

FEBRUARY 12, 2019
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100

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

Mayor Hubbard called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m., and reminded the audience of the process to address the Commission (Citizen Comments/Speaker Appearance Forms).

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

1. Kenneth Florence distributed information (copy on file) regarding 900 signatures, adding that a lot of people are present today. He expressed concern regarding the proposed liquor store at MLK and Johnny Williams Road and asked that the developer consider something other than a liquor store, adding that the petition being presented today opposes it. He gave a brief history of this issue that started a year ago and asked the Commission to vote ‘no’ and deny final approval that is on the agenda today. (Approximately 15 raised signs in support of Mr. Florence’s statements asking the Commission to deny the rezoning.

2. Demetrius Young discussed information regarding the information discussed by Mr. Florence. He said he rides City transit daily to ASU as he pursues his Undergraduate and Master’s Degree; he encounters many who are disenfranchised and struggling to survive within that community, with a liquor store being the last thing needed there. He stated that the community is at a loss, trying to understand why, after a denial vote by the Planning Commission, a recommendation of Planning staff against and the manager of Mt. Zion apartment speaking out against it, that the vote went the way that it did. He read from the petition that opposes the rezoning matter on the agenda this morning, adding that a flier is included regarding the negative effects of having an alcohol establishment in the area. He asked that residents in the area be considered and said they would like to work with the business owner to find an alternative, adding that those who submitted the petition in support of the establishment do not necessarily support the views of the Commission.

Commissioner Fletcher addressed the remarks of Mr. Young and asked how many times he met with Mr. Patel (the applicant); Mr. Young said they met with him Tuesday of last week. Commissioner Fletcher noted that this item has been going on for over a year and that they have talked to Mr. Patel at length. She asked how many in the audience have spoken to Mr. Patel adding that legally, the liquor store can open today, however he [Mr. Patel] said he will consider options; she asked that they speak with Mr. Patel.

Commissioner Postell told Commissioner Fletcher that she is out of order; this is in his ward and she has no business worrying about Johnny Williams Road. He stated that he has confronted the group of Commissioners to ascertain the situation on Johnny Williams Road, adding that he was not as involved due to his health; however, he said he will not stand by and be hoodwinked by the Commission. The vote was against the rule and law and was a ‘fragile dis-concern’ for the people, etc. He asked that no Commissioner go into his ward and said no one has done anything illegal, adding that Paul Forgey, Planning Director, has gone through the process and conducted surveys. He said he is responsible for getting people in his ward help and discussed Johnny Williams Road area.

Mayor Hubbard stated that the item is on the agenda and that additional information is forthcoming. She explained the speaker appearance portion of the meeting, etc., to Commissioner Postell.

Mr. Young spoke in response to Commissioner Postell, adding that they understand that the rezoning was voted on; however, the residents in the area do not want this in their neighborhood. He stated that it is not their job to speak to Mr. Patel and his proposal should have died.

APPOINTMENTS:

1. 2019 Annual Appointments
2. 2019 Appointment of Mayor Pro Tem

There were no questions/comments on appointments.

TRAVEL:

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

1. Mayor D. Hubbard; Mayor's Day Conference & Training; Atlanta, GA; January 24-28, 2019; \$1,517.40
2. Commissioner J. Howard; Mayor's Day Conference & Training; Atlanta, GA; January 25-28, 2019; \$1,553.43
3. City Manager S. Subadan; Albany-Dougherty Day in Atlanta; Atlanta, GA; February 20-21, 2019; \$617.28
4. City Clerk S. Tolbert; Annual IIMC Conference/Training; Birmingham, AL; May 17-23, 2019; \$2,235.68
5. Asst. City Clerk S. Kelly; Annual IIMC Conference/Training; Birmingham, AL; May 16-23, 2019; \$1,650.42

PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS

ALCOHOL LICENSE APPLICATIONS

1. Latin Flavor Restaurant LLC, d/b/a Latin Flavor Restaurant; 2427 G. Sylvester Rd; Beer/liquor Consumption; D. De Martinez/Agent; WARD 1

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Chief Deputy Anthony Donaldson stated that this will be a Mexican restaurant.

