that the Commission has voted on some that did not meet warrants. Mr. Maples explained the criteria of meeting the Universal Traffic Code and following the matrix. In response to Mayor Pro Tem Langstaff, he said that they provided the same information that is always provided: the analysis, traffic counts, 80 percentile and accident record, but they have never done a survey, at least not since he's been with the City. He added that surveys was conducted for speed humps.

A brief discussion followed with Commissioner Marietta reiterating his reasons for wanting to put in stop signs and Mr. Roberson advising that the Commission is given the tools to determine whether or not to put in stop signs, even if warrants are not met; it is up to the Commission's discretion.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that she had lived in the area and agrees that there are speeders. Chief Persley agreed that there are concerns; however, he said he concurs with staff's information.

Hearing no additional discussion, the motion unanimously carried.

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OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Commissioner Howard mentioned crime and commented on auto break-ins, shootings, etc., and asked if the Gang Task Force can give an update on hotspots, etc., at the next meeting. He commended Shelena Hawkins, Community and Economic Development Director, on the great job she did at the recent Ward 1 Town Hall Meeting and suggested that an ad be put in the Albany Herald when the next meeting is held because citizens are misinformed and/or lack good information.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

SONJA TOLBERT
CITY CLERK