



**BOARD OF MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION**

September 27th, 2018

5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

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

Staff Present: Patrick Bryant, City Manager
Ken Turner, Finance Director
Gina Hill, City Clerk
Keri Stevens, City Planner
Lynn Thomas, Police Chief
Bryan Armstead, Public Works Director
Rebecca Long, Communications Manager

Item No. 1 Meeting Called to Order

Item No. 2 Adoption of Agenda
Commissioner Shortell moves to adopt. Commissioner Laratte seconds. All ayes.

Item No. 3 **Conditional Use Permit for a Specialized School at 106 N. Clarendon Avenue, Suite A**
The applicant, Tricia Froedge, proposes a specialized school that will focus on using movement and music in small class settings, workshops and individual sessions. This use is outlined in section 815, in Article 9 (Table of Permitted and Conditional Uses by District) and requires review and approval by the Board of Mayor and Commissioners (BOMC).

Mayor Elmore says public hearings for this and the following conditional use permit have already taken place. There is no further comment from either the BOMC or the public. The item will be up for a vote at the regular meeting October 4th.

Item No. 4 **Conditional Use Permit for Medical and Health Services at 151 Locust Street**
The applicant, Anne Rice, proposes a co-working space exclusively for therapists to host mental health-related workshops/seminars and therapy sessions. This use is outlined in section 821 I., in Article 9 (Table

of Permitted and Conditional Uses by District) and requires review and approval by the BOMC.

There is no further comment from either the BOMC or the public. The item will be up for a vote at the regular meeting October 4th.

Item No. 5

2019 Budget Discussion

Mayor Elmore says he has no comment on the budget at this time and would like the new city manager to have time to get familiar with it. Commissioner Shortell brings up the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and their role as the Main Street Board. She asks the rest of the Board if they plan to fund the DDA in their Main Street roles. Ms. Shortell says she was told the figure was \$120 thousand but that included events coordinators and such. DDA member Sam Collier reminds the Board that the past budget also included benches, trashcans, bike racks and other amenities. The City funded the DDA in 2018 roughly \$78 thousand. City Manager Patrick Bryant suggests City staff look at the issue and bring information back to the BOMC so they can decide whether or not to fund the DDA and, if so, how much. Commissioner Yelton says she would love for the City to be recognized for strategic budgeting at some point. She requests a narrative included in the budget that ties everything back to the BOMC's strategic goals. What the City is spending on human resources is another figure she would like to see. Mr. Bryant agrees and would like for that information to be given to each employee as well. Ms. Yelton adds she would like to see statistics on each department that illustrates their performance. Mr. Bryant wants to move the City more towards better forecasting of capital needs. He adds he likes to make decisions based on data instead of anecdotes and wants to be proactive instead of reactive. Commissioner Laratte asks if there are benchmarks for different departments and Mr. Bryant responded that those need to be developed. That can be done, he says, by looking at best practices and what other cities do. A consultant can be used to help the City develop a program, he adds. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher then reviews some of the items on the capital budget. He also mentioned health insurance costs for City employees since it is more than 20% of the budget. Sidewalks are also important to him, he says. He reminds everyone that any rent paid for a public works building is not included in the budget. Mr. Bryant says the City should be mindful of its fee structure and whether or not it keeps pace with other cities'. He would like to see a more robust budget development process. There is not public comment.

Next steps: The budget will be discussed again at upcoming work sessions.

Item No. 6

Annexation Discussion

If the City is interested in having a feasibility study conducted of any previously unstudied areas to be considered for annexation, the deadline to request one is October 1st.

