

DECEMBER 15, 2020

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF ALBANY,
GEORGIA
GOVT. CENTER – RM. 100 (and virtual meeting)

PRESENT: Mayor Bo Dorough
Mayor Pro Tem Jon Howard
City Commissioners: BJ Fletcher, Chad Warbington and Demetrius Young
City Manager: Sharon Subadan
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Dorough called the meeting (including those virtually) to order at 6:01 p.m.

Pastor DeCarlo Marcus, Freedom Church of Albany, gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Dorough confirmed the attendance of those on the virtual conference call with Commissioners Matt Fuller and Bob Langstaff present.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, seconded by Commissioner Warbington and, following a roll call, the motion unanimously carried.

RECOGNITION

Mayor Dorough recognized Asst. City Manager Stephen Collier and presented him with a proclamation for his upcoming retirement with 38 years of service. Each Commissioner congratulated Mr. Collier for his years of service. Former Asst. City Manager Phil Roberson and Keshia Collier (his spouse) congratulated Mr. Collier and briefly spoke about him as a person, fellow employee and husband. Mr. Collier thanked the Mayor, Commissioners and City Manager for their support.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Following a brief overview of 2021 Blanket Renewals by Marshal Walter Norman, Business License Director, Mayor Pro Tem Howard told Marshal Norman that he felt the Marshal's office had done due diligence with the reviews that were discussed in work sessions. Commissioner Warbington also thanked Marshal Norman for the in-depth review and clarifying questions/answers. Commissioner Fletcher moved to approve the 2021 Alcohol License Blanket Renewals, seconded by Mayor Dorough and, following a roll call, the motion carried 5-2 with Mayor Pro Tem Howard and Commissioner Young voting no.

Marshal Norman briefly discussed the following, adding that the application meets the criteria for approval.

1. 7even Bar & Grille; 104 N. Washington Street; P. Ford and C. Ford/Agent; Liquor, Beer and Wine Consumption

In reply to Commissioner Young's question re: new license owner training on the open container(s) restrictions for downtown events, Marshal Norman advised that training is done after approval.

Commissioner Fletcher moved to approve the Alcohol License Application, seconded by Commissioner Fuller and, following a roll call, the motion carried 6-1 with Mayor Pro Tem Howard voting no.

Marshal Norman briefly discussed the following Alcohol License Application - Transfer of Ownership to Mohammad F. Munir, adding that the application meets the criteria for approval.

2. Diamond 786 Enterprise, Inc., d/b/a Havmore; 2200 W. Gordon Avenue; M. Munir/Agent; Beer and Wine Package

Commissioner Warbington moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher and, after a roll call, the motion carried 5-2 with Mayor Pro Tem Howard and Commissioner Young voting no.

APPOINTMENTS

1. One appointment to the Albany Housing Authority (Mayor's appointment) for one-year term ending November 2021.

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Mayor Dorough stated that he will appoint Yvonne Jones

2. One appointment to the Joint City/County Elections Board for two-year term ending December 2022.

Commissioner Fletcher nominated Price Corr, seconded by Commissioner Langstaff. Mayor Pro Tem Howard nominated Valarie Brown-Williams, and moved to close nominations, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher.

Commissioner Young stated that he feels there are systemic issues in the Elections Office and briefly commented on discussions he had with them regarding a lack of understanding laws, and properly applying them. He stated that Ms. Brown-Williams will be an asset on that Board. He mentioned poll workers not understanding election laws, i.e., not knowing it is illegal to carry weapons, understanding provisional ballots, etc. and stated that he feels that Ms. Brown-Williams, as an attorney, will assist in eliminating issues from prior years and bring an understanding of laws to the Election Board.

Following a 4-3 roll call vote, Mayor Dorough declared Mr. Corr to be duly appointed with Mayor Pro Tem Howard, Commissioner Young and Mayor Dorough voting no.

RESOLUTIONS

Commissioner Warbington moved to approve the following resolution, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher and, following a roll call vote, the motion unanimously carried.

A RESOLUTION #20-R189

Authorizing execution of indemnity Agreement with GA Dept. of Transportation; Authorizing the City Manager to execute said agreement

Commissioner Warbington moved to approve the following resolution, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher.

A RESOLUTION #20-R190

Setting forth Operational Responsibilities of the Municipal Court

Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked Judge W. Weaver to provide feedback on this matter. Judge Weaver stated that he was involved with the Municipal Court Task Force meetings and that he agrees with the Resolution. In reply to Mayor Pro Tem Howard, he advised that areas of concerns were worked out (City Manager and Court Administrator to have oversight of day-to-day operations, relieving him of administrative responsibilities).

Hearing no further comments, and following a roll call, the motion unanimously carried,

Yvette Fields, Central Services Director briefly discussed information on the following Resolution and, in reply to Mayor Dorough, she explained the funding sources listed in the agenda item (copy on file).

Mayor Pro Tem Howard moved to approve the following resolution, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher and, following a roll call, the motion unanimously carried.

