

**BOARD OF MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL CALLED WORK SESSION
Wilson, Morton & Downs LLC
125 Clairemont Ave., Ste. 420
Decatur, Georgia 30030
October 4th, 2018
8:30 a.m. to 12 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
Gina Hill, City Clerk

Item No. 1 Meeting Called to Order

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

Item No. 3 **Updated 2018 BOMC Strategic Planning Goals**

The meeting started with everyone going around the room saying a little bit about themselves. They start to discuss the list of the projects the BOMC is trying to accomplish and their major priorities of infrastructure, downtown development and communications. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher gives an update on the process of re-establishing the downtown street grid. He explains how the street grid project came about and how it can change the area. The conversation turns to the zoning code rewrite and how updated zoning can improve the process of development in the future. There was brief discussion of the pros and cons of a moratorium on planned development zoning. The next topic is stormwater, which Mr. Fisher feels is the City's biggest infrastructure concern. Mayor Elmore gives City Manager Patrick Bryant some background information on stormwater. The group discussed ways to approach stormwater moving forward. The consensus is that there needs to be a stormwater master plan and ways to fund improvements. Commissioner Yelton brings up the need to do an intragovernmental agreement with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) for 2019. Mr. Bryant says he'd like to talk to the city attorney about the current agreement and future goals and

then craft a new agreement based on that discussion. The group touches on the draft budget and whether or not the DDA will have funding within it. When talking about DDA roles and responsibilities, Mr. Bryant says he feels it's very important that both groups are on the same page. He says the BOMC should influence the DDA but in a way that everyone is comfortable. Mr. Fisher gives Mr. Bryant some history on the DDA and why it was formed. Mr. Bryant says he would like to cultivate a good relationship between the DDA and City staff. Commissioner Laratte says he feels there is lots of transparency currently and he thinks that will build a good relationship with the public.

Item No. 4

Communication Protocol Discussion

The topic turned to communications and BOMC meeting agendas and meetings. Mr. Bryant says he would recommend that the BOMC make changes to how public comment is handled at meetings, including only taking comment at certain meetings, registering ahead of time, and time limits. He noted that from his conversations with members of the BOMC, one of the biggest stressors for them is public meetings. Mr. Bryant also added that, for instance, three readings for an ordinance was rare and that one or two were more common. The idea of a consent agenda was also introduced. Mr. Bryant says he is a proponent of having the city attorney present at each regular meeting. He believes that presence can keep the meetings more orderly. Mr. Laratte brought up the idea of livestreaming the City meetings. Mr. Bryant is supportive of that. He said meetings have been livestreamed at other cities where he has worked. Facebook Live is also an option. There are concerns about closed captioning and complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Mayor asks Mr. Bryant to compile his suggestions in a memo. When talking about upcoming topics, Ms. Shortell says she feels it's important to have communication protocol clarified in the BOMC handbook. Mayor Elmore talked about issues with reporters and having a smoother process for communicating with the media. Mr. Bryant says he's very measured when speaking to the press but that he should be the buffer between the BOMC and the media. He says dealing with the press is one of his strengths. He suggests that before speaking with the press, any BOMC member should discuss it with him and make sure they're presenting a unified message. Saying you'll get back with a member of the press with a response is acceptable, Mr. Bryant adds. Ms. Shortell feels the press sometimes tries to divide the BOMC. The new city manager says in the past he built relationships with the beat reporters and would talk to them off the record so that when things happened, the reporters knew the context in which it was happening. Mr. Bryant tells the group that he was hired for management and strategy and media relations is part of that. He wants to make the BOMC look good. When it comes to disagreement within the board, Mr. Bryant feels that has to be managed properly as well and all comments to the press should go through the city manager. Ms. Shortell requested that Mr. Bryant also add this change in strategy to a memo as well. Mr. Bryant tells the group that his goal is to respond to their calls and messages within an hour.

