

PUBLIC SERVICES
COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ROOM - July 8, 2002
12:30 P. M.

PRESENT: B. Young, Mayor, W. Mays, Chairman, U. Bridges, B. Kuhlke members, G. Kolb, Administrator, J. Wall, Attorney, R. Sherman and L. Harris, S. Walker, L&I, D. Williams, Asst. Comptroller, N. Morawski, Deputy Clerk of Commission.

ABSENT: R. Colclough, member.

ALSO PRESENT: Commissioners T. Boyles, U. Bridges, A. Cheek, M. Williams, B. Hankerson and L. Beard.

MEDIA: S. Eidson, Metro Spirit, H. Williams, Augusta Chronicle, G. Eskola, Channel 6, N. Coleman, Augusta Focus.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

2. Motion to approve the purchase of two (2) multi-unit play systems for McBean Park and Brookfield Park, referring to bid item #01-112 as approved by the Augusta Commission on October 4, 2001, from Hasley Recreation and Design in the amount of \$60,000.
3. Motion to approve the authorization of Fire Department SPLOST Phase IV funds in the amount of \$76,278.16 to the Department of Recreation and Parks as credit for expenses at McBean Park.
4. Approve Georgia Department of Natural Resources - Environmental Protection Division - Grant in the amount of \$62,597.20 for the purpose of funding the Scrap Tire/Solid Waste & Education Program.
- ~~9. Approve Augusta Regional Airport to enter into a retainer agreement with The LPA Group.~~
10. Motion to approve the amended lease agreement between the City of Augusta and the Augusta Arsenal Soccer Club for the mutual installation of field lighting for two fields at the Augusta Soccer Park.

Mr. Kuhlke: I move for approval.

Mr. Bridges: Second.

Motion carries unanimously.

1. Report from Administrator with recommendation and an analysis of the collection process of business license fees. (Deferred from June 10 Public Services)

Mr. Kolb: I've had a chance to review it and discuss this in detail not only with L&I but also with the Tax Commissioner and the Tax Assessor's office. Based on what we have done in the past and based on our analysis of what has been collected this year we are up to 95% of what we projected as revenues. Each year we are pretty much on target for the revenues that we've collected. Looking over the past 2 years and comparing it to 2002. I've also looked at the process that they use. Beginning February 1 the penalty is added interest is added each month until it is actually paid. So we're looking at a very small percentage of the businesses that actually pay the business license fee late. We actually make extra money. I do not at this time warrant or believe that we need to change our process. That's not to say that we should not make some changes in the future to the way we do business with respect to this. We need some updating in terms of our software and we're now taking that as a long-term approach to improving the process. But I believe that our current system as it stands now is adequate in terms of collecting business license fees.

Mr. Sherman: We're at 96% of what we projected the revenue to be for this year. Our recommendation after reviewing this is that we do need some enhancements to our software system that would give us the accurate number of businesses that have been billed. How many have been deleted and the amount owed in taxes by the businesses that have been deleted. Basically a statically package so we can give you the information you may need. The biggest report and the most important is the past due report. Everything on that report is still owed to the city. The long-term recommendation is that the L&I Dept. work with the Tax Assessors office, Tax Commissioners office and the Utilities Dept., to coordinate the collection of the delinquent taxes owed to the city. So that when someone comes in wants to get a new license the system would check for any back taxes owed to the other three departments. We would know not to issue them a permit or license until the tax is collected.

Mr. Kolb: In summary there is always a way to improve a process for the way we actually do business. But currently, with the present capabilities that we have and the staff capacity that we have I think that we are doing all that can be reasonably be done to collect this particular fee. Given at the end of the year that we come very close to what we projected in revenue fee, in many cases exceeding that, I think that it's being done adequately. If I were to make any recommendation, it would be that you allow us to pull the three major departments together and develop a system that we can probably use. To shop around and find software that would do the capability and provide the improvements and the accuracy in collecting data that we need in order to stay on top of this.

