

COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Council Chambers
C. E. "Red" McDaniel City Services Center- Second Floor
3111 Citizens Way, Columbus, GA 31906

May 30, 2023
9:00 AM
Consent Agenda / Work Session

CONSENT AGENDA/WORK SESSION

PRESENT: Mayor B. H. "Skip" Henderson, III and Mayor Pro Tem R. Gary Allen and Councilors Tyson Begly, Joanne Cogle, Charmaine Crabb, Glenn Davis, Bruce Huff (arrived at 9:06 a.m.), Judy W. Thomas, and Toyia Tucker (arrived at 9:08 a.m.). City Manager Isaiah Hugley, City Attorney Clifton Fay, Clerk of Council Sandra T. Davis, and Deputy Clerk of Council Lindsey G. McLemore were present.

ABSENT: Councilors Jerry "Pops" Barnes and R. Walker Garrett were absent from the meeting.

The following documents have been included as a part of the electronic Agenda Packet: (1) Muscogee Elections and Registration Presentation; (2) The Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program Presentation; (3) Columbus City Hall Update Presentation; (4) Personal Transportation Vehicles (PTV's) Update Presentation; (5) Columbus Infrastructure Update Presentation; (6) Traffic Calming Presentation; (7) Short-Term Vacation Rental Update

The following documents were distributed around the Council table: (1) Information on Westville Temporary Closure;

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor B. H. "Skip" Henderson, III, Presiding

INVOCATION: Offered by Mayor Pro Tem R. Gary Allen

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Mayor Henderson

CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES

1. Approval of minutes for the May 23, 2023, Council Meeting and Executive Session. Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the six members present, with Councilors Huff and Tucker being absent for the vote, and Councilors Barnes and Garrett being absent from the meeting.

ORDINANCES

2. **Ordinance (23-027) - 2nd Reading-** REZN-03-23-0514: An Ordinance amending the Zoning Atlas of the Consolidated Government of Columbus, Georgia to change certain boundaries of a district located at **5032 Milgen Court, 11 / 15 Masterbuilt Court** (parcel # 083-029-001 / 002 / 004) from GC (General Commercial) Zoning District to LMI (Light Manufacturing/Industrial) Zoning District. (Planning Department and PAC recommend approval) (Councilor Crabb) Councilor Crabb made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Allen and

carried unanimously by the six members present, with Councilors Huff and Tucker being absent for the vote, and Councilors Barnes and Garrett being absent from the meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

3. **RESOLUTION (187-23)** - A resolution to amend Paragraph (2) of Resolution 360-16 to allow parking fees to be charged in all parking garages and parking lots owned by the City in the Uptown Zoning District (UPT) and the Central Riverfront Zoning District (CRD) to include the RiverCenter Garage for certain special events that are anticipated to create extraordinary parking demand and public safety concerns. **(Add-On Resolution)** Councilor Thomas made a motion to amend Paragraph 2 “Special Event parking fees for all City owned parking garages and parking lots in the UPT and CRD Zoning Districts will not be charged, except that the City Manager, as authorized by Council, may impose parking charges for individual Special Events which due to traffic and public safety concerns necessitate such fees”, seconded by Councilor Crabb and carried unanimously by the eight members present, with Councilors Barnes and Garrett being absent from the meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to approve the resolution as amended, seconded by Councilor Begly and carried unanimously by the eight members present, with Councilors Barnes and Garrett being absent from the meeting.

Councilor Crabb made a motion to authorize the City Manager to charge \$10.00 for parking in all City parking lots for the upcoming GOP Convention, seconded by Councilor Thomas and carried unanimously by the eight members present, with Councilors Barnes and Garrett being absent from the meeting.

4. **RESOLUTION (188-23)** - A resolution excusing Councilor Jerry “Pops” Barnes from the May 30, 2023 Consent Agenda / Work Session. Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilor Huff and carried unanimously by the eight members present, with Councilors Barnes and Garrett being absent from the meeting.
5. **RESOLUTION (189-23)** - A resolution excusing Councilor R. Walker Garrett from the May 30, 2023 Consent Agenda / Work Session. Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilor Huff and carried unanimously by the eight members present, with Councilors Barnes and Garrett being absent from the meeting.

WORK SESSION AGENDA

I. Westville Update - George Singer

Mr. George Singer approached the rostrum to provide information on the temporary closure of Historic Westville. He explained due to lack of operational funding from development and low admissions, they are requesting a 6-month extension to their current lease. He stated Westville is currently consulting with a consulting firm to establish a better mission and a way to sustain financially.

City Manager Isaiah Hugley advised this would come back at the next business meeting.