Commissioner Postell questioned Commissioner Howard on whether this item is in his ward and the questions he raised and then spoke to the large number of alcohol establishments in all wards. He asked

Mr. Donaldson how many have been approved for this area. Mr. Donaldson said he does not have the information, but will provide it. Mayor Hubbard stated that this is a restaurant.

2. The Bread House of Albany LLC, d/b/a The Bread House & Ganary; 520 N. Jefferson Street; Beer/wine Consumption; A. Stanfield/Agent; WARD 3

There were no questions/comments on this item.

RAILROAD CLOSURE PETITIONS

Bruce Maples, Director of Engineering, discussed information (copy on file) regarding a response to Norfolk Southern (NS) Corporation's petitions to close the 3rd Avenue and 7th Avenue railroad grade crossings, which began last year. He gave a brief history of the item, adding that a public hearing was held last year, etc.

Mayor Hubbard stated that the City has been working with the railroad and GDOT to come to an agreement/compromise regarding the closure of the two crossings. Mr. Maples elaborated on the history and discussions from the meeting with the railroad and GDOT, including a project that was presented to NS and GDOT; however, no response from NS has been received. He said a discussion with GDOT resulted in the possibility of funding to assist with the project and last night an email was received from GDOT stating that there is a good possibility of available funding for Washington Street improvements and rerouting of traffic, etc. He added that there has been no final discussion with the railroad regarding the current status.

Ms. Subadan commented on the two proposed closures and discussed her approval/non-approval of each, adding that it will be a process, which will include SPLOST funding. She mentioned statements from the County EMS Director whose written statements indicate that there are challenges with closing 3rd Avenue, which logistically the City believes is less problematic.

In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mayor Hubbard stated that since she has been in office as Mayor, she has worked diligently to build a good relationship with the railroad. She mentioned the most recent information that she circulated from NS regarding this matter and said she has been working to move the City forward. The issue today is to take a vote because an extension has been approved and we are now at the end of the extension and, at this point we have to decide to continue negotiations, i.e., a vote closing 3rd Ave., will result in continued negotiations.

Commissioner Marietta stated that this is part of a long process and his opinion is to vote to deny both.

PUBLIC WORKS MATTERS

DOGWOOD TRAIL ALLEY CLOSURE REQUEST

Mr. Maples discussed information (copy on file) regarding the request and procedures to close the alley between Marie Road and East Drive in East Albany (Albany Homes area).

In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Maples clarified the location, which is at an intersection of Clark Avenue, and Turner Field Road and is part of a redevelopment plan.

In reply to Commissioner Fletcher, Mr. Maples clarified that this is the new apartments that will be developed and the reason for closure of the alley. Mayor Hubbard stated that this has been in the works for a long time and we are happy that it is moving forward

At this time, Mayor Hubbard apologized for not recognizing William Wright who asked to speak on the railroad crossing.

Mr. Wright discussed (NS) relocating their corporate headquarters to Atlanta, which was not disclosed, adding that this does not appear to be a fair process. He distributed information (copy on file) and stated that if it is really a public safety concern, as they claim, why wasn't the issue raised 50 years ago., w Referring to the information, he noted a list of the criteria that should be used and vetted before making any changes. He suggested that this is a due process issue, adding that NS made \$11.0 billion last year; he asked what happens to pedestrian traffic. He also suggested that negotiations should include public involvement; voting no to not close and continue negotiations. He stated that he will forward the additional information in PDF format and again asked that the Commission vote 'no' to close.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS

PURCHASES:

Kimberly Allen, Buyer, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the following:

1. 207 Pine Ave., Roof Replacement - Jenkins Roofing Inc., Tallahassee, FL
Total exp. \$133,288.00

Discussion followed with Commissioner Postell questioning the reason for the new roof. Don Gray, Facilities Maintenance Director, stated that the roof was damaged during recent storms. Ms. Subadan stated that the building will not be torn down; plans are to redevelop it.

Commissioner Marietta clarified that the roof repairs will be funded by insurance.

Ms. Allen discussed information (copy on file) regarding the following:

2. AFD Storage and Training Facility Repairs - C.A. Brown Construction Co. Inc., Leesburg, GA
Total exp. \$243,620.00

In reply to Commissioner Fuller, Ms. Allen stated that insurance is paying for this as well.

