



**BOARD OF MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION
April 18, 2018
5:30 p.m.**

MINUTES

Members Present: Jonathan Elmore, Mayor
Brian Fisher, Mayor Pro Tem
Adela Fisher, Commissioner
Lionel Laratte, Commissioner
Lisa Shortell, Commissioner

Staff Present: Ken Turner, Interim City Manager
Gina Hill, City Clerk
Keri Stevens, City Planner
Rebecca Long, Communications Manager
Bryan Armstead, Public Works Director

Item No. 1 Meeting Called to Order

Item No. 2 Adoption of Agenda

- Commissioner Fisher moves to defer Item No. 12. Commissioner Shortell seconds. All ayes.
- Commissioner Shortell moves to move Item No. 14 to the top of the agenda. All ayes.
- Commissioner Fisher moves to adopt the agenda as amended. Commissioner Laratte seconds. All ayes.

Proposed Property and Casualty, Workers Comp Insurance Changes

City staff has obtained a quote for this coverage that offers significant savings over the City's current provider. Details will be presented to the BOMC for review.

Ken Turner previously gave the BOMC a spreadsheet comparing the City's current provider, Georgia Municipal Association, with the proposal from Travelers Insurance. He noted differences in deductibles and coverage but said the bottom line is that the switch could save the City about \$42,000. The rates will not increase more than 4% for the first three years. Mr. Turner said he has checked references since more cities are moving to this program. Heather Orvis and Michael White, representatives from the insurance broker Apex, answered questions from the BOMC about various issues, including access to legal counsel. Apex has about 300 clients in

Georgia, including school systems, counties and cities. They represent about 60 different insurance carriers.

Next Steps: The BOMC will vote on a resolution to support this change at the next regular meeting April 23rd.

Item No. 3

Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) Between the Board of Mayor and Commissioners (BOMC) and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

The IGA expired at the end of 2017. The BOMC and DDA are in the process of executing an IGA to govern the relationship moving forward in 2018. The attorneys for both groups have approved the current draft. The DDA also approved the IGA with one amendment at their April 10th meeting.

All Board members support the IGA but Commissioner Laratte feels the BOMC should have more oversight of the DDA's real estate transactions. Mayor Elmore suggests having a joint strategic planning session between the two groups before the next IGA is done. DDA Chair Dave Deiters says the DDA would be agreeable to that.

Next Steps: The IGA will be voted on at the next regular meeting.

Item No. 4

Discussion of DDA/Main Street Board Membership

The current DDA is interested in adding a commissioner as a member to fill an empty seat. This was discussed at the last joint special called work session between the DDA and BOMC and it was determined that more discussion and research was needed.

The Board discusses having one of its members on the DDA as someone with economic interest in the downtown since the City owns property in the Central Business District (CBD). That would be instead of saying someone has an economic interest because of their home's proximity to downtown. There is agreement that the resolution appointing new members should contain language to that effect. It's also mentioned that the membership application should also contain such language. Commissioner Laratte is not in favor of having a BOMC member on the DDA. He does not believe there should be any overlap between the two. Mayor Elmore said it is allowed by law and he has gotten positive feedback from other cities who structure their DDA with one elected official. He reiterated that it can always be changed if needed. DDA Chair Deiters says he supports the idea and feels having a BOMC member on the DDA falls in line with best practices. Several residents spoke against the move saying the two boards should not overlap and it would be difficult to undo the arrangement. One resident wondered if the BOMC member could be elected to chair the DDA.

Next Steps: This will be voted on at the next regular meeting.

Item No. 5

Update on City Manager Search

The BOMC has contracted with The Mercer Group to lead the search for a new City Manager and the project manager has starting interviewing stakeholders.

Commissioner Yelton clarifies that the project manager for The Mercer Group hasn't started interviews yet but is scheduled to on April 25th.

Next Steps: The BOMC will continue to regularly update the public on the search.