Mayor Elmore says he believes that annexation can be a part of smart growth. He cites the need for a better balance between residential and commercial taxes. Mr. Elmore wants to discuss adding some areas to the map for study only and he reviews them. Commissioner Laratte says a couple of areas mentioned make sense to him for annexation. Commissioner Shortell agrees that more commercial area is needed in the City. She is wary of adding more residential. There is discussion about whether or not a study will show data on individual areas or only as a whole. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher notes that income from a particular area is easy to determine but expenses related to increased services are not as easy to predict. Ms. Shortell is in favor of doing the study to get more information as long as it's not cost-prohibitive. Commissioner Yelton is in favor of a study overall. She wonders what percentage of residential versus commercial the City should strive for. City Manager Patrick Bryant says the ideal balance is a two-to-one jobs to residents ratio. Ms. Yelton also says it's important to engage stakeholders during this process, including schools and legislators. Mayor Elmore comments that the City could help business development for areas annexed which would be a benefit other cities or the county may not be able to provide. Mr. Fisher says developments like Trammel Crow and The Willis add revenue without using many services like sanitation. In general, he believes, annexation can benefit the City and those around it by giving more control over development. He also feels that communications with those affected is important. Mr. Laratte agrees that understanding what it being built in adjacent areas is the biggest argument for annexation. He adds that providing services is not as big of a concern. Mr. Bryant comments that it's best when the City gets revenue from people who come into the City and then leave, thus not requiring services. Resident Kathy Kingsbury suggested talking first to current Avondale residents about their feelings on annexation. Dee Merriam is supportive of doing a study. An audience member requested that people be encouraged to craft goods in any annexed commercial areas. There was some conversation about diversity in businesses and in housing stock. The group starts discussing the map to be studied. Mr. Bryant suggests adding all the potential areas. City Planner Keri Stevens tells the group that the City does not have map-making capabilities and the Atlanta Regional Commission would need about a week's notice to produce one. They start discussing areas and boundaries to include.

Next Steps: City staff will gain clarification on which areas to add to the map for study, while also talking to Decatur and the Carl Vinson Institute about doing a study. The map will be posted on the City website once it's complete.

Item No. 7

Updated Process for Board Appointments

Besides the BOMC, the City currently has more than ten other boards, authorities and commissions. At the request of the BOMC, staff has written preliminary updates to the process and procedures for how members of these various boards are appointed.

Mayor Elmore thanks City staff for putting this together. City Clerk Gina Hill says the policy could just be agreed upon and adopted without a vote or resolution. Resident Joe Anziano says that because most of the boards have an odd number of seats, the BOMC will end up getting involved more that it may like. There was discussion about potential solutions. The consensus is that no changes to the draft are needed.

Next Steps: The draft will become the official policy. Ms. Hill will inform all the board chairs and members of the new procedures.

Item No. 8

Laredo Drive Request for Proposal (RFP) and Contract Award Recommendation

The City received grant funds in the amount of \$40,000 from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) to complete a feasibility study and demonstration project for the Laredo Drive/Parry Street/North Clarendon Avenue intersection. The City is responsible for a 20% match, which is \$10,000. The City received two (2) responses to the RFP for the project from Stantec and Pond. Interviews with both firms were conducted by Ken Turner, Keri Stevens, Bryan Armstead, and a representative from the ARC. Staff recommends awarding the contract to Stantec.

City Planner Keri Stevens explains the process and why staff has recommended Stantec. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher wishes to move forward. Commissioner Yelton asks that Avila be updated about this project if they haven't been already. Ms. Stevens responds that Avila will be part of the process as a major stakeholder.

Next Steps: A resolution allowing the City Manager to enter into a contract for this project will be voted on at the next regular meeting.

Item No. 9

Live, Work, Play Application

The Live, Work, and Play Award recognizes cities that are committed to increasing the quality of life for all residents – a place well managed but with a "sparkle" that makes for a great place to live, work and play. City staff is drafting the application (due Oct. 12th) and supporting documentation and would like to include a resolution of support from the BOMC. Winners will be notified at the end of October.

City Planner Keri Stevens describes the designation and says that she and Communications Manager Rebecca Long are working on a submission. She's requesting a resolution because she thinks it will help the City's changes of being accepted. Commissioner Laratte asks when this designation offers the City and Ms. Stevens explains why it is an asset to Avondale.