A RESOLUTION #20-R191

Authorizing the use of SPLOST VII Funds for Engineering and Design Services re: Downtown Streetscape Design Project

Ms. Fields briefly discussed the following resolution and explained the process of disposing of surplus properties, adding that the resolution authorizes the City Manager or her designee to sign the surplus properties documents.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard moved to approve the following resolution, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher and, following a roll call, the motion unanimously carried.

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A RESOLUTION #20-R192

Authorizing the City Manager or her designee to transfer Title to Vehicles

David Hamilton, Transportation Director, briefly discussed the following resolution regarding the temporary agreement with Greyhound relocating to the First Tee Building until the new Transportation Center is built, etc.

Commissioner Warbington moved to approve the following resolution, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Howard and, following a roll call, the motion unanimously carried.

A RESOLUTION #20-R193

Authorizing execution of Lease Agreement with Greyhound Lines, Inc., Authorizing the City Manager to execute said Agreement

Mayor Dorrough advised that the following resolution was added after the agenda was distributed regarding changing the date of the work session from Tuesday, January 5, 2021 (due to that being the run-off election day) to Wednesday, January 6, 2021. The Clerk read the resolution in its entirety. Mayor Dorrough moved to approve, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Howard and, following a roll call, the motion unanimously carried.

A RESOLUTION #20-R194

Changing first work session in January 2021

Ms. Subadan discussed information regarding the following resolution re: approving a grant for Food for Less on Gordon Ave., (copy on file), the City's partner in this opportunity, adding that there was a typo in the agenda item whereby the grant deadline was listed as January 16, but is actually December 16, making this a conditional item. She briefly commented on the grant award of \$150,000, other funding and added that this is a private grant (Healthy Food Financing Initiative) that requires Commission approval to be accepted.

A RESOLUTION #20-R195

Accepting Grant Award from Reinvestment Fund re: Health Food Financing Initiative

Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked for a list of the locations of other Food for Less Stores. Ms. Subadan explained that she will ask representatives to be at the second work session in January to address questions.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that this store is needed in the area.

Commissioner Warbington asked if the current store will be renovated. Ms. Subadan advise that the store will be remodeled to be consistent with other Food for Less Stores, with equipment being targeted in the grant.

In reply to Commissioner Young, Ms. Subadan explained that they have said there will be 40 full-time and 30 part-time employees with the pay being \$10.35-\$16.61 per hour with benefits.

Mayor Dorrough stated that staff is seeking approval to accept the grant, etc., adding that it will likely be a complete renovation.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard moved to approve the resolution, seconded by Commission Fletcher and, following a roll call, the motion unanimously carried.

Ms. Subadan briefly discussed information regarding the following resolution.

A RESOLUTION NO. #20-R196

Authorizing appointment of Assistant City Manager

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Mayor Pro Tem Howard suggested that with Albany having a population of less than 75,000, the City does not need two Asst. City Managers and that he will vote no.

Commissioner Fletcher stated that a few years ago she felt the same way, however now she thinks two are needed, etc., adding that she is happy that the selection was made from within and that she likes Steven Carter and hopes that the City will not lose any more people.

Commissioner Warbington referenced the Charter Task Force and the decision that the Commission must give consent for this position. He recommended changing the language in the Charter to define what 'consent' means.

Commissioner Young stated that he feels the City Manager is to provide a certain level of service and for her to be successful, the Commission should give her that consideration in knowing what she needs. He mentioned the job performance to hold the City Manager accountable.

Mayor Dorough stated that the Charter provides for the Asst. City Managers, Fire Chief, Chief of Police, Finance Director and Code Enforcement Director positions requiring the consent of City Commissioners and suggested that passing a resolution is not giving consent, adding that he feels it is appropriate for the Commission to be involved in the hiring of these individuals. In moving forward, he suggested having some Commission representation and a role in the selection process to be comfortable with the City Manager's selection.

Commission Warbington moved to approve the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher and, following a roll call, the motion carried 6-1 with Mayor Pro Tem Howard voting no.

Ms. Fields briefly discussed the following resolution regarding the Recreation Master Plan

A RESOLUTION NO. 20-R197

Authorizing the Issuance of Request for Proposals re: a Recreation Master Plan

Commissioner Fletcher moved to approve the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Warbington and, following a roll call, the motion unanimously carried.

Discussion followed regarding the following resolution.

A RESOLUTION NO. 20-R198

Accepting Grant Award from the Center for Court Innovation and US Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Initiatives re: Technical Asst. Grant (for Municipal Court)

Municipal Court Judge Weaver discussed a power point presentation (copy on file) regarding the 2-year, \$400,000 grant, i.e., Timeline/Assessment and Planning 2018-2020. He explained different issues that the grant will help resolve, mentioned City officials being recognized for 'Albany Works' and asked the Commission to consider approval.