Item No. 6

Phoenix Station Update

Phoenix Station is the name of a proposed development near the intersection of Covington Highway and Memorial Drive. The development would include 244 apartments. The BOMC is in the process of drafting a letter to county decision-makers outlining their concerns.

Commissioner Shortell updated the group on efforts by the group Friends of Kensington. She also brought and circulated a draft letter she wrote on behalf of the BOMC to be sent to various county officials. The other Board members support the letter. Mr. Turner says the letter should be reviewed by the City Attorney. Mayor Elmore reiterated that this project does not reflect the planning documents for the area.

Next Steps: The City Attorney will review the letter. Once in final form, copies will be printed for the members of the BOMC to sign. It will then be scanned so it can be emailed to others.

Item No. 7

Communications Plan, Public Comment and Minutes Changes

One of the BOMC's strategic priorities is communications. City staff was asked to develop a draft Communications Plan which will be discussed. The BOMC also requested that staff make recommendations for changes in the public comment portion of meetings as well as the format for minutes. One resident suggested the City form a relationship with the developer.

Commissioner Shortell says communications is a priority for the BOMC with an emphasis on education. The City has not had a communications plan before. Communications Manager Rebecca Long explains that her draft plan is comprised from parts of many plans from other cities. She also says she's looking into ways the City could use Nextdoor as an agency. Mr. Turner says Nextdoor would only be used to disseminate information. He added that only certain staffers would have access to social media accounts.

Next Steps: The communications plan draft will remain on the website and discussed at future meetings to make sure the public has time to voice opinions. At some point a resolution adopting the plan will be introduced. City Clerk Gina Hill will help Rebecca Long put together a strategic timeline for implementing the plan and other ideas.

Ken Turner has emailed a draft of a public comment policy to the BOMC for their review. Mayor Elmore says if someone is unruly they can be escorted out and barred from the next three meetings. Also, although 15 minutes could be allotted for public comment, it can be cut short if no comments remain. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher points out the need to be consistent with whatever measures are taken. Commissioner Shortell notes that issues brought up in the meeting should not be discussed by the BOMC because the public not in attendance would not have notice it was being discussed. The consensus is that there is not a need currently to use comment cards like many other cities do. It was also mentioned that residents can always email their thoughts to BOMC members.

Next Steps: The draft will be posted on the website and the topic revisited at the May work session.

Gina Hill, City Clerk, discusses an alternate way to do meeting minutes. Mayor Elmore supports the move and suggests posting a sample of minutes done the "old" way versus that proposed way for comparison. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher supports the change. Commissioner Shortell adds that more people might read the minutes if the format was changed. Commissioner Yelton supports the change and asked if the move would impact the work of the auditors. Mr. Turner said the auditors approved the change. Commissioner Laratte says he sees no downside to the change. A resident suggested the meeting audio be legally made the official record of the meetings. Another audience member suggested posting the pros and cons when posting the sample of each style of minutes.

Next Steps: Start using new method of minutes. Post samples of the different methods on the website.

Item No. 8

Resolution to Amend the 2017 Budget

Every year, the City revisits the previous year's budget and documents actual revenue and expenditures where they diverged from budgeted line items.

Ken Turner goes over differences in the planned 2017 budget and actual revenue and expenditures. The BOMC asked questions about how and why there were variations in items. A resident requested that the spreadsheet being referenced be added to the website along with the resolution.

Next Steps: The resolution will be voted on at the next regular meeting.

Item No. 9

Resolution Supporting Main Street Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The BOMC will review the 2018-19 Georgia Classic Main Street Program MOU and the 2018 National Main Street Center's sub-licensing agreement and vote on their approval at the next regular meeting. All accredited Main Street cities are required to have these on file with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs in order to retain services

and use of the Main Street name. The DDA/Main Street Board approved both items at their April 10 meeting.

City Planner Keri Stevens covers the highlights of the agreement. All members of the Board support approving it. There are no questions or comments.