Mr. Kuhlke: I move that we accept this as information and instruct the Administrator to come back to us with some kind of comparison and see what the cost benefits are.

Mr. Bridges: Second.

Motion carries unanimously.

5. **Transfer Application: A.T. 02-07: A request by Sung Chol Song to transfer the retail package Liquor, Beer & Wine license used in connection with Frank's Package Shop located at 3251 Deans Bridge Rd. to a new store being built at this address. District 5. Super District 9.**

Ms. Song: Sung Chol Song 4223 Riverside Drive, Evans.

Mr. Sherman: The L&I Dept. and the Sheriff's Dept. have reviewed the application and recommend approval. (No objectors)

Mr. Kuhlke: So move for approval.

Mr. Bridges: Second.

Motion carries unanimously.

6. **New Ownership: A.N. 02-24: A request by Hud McTeer for a retail package Beer & Wine license to be used in connection with McTeer Food & Fuel located at 1237 Gordon Hwy. District 1. Super District 9.**

Mr. McTeer: Hud McTeer, Highway 25 South, Millen, GA.

Mr. Sherman: The L&I Dept. and the Sheriff's Dept. have reviewed the application and recommend approval. (No objectors)

Mr. Kuhlke: So move for approval.

Mr. Bridges: Second.

Motion carries unanimously.

7. **New Ownership: A.N. 02-25: A request by Chin S. Pak for a retail package Beer & Wine license to be used in connection with Sunset Mini Mart located at 2925 Peach Orchard Rd. District 8. Super District 10.**

Mr. Pak: Chin S. Pak 4531 Evanston, Evans.

Mr. Sherman: The L&I Dept. and the Sheriff's Dept. have reviewed the application and recommend approval. (No objectors)

Mr. Bridges: So move for approval.

Mr. Kuhlke: Second.

Motion carries unanimously.

- 8. Motion to approve the transfer of deed for 1.19 acres at Blount Park to Sand Hills Neighborhood Association for the purpose of economic development in the Sand Hills area.**

Mr. Wall: Since this would be surplus property that generally would be sold, I think perhaps we need to develop some type of contract with the Association as to their exact plans. In the event they fail to do it that there will be a reversion back to the county. Unless there is an urgency, I'd like to develop that contract and bring it back. Tom, do you think there is any problem as far as that's concerned.

Mr. Beck: Tim Wilson, President of the Sands Hill Neighborhood Association as well as James Steel with HND are here today. As far as we're concerned, as you remember Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee you did vote to close Blount Park with the exception of the athletic field. It has been identified through a survey to identify 1.19 acres that really is surplus property. Mr. Steel and Mr. Wilson, who we've been working with on the new Sand Hills park project approached our department about the possibility of this property not only for temporary use for their association needs and all that they're doing in the community, but also for an economic development project. So from our standpoint that part of the park is basically surplus now.

Mr. Wall: My only point is, as a general rule surplus property has to be auctioned off here I think there is benefits to the community. I think we can build that into a contract and have the property transferred with those as conditions. Exactly what those conditions are I'll have to rely on somebody. And then we have consideration flowing as to the transfer of the property in the event that they fail to complete those conditions in a timely manner, then there would be a reversion back to the County. That would be my recommendation, that we proceed with that and bring it back once we have that contract developed.

Mr. Wilson: That's fine as far as getting the contract is concerned. We're looking to redevelop that piece of property. There is also a basketball court, tennis court and a smaller building. As an Association we're looking to revitalize that entire area. I think we are geared up to take it over as far as taking care of any maintenance as well as any utilities, anything that is concerned with that property.

Mr. Mays: What kind of time frame are you looking at?

Mr. Wall: We should have it by the July 29 meeting.

Mr. Kuhlke: I would like to make a motion that we have the attorney draw up the contract and bring it to our next Committee meeting.

Mr. Bridges: Second.

Motion carries unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned.

Nancy Morawski
Deputy Clerk of Commission

/bb