Dale Henry, Buyer discussed information (copy on file) regarding the following:

3. Right of Way Clearing & Maintenance – Trees Unlimited, Albany, GA;
Est. expenditure \$750,000.00

Commissioner Howard asked Jimmy Norman, Director of Utility Construction, if this is being monitored. Mr. Norman explained that City crews will monitor. In reply to Commissioner Howard he advised that this work is done only on city right-of-ways; it is specialized work because of energized power lines. Discussion followed with Commissioner Howard asking how monitoring will be accomplished and Mr. Norman explaining the process, qualifications and standards for trimming trees. Commissioner Howard mentioned the state-wide project on the bypass, with Mr. Norman agreeing that it is a GDOT contract and Mayor Hubbard stating that the City had no input in this state project.

Commissioner Marietta asked for clarification of certain tree cutting, with Mr. Norman advising that the City does not go on private property, but can cut limbs hanging on/over city right-of way.

Yvette, Fields, Central Services Director, discussed information (copy on file) regarding the following, which is on an as needed basis after any disaster.

4. Disaster Debris Removal Services - Ceres Environmental, Sarasota, FL

In reply to Commissioner Postell regarding debris removal, Ms. Fields advised that there was a contract after the storms in 2017, but no contract was with them for Hurricane Michael (that debris was picked up by Corps of Engineering). Mayor Hubbard agreed that the State contracted with Corps of Engineers and that contract expired.

Commissioner Marietta asked the representatives from Ceres to introduce themselves– Stanley Bloodworth stated that he and Ed Ziegler, are both Project Managers with Ceres Environmental. Commissioner Marietta stated that he is concerned with the pick-up process and pine-straw debris removal, etc., asking why Ceres would drive by areas with this type debris without picking it up. Mr. Bloodworth explained the process, adding that they were under the Corps of Engineers contract and, the contract declare what is eligible/ineligible as well monitoring Ceres closely to be sure they adhere to their stipulations. In reply to Commissioner Marietta, Mr. Bloodworth advised that monitoring will be conducted by Tetrattech and all eligible debris will be removed going forward. Commissioner Marietta asked if construction debris will be picked up with Mr. Bloodworth replying in affirmative. He explained the process and work orders that were received in the past and now construction debris (eligible debris) will be picked up moving forward.

In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Mr. Bloodworth stated that they will now be picking up root-balls, even though it is under protest, but hopefully will be resolved soon.

Commissioner Howard questioned pick-up of tree limbs, etc., and senior citizens who have root-balls, which is on private property. Mr. Bloodworth stated that they are not allowed to go on private property; however, another option, is personal property debris removal on a case-by-case basis approved by FEMA. Mayor Hubbard said this was applied for, but the City has not been approved at this time.

FY18 AUDIT RESULTS

Finance Director, Derrick Brown, introduced Meredith Lipson, with Mauldin & Jenkins, to present the fiscal year 2018 audit results (and distributed booklets – copy on file). He advised that a copy of the CAFR will be distributed during the break.

Ms. Lipson discussed the information and noted page 4 of the report (which is the audit opinion, etc.), including the implementation of GASB 75; pg. 5 – information on CAFR; pg. 6, recognition and award (received for over 26 years); pg. 7 – overview of financial statements; pg. 8 – chart of revenues/expenditures; pg. 9 – general fund balance history; pg. 10 – enterprise funds (sanitary sewer, airport, water, light, gas, storm water f, transit, civic center solid waste and telecommunications funds).

Commissioner Marietta asked if there is a MEAG Reserve Fund, with Mr. Brown clarifying that there is not an actual ‘fund’, but it is part of the fund balance via MEAG credits.

Continuing with the presentation, Ms. Lipson discussed pg. 15 – compliance reports; pgs. 16 –18 audit scopes and procedures/required communications; and pg. 19 – accounting related matters for consideration.

Ms. Subadan congratulated Mr. Brown and his Finance staff, adding that this is the best finance team and Finance Director she has ever worked with. Mayor Hubbard agreed.

In reply to Commissioner Postell, Mr. Brown discussed the audit process, which takes some time to prepare. Mr. Brown thanked the Mayor and City Manager for their comments and noted that this is the first year with no findings/recommendations from the audit. He also recognized his staff for their commitment to their job. Mayor Hubbard thanked the Finance Department for a job well done.