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

Item No. 10

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources has opened up grant

funding under the 2018-2019 LWCF. The minimum grant request is \$25,000 with a maximum of \$100,000 and the recipient must provide a 50% match. Pre-applications are due October 31st. Grant funds can be used for acquisition, development and rehabilitation efforts. City staff would like to discuss possible projects with the BOMC.

City Planner Keri Stevens describes this grant. She mentioned using for the North Woods drainage project at Lake Avondale but says this grant won't be awarded until the spring which may delay the project. She also gives an update on where things stand with the request for proposal (RFP) process for the North Woods project. City Manager Patrick Bryant recommends the City move forward with applying for this grant. He adds that the North Woods project is the type of project the group giving the grant favors. Resident Dee Merriam suggests that City staff emphasizes recreation in the application as opposed to drainage.

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

Item No. 11

Update on Re-establishing Downtown Street Grid

The City received four (4) responses to the RFP for Phase I of this project. Staff, along with identified BOMC and DDA members, will review the submitted RFPs and determine whether there is a most responsive bidder or whether interviews with some or all of the firms are needed to make a decision.

City Planner Keri Stevens lists the firms that have expressed interest in this project. She adds they are all very qualified. She, along with members of the BOMC and DDA, will interview three of the firms based on price on October 10th. Afterwards, she should be able to make a recommendation. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher says the goal is to discuss the project at the October work session and vote on which company to hire at the following regular meeting. Commissioner Shortell reminded the group that funding still needs to be discussed. Kathy Kingsbury asks that it be posted how much the City has spent on consultants this year compared to past years.

Item No. 12

City-Owned Four Acres Update

DDA member Sam Collier and DDA consultant David Burt present their draft process map for moving forward with this project. Mr. Collier notes that a lot of the work has already been done. He says that the park development, programming and funding will all progress parallel to each other. Mr. Burt adds that most of the information in upcoming meetings has already been covered but it needs to be brought together and make sure everyone is on the same page. They lead the BOMC through the process map. Both Mayor Elmore and Mayor Pro Tem Fisher support the map. Commissioner Shortell asks when uses for the park will be discussed. The consensus is that programming will not be part of the request for proposals (RFP) process at this point. Mayor Elmore feels

they need to stick with concept 9 and move forward. Ms. Shortell inquires if a facilitator will be needed along this process, which there is agreement to consider that further. Commissioner Laratte asks about preferred methods of financing. Mr. Collier responds that the topic will be discussed at the October 17th meeting. Mr. Fisher says he'd like to be involved in any financing discussions. City Clerk Gina Hill reminds the BOMC that there is a meeting regarding eminent domain scheduled for October 8th. The mayor says he'd like to stick as close to the process map as possible. Dee Merriam asks if the BOMC wants the Greenspace Committee to get public input on the plan at their next gathering. Yes, within boundaries, the Mayor answered. Kerry Quinn commented that this is very excited.

Next Steps: The next BOMC meeting on this topic will take place on October 17th.

Item No. 13

Intergovernmental Agreement Between the BOMC and Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

The IGA expires at the end of 2018. The BOMC and DDA will start discussing an IGA to govern the relationship in 2019.

Mayor Elmore points out that there is currently no funding in the draft 2019 budget. He feels the City should pay for the Community Promotion Program (CPP) and possibly other items. City Manager Patrick Bryant suggests that the BOMC allow him to look into the matter further before more conversation. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher points out that there are joint projects between the BOMC and DDA that are in the budget. He adds that the basics of the last IGA could transfer into the next one and he would like to see a multi-year IGA. There is no public comment.

Next Steps: Mr. Bryant will research the matter for future discussions.

Item No. 14

Public Comment: None

Item No. 15

Adjournment

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

APPROVED THIS 22nd DAY OF OCTOBER 2018


Jonathan Elmore, Mayor

ATTEST:


Gina Hill, City Clerk