The discussion turns to communication and Mr. Bryant reminds the group that venting frustrations should only happen via a phone call or in person. The group relays their confusion about whether or not it is proper to reply all to emails among the board. Mr. Bryant maintains that can be solved by directing emails through him. When reviewing, Mr. Bryant requests that the BOMC trust him and he, in turn, will trust his staff to execute. He also asks that all communication between the BOMC and City staff (other than the city clerk) go through him. The same goes for the city attorney. Ms. Yelton says the only exception might be if there is an issue with the city manager's job. Mr. Bryant says he hope the board would come to him first if that situation arises. Ms. Yelton says it all boils down to trust. Texts or phone calls are the preferred method of communication for Mr. Bryant. He also says that when entering a public meeting, everyone needs to be on the same page and no one should be blindsided. He asks that members come see him before a meeting if there is any disagreement, questions, or new information about an agenda item. Ms. Yelton asks Mr. Bryant what he needs from them and he responded just to communicate their expectations. He sees his role as working for the BOMC and it's the BOMC that works for the residents.

Item No. 5

Draft City Manager Evaluation Tool & Timeline

Commissioner Yelton says the BOMC was to make a good faith effort to come up with goals and evaluation tools for the new city manager within 15 days of his start date. They had requested proposed goals from him by November 1st. She reminded the group that they would do another strategic planning retreat in January or February of 2019. City Manager Patrick Bryant his main goal is to achieve whatever goals the BOMC sets for the organization and to improve the organization in order to achieve those goals. He feels he should be evaluated on his ability to help the Board achieve their goals. He requests autonomy to do what he wishes within City Hall to be able to achieve those goals. He adds that elected bodies getting involved in daily operations is often a problem in city government. Mayor Elmore says if others got the impression that the BOMC was getting too involved in City operations it was because the Board felt like their goals were not being effectively implemented. He continues that he thinks it's the Board's job to set strategy and larger goals and up to the city manager to come back to them with options for achieving that. Mr. Bryant responds that it is that simple and he should be evaluated by whether or not he's helping the BOMC achieve its goals. Ms. Yelton asks how they should talk about the changes that are to come. Mr. Bryant suggests that they don't talk about it and let things naturally evolve. Commissioner Laratte says that if you expect to change successfully, everything you do and say publicly should support that change. Commissioner Shortell says she appreciates Mr. Bryant's commitment to open communication. Mayor Pro Tem Fisher says he feels like, in the past, all staff members were treated the same in a one-size-fits-all mentality. He also felt like some staffers were overworked. Mr. Bryant reveals that the previous day he told salaried staffers that as long as they are dependable and getting their work done, they can do

whatever they need to do whenever they need to do it during the work day. He thinks it's important to maintain a healthy work/life balance. Mr. Fisher is pleased by the change in policy. He adds that he thinks having staffers do their jobs while also planning events can be overwhelming and he wants Mr. Bryant to have the freedom to manage things differently even if it impacts the budget. Ms. Yelton says she would like a document summarizing the discussion on city manager goals and she requests that Mr. Bryant look at the evaluation tools she gave him. Mayor Elmore summarizes that he would like to put systems in place that will make things easier for future BOMCs and city managers. They can be tweaked in the future, he adds, but some policies and procedures are not what they should be. One of those is a fair and consistent way to evaluate city managers. Mr. Fisher says once an evaluation tool is agreed upon it should be made public (not the actual review). He wants to ensure the City is not in a position like it was with the previous city manager. Mayor Elmore wants to prevent there being unknown contract stipulations and that needs to be discussed with attorneys. The group agrees that the evaluation process needs to be codified as much as possible. There was discussion about posting every contract on the City website and potential changes to the process of approving future agreements. Ms. Yelton says part of their motivation is reactive to what happened in the past and proactive because the changes they're making are best practices that most cities already embrace. Mr. Bryant tells the group that there may be changes within the organization. He adds he still needs to get to know the staff and how they operate and that internal piece takes the longest to figure out.

Item No. 6 Public Comment: None

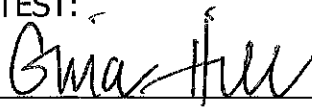
Item No. 7 Adjournment
Mayor Pro Tem Fisher moves to adjourn. Commissioner Yelton seconds.
All ayes.

APPROVED THIS 22nd DAY OF OCTOBER 2018



Jonathan Elmore, Mayor

ATTEST:



Gina Hill, City Clerk