BOARD REQUESTED REPORTS

CHEHAW PARK AUTHORITY UPDATE

Mary Ligon, Chairperson of the Chehaw Park Authority, presented information (copy on file) regarding the park and recognized Don Meek, Park Director and Tommy Gregors, Thronateeska Heritage Center/Flint RiverQuarium Director, who are present to answer questions. She gave a brief history of the park and enabling legislation, commented on the mission, the zoo at Chehaw/other activities at the park, the chart of the history of funding compared to operations income, AZA accreditation standards/what other zoos do with operations, return on investment (FY 18), impact from Hurricane Michael, the education department, special events, dashboard data, SPLOST VII Projects and the focus, which is the partnership, not a merger, with Thronateeska, a strategic plan, waterfront campground and FEMA/GEMA recovery.

Mayor Hubbard thanked Ms. Ligon for the update and asked if the Park will be ready to continue with the Festival of Lights this year. Mr. Meeks stated that due to the storm debris last year it was put on hold, but moving forward it will remain a part. In reply to Mayor Hubbard on volunteer hours, Ms. Ligon explained that this time of year the park is slow, but increases during summer months. Regarding

the volunteer process, Mr. Meeks stated that they use social media to get the word out, etc. In reply to Mayor Hubbard, Mr. Meeks spoke to the upcoming campground and how much the waterfront campground will cost to complete (with use of some SPLOST VI and VII funds).

In reply to Commissioner Langstaff, the Dashboard data was discussed as it pertains to paid attendance with Ms. Ligon stating that it is hard to get exact numbers/breakdown on use, i.e., membership, etc. Commissioner Langstaff commented on zoo attendance/park attendance with Ms. Ligon agreeing with his analogy, which she explained, can fluctuate. Regarding the return on investment page, Commissioner Langstaff commented on estimated zoo/park attendance with Ms. Ligon stating that she has the numbers but does not remember them. She and Mr. Meek agreed with Commissioner Langstaff that the ROI was inclusive of the entire park. Commissioner Langstaff asked to get a breakdown of just the zoo vs. other parts of the park.

Commissioner Fuller questioned FEMA/GEMA reimbursements with Mr. Meeks explaining the recovery/restoration process, with indications of Chehaw qualifying for some level of funding support. Commissioner Fuller asked if exhibits/buildings were insured, with Mr. Meeks stating that there was some insurance on part of the zoo, adding that insurance coverage on walkways, fencing, etc. is extremely expensive.

Mayor Hubbard commented on the partnership and future plans/vision. Mr. Gregors gave brief comments on the partnership Thronateeska now has with Chehaw, i.e., sharing audiences⁷/school groups. He advised that the partnership was approved by Thronateeska, RQ and Chehaw, adding that they are currently in discussions with Civil Rights Institute and the Arts Museum.

Mayor Hubbard thanked all for the information

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

Ms. Subadan gave a brief update on various projects; (installation of streetlights 13% complete, repair of damaged overhead streetlight cables; neighborhood lights expected in mid-March, etc.); distribution of T-SPLOST information; AMI contract is still under negotiations, but is closer to fruition, pre-bid for Runway 22 was held and coming to the Commission for approval in the near future; sewer engineering contract for the Utility Board will be on the next agenda; , brownfield application was submitted by the January 31 deadline; The Flint (restaurant) is planning for an April ribbon-cutting, and is ahead of schedule; storm recovery, with approximately \$19.0 million expended, application for reimbursements to FEMA/GEMA has not yet begun and does not include any debris management reimbursements, etc.

Commissioner Fuller asked the amount due from FEMA with Ms. Subadan deferring to Risk Manager Veronica Wright, who said we are waiting on the remaining \$3.3 million from 2017 storms, for a total of \$18.4 million.

In reply to Commissioner Howard, Ms. Subadan referred to the flier that was distributed (copy on file) that will be put in utility bill mail-outs re: separating storm debris, as well as developing a door hanger. In reply to Mayor Hubbard, she advised that the information will be on the website as well.

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Commissioner Marietta referred to the door hanger and commented on co-mingling, etc., with Ms. Subadan stating that phone numbers will be distributed for citizens to call with questions.

OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Commissioner Howard announced a meeting with Community Development regarding needs assessment and money that is received from the state/federal governments for low-mod income families.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

SONJA TOLBERT
CITY CLERK