Next Steps: The item will be voted on at the next regular meeting.

Item No. 10

Proposed Irrigation System at Willis Park

Recent movie filming at Willis Park has provided the City with \$40,000 in fees paid by the production company. City staff proposes spending part of that amount on an irrigation system for the grass and other landscaping at Willis Park. Staff has collected three estimates that range from \$12,000 to \$32,000.

Ken Turner recalls that an irrigation system was in the original estimate to remodel the park several years ago but was removed to cut costs. He says last summer a public works associate was assigned to water the park on a regular basis which isn't efficient. Mr. Turner goes over each estimate as well as the park needs. Commissioner Shortell expressed concern about the park trees during the installation of the irrigation system. Public Works Director Bryan Armstead says measures will be taken to protect the trees. The BOMC members support this measure.

Next Steps: A resolution approving this purchase will be voted on at the next regular meeting.

Item No. 11

Public Works Building Update

The City's public works building is in need of repair or replacement. Current estimates of this project are almost double the amount mentioned in recent years. The BOMC will discuss next steps.

Mr. Turner gives background that the public works building was originally expected to cost about \$600,000. Recent estimates, however, are more than \$1 million. Construction is estimated to take six to nine months so the public works department would need temporary headquarters during that time. Mayor Elmore says it needs to be decided if the design should be revised to get the price lower or should the City borrow money to complete the project. One idea is to use the empty credit union building on College Avenue as a temporary home to public works. Mayor Elmore is against that idea because the length of time it would be occupied could interfere with downtown development on the City-owned four acres. He adds it's worth discussing if the public works department should relocate permanently. Commissioner Laratte suggests slowing down and looking at the interim location issue first and go from there to look at the different options. Commissioner Yelton asks if City staff can handle this and Mr. Turner said they could definitely find out how to renovate the building at less cost. He added that City staff will continue

to look for temporary quarters and other options. One resident points out that the downtown will start to develop in the upcoming years and it would then be an undesirable location for a public works building. Another resident said temporarily using the credit union building would send the wrong message. A business owner said an alley currently blocked by the public works building would need to be opened up if the City was ever going to be walkable and bike-friendly in that area.

Next Steps: City staff will see if the current estimate can be lowered by making alterations to the plan. Concurrently, City staff will explore options for temporary public works headquarters.

Item No. 12

One Fairfield Plaza Driveway Area

The only area for residents at this address to park vehicles is on City right-of-way. The homeowner seeks a solution that will provide them long-term access to this area. After review, the City Attorney has given an opinion of how the situation may be handled moving forward.

This item was deferred.

Item No. 13

Hobbs Street Cul-de-sac Abandonment and Disposal Proposal

Developer Icon Residential is requesting a road abandonment and disposal of a portion of the cul-de-sac at the end of Hobbs Street.

Mayor Elmore explains that in exchange of the road abandonment, the developer will give the City two triangular pieces of land. City Planner Keri Stevens said the development's home owners association will maintain the City property, according to the draft developer agreement. Commissioner Shortell says the development will do its own sanitation. Mr. Stevens outlined the process moving forward. She also explained that the developer was requested higher density than what is currently allowed in zoning and that's part of the reason they would be going through a planned development agreement.

Next Steps: The Planning and Zoning Board has 60 days to make a recommendation on this development to the BOMC. A public hearing is scheduled for May 21st. The project then comes before the BOMC for approval.

Item No. 14

Proposed Property and Casualty, Workers Comp Insurance Changes

City staff has obtained a quote for this coverage that offers significant savings over the City's current provider. Details will be presented to the BOMC for review.

This item was moved to the top of the agenda.

Item No. 15

Public Comment

Item No. 16

Adjournment

Mayor Pro Tem Fisher moves to adjourn. Commissioner Shortell seconds.
All ayes.

APPROVED THIS 23rd DAY OF MAY 2018



Jonathan Elmore, Mayor

ATTEST:



Gina Hill, City Clerk