Debra McFadden-Bryant, Business Process Improvement Specialist, also presented a power point presentation (copy on file) regarding the intent of the BJA Grant, funding focus and budget, reporting that the Albany Works Initiative resulted in the grant being awarded to Municipal Court.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard clarified that if the vote is not taken tonight...Ms. McFadden interjected that the City will lose the grant as of December 31, 2020 but can reapply after two years, etc. She commented on discussions with stake holders and other portions of the presentation including: the Municipal Court Task Force and other issues that were not resolved, etc. She advised that stake holders can be added to build the team to accomplish this. Mayor Pro Tem Howard commented on tracking of different religions and the percentage of religious people in Albany; Ms. McFadden advised that the other percentage is not formally affiliated with any church/particular religious group; the statistics were for information purposes only (as noted on page 113 of the agenda item).

Commissioner Fuller stated that this was a great job in securing the grant.

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Commissioner Fletcher commended staff and said she will support the initiative, adding that one day she hopes Albany will not be an ‘entitlement’ City. She also commended Ms. McFadden for her presentation volunteered to help in this endeavor.

Commissioner Warbington stated that this was a lot of information and he wishes it had been presented earlier to have more time to absorb; however, he said he supports the initiative. In reply to Commissioner Warbington’s question regarding the funds, Ms. McFadden explained the process to include a risk assessment and individuals being held accountable to the court. In reply to Commissioner Warbington re: social services that are in place, Ms. McFadden explained that they will work with all organizations through a consortium with the Municipal Court, adding that there will be court assessment and citizens will work with the court and have the services they need, etc. Commissioner Warbington asked if the providers will be paid for their services; Ms. McFadden-Bryant replied negatively and explained how the grant will allow the court to expand intervention services. She briefly discussed: assessment of participants; case manager and a data assistant component; etc. She discussed those who are court-ordered and the need for accountability coaches who help teach participants how to navigate the program/system.

Commissioner Young thanked staff for the work they have done on this and verified that there will be a social service arm with the court rather than just probation. He mentioned the high number of individuals who are ‘on paper’ as a result of having been to court. Often, they are put on probation and ordered to take classes, but do not follow through; they may be fined or sent back to jail and their lives start to spiral. He questioned the individuals who will be coaches and asked if they will be partnered with participants or will they be hired through the grant and if participants will report to the coaches, much like reporting to a probation officer. Ms. McFadden explained that the accountability coaches are a volunteer leg that must be developed. Volunteers are trained and will work with probation officers, adding that it is a two-year planning process and will take time to have an impact. The intent is that those who are hired will help build a volunteer program. She briefly discussed the pilot program, which out of 100 participants, ended with only five-six completing the program. This helped staff build the program and increase the success rate. In reply to Commissioner Young, Ms. McFadden explained the 25% in-kind services which was based on percentages of the time of those in the court - the judge, committees and herself.

Mayor Dorough clarified that the request is to accept the grant and asked to receive quarterly reports. Judge Weaver added that those who are court-ordered to get their GED, do not have navigational skills and cannot maneuver through the system; they need someone to help walk them through it. Ms. McFadden thanked the Commission for their support of the pilot program and acknowledged Ms. Subadan’s insight re: the recidivism rate and, people needing help to become self-sufficient.

Commissioner Fletcher moved to adopt the resolution, seconded Mayor Pro Tem Howard and, following a roll call, the motion unanimously carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Subadan presented the Annual City Manager’s Report and, using a power point, discussed the following accomplishments: COVID Responses, Police Advancements, Financial Management, Clean Energy, Sewer/Storm Water, Capital/Infrastructure projects, Quality of Life, Operation Clean Sweep, which began in Ward 6, but will be carried out in all wards; Commission Task Force Initiatives from the Retreat. She mentioned City employees who passed in 2020 and are in our memories.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard commended the well-planned Annual Report presentation.

Commissioner Fuller thanked the City Manager for the presentation and wished all Happy Holidays.

Commissioner Fletcher also thanked the City Manager for the presentation and wished all Happy Holidays.

Commissioner Warbington expressed appreciation for Ms. Subadan’s presentation.

Commissioner Young thanked the City Manager and staff.

Mayor Dorough commented on the Christmas Tree Lighting and mentioned the three employees who died of COVID with their families recognized during this moving occasion. He stated that this is the

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time to reflect on the year, losses and sacrifices in the community and thanked Ms. Subadan for her presentation.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard welcomed the City Clerk back and mentioned people who have died in his ward due to COVID-19. He said he has served the citizens of Ward I for 26 years and is challenged because he can no longer visit personally with his constituents, however he challenged the citizens of Ward I to clean up junk cars, old furniture on their front porch and illegal dumping. He also asked that managers of Pic and Save, Dollar Tree and Harvey's to stop people from taking shopping carts and mentioned the trash near Dougherty County High School, adding that he supports wearing masks (and providing a brief statistical update on the coronavirus), adding that he wishes all happy holidays and a Happy New Year.

Mayor Dorough also welcomed the City Clerk back and asked for a report of the gates on the trail, EV charging stations, the census and sidewalks on Board Avenue.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

MAYOR

ATTEST

CITY CLERK