II. Elections Update - Nancy Boren, Director, Elections and Voter Registration

Elections and Registration Director Nancy Boren approached the rostrum to provide a presentation on the Elections and Registration Office. She explained in 2023, her office is taking inventory of their two warehouses, implementing a new voter registration system, maintenance on the voter list, evaluating current polling locations, preparation of the FY 2024 budget, monitoring Legislation Session, and training staff. She also mentioned the upcoming Special Election for School Board District 7 on June 20, 2023 and provided the early voting dates and times. In conclusion, Elections and Registration Director Boren outlined the elections that are scheduled to occur in the year 2024.

IX. Announcement of Collaborative Community Connection Partnership Program (C3 Program) - Holli Browder, Director, Parks and Recreation & Partners

Parks and Recreation Director Holli Browder approached the rostrum to announce the new Collaborative Community Connection (C3) Partnership Program. She explained this new program brings together many partners to collaborate and share resources to provide better and more programs and activities for the community throughout these summer months. She stated the Frank Chester Recreation Center will be extending their hours to allow Columbus residents to have a safe place to partake in positive activities.

VI. Mayor's Summer Youth Program Update - Feleshia Marshall, Assistant Director, JTPA/WIA

JTPA/WIA Assistant Director Feleshia Marshall approached the rostrum to provide information on the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program. She explained this program is designed to introduce youth in the community to the workplace while teaching them the skills needed for a successful career. The program is scheduled to begin on June 12, 2023 through July 28, 2023. She stated the participants will attend workforce preparation classes hosted by the Urban League of Greater Columbus and be matched with local employers to gain work experience.

V. Move to City Hall Timeline - Ryan Pruett, Director, Inspections and Code

Inspections and Code Director Ryan Pruett approached the rostrum to provide information on Phase I and Phase II of the move to the new City Hall. He explained Phase I relocations will begin on June 20, 2023 and will be completed by July 17, 2023.

City Manager Isaiah Hugley explained there is a need for an additional position for the information desk that was omitted from the FY 2024 Budget. He stated they may bring it back for the 1st Reading of the budget ordinance.

VIII. Proposed Expanded Area for Golf Carts Update - Pam Hodge, Deputy City Manager, Finance, Planning and Development

Deputy City Manager Pam Hodge approached the rostrum to provide an update on Personal Transportation Vehicles (PTVs) in the Uptown area. She explained a map that was shown, depicting the current street segments that allow PTVs and the proposed street segments additions.

VII. Infrastructure/ Transportation Projects Update - Pam Hodge, Deputy City Manager, Finance, Planning and Development

Deputy City Manager Pam Hodge approached the rostrum to provide an update on current and ongoing infrastructure and transportation projects. During the presentation she responded to questions from the members of Council regarding various projects in their respective districts.

REFERRAL(S):

FOR THE CITY MANAGER:

- Look into utilizing discretionary funding for civil engineering in an effort to expedite projects. *(Request of Councilor Davis)*
- Provide a list of streets in priority order based on fiscal year. *(Request of Councilor Tucker)*
- Copy of layout design of the Verging Diamond Project. *(Request of Councilor Davis)*

III. Traffic Calming Update - Donna Newman, Director, Engineering

Engineering Director Donna Newman approached the rostrum to introduce Mr. Barrington Adams, a senior at Northside High School, who has an interest in civil engineering and will be doing an internship with the Engineering Department this summer.

Assistant Engineering Director Vance Beck approached the rostrum to provide a traffic calming update. He explained the various options available and the pros and cons to each option. He also responded to questions from the members of Council regarding the requirements streets must meet for a traffic calming measure to be installed.

REFERRAL(S):

FOR THE CITY MANAGER:

- Provide the current traffic calming requirements and explanations. *(Request of Councilor Begly)*
- Identify funding for the installation of traffic calming measures for neighborhoods that do not have HOAs that can cover the cost. *(Request of Councilor Tucker)*

X. Tax Digest Update - Angelica Alexander, Finance, Director & Suzanne Widenhouse, Chief Appraiser, Tax Assessor

Finance Director Angelica Alexander approached the rostrum to begin the tax digest update. She stated each year the Board of Tax Assessors is required to review the assessed value of taxable property in the county and if there is an increase in the fair market value for a specific property due to improvements or some sort of sales transaction, the board is required by law to determine the value of that property, known as a reassessment. She explained she wanted to notify Council of the 11% increase to Urban Service Districts 1 and 2 before they are advertised in the newspaper.

Chief Appraiser Suzanne Widenhouse approached the rostrum to comment on the rollback rate and reassessments. She also gave some examples of common improvements to properties that would increase the property value.

IV. Short Term Vacation Rental - Ryan Pruett, Director, Inspections and Code

Inspections and Code Director Ryan Pruett approached the rostrum to provide an update on short-term vacation rentals. He explained there are currently 153 permitted short-term rentals in Columbus, but according to data provided by the Columbus Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), there were

273 active short-term rental advertisements as of April 7, 2023. He stated Inspections and Code has issued six new permits since the moratorium ended on May 15th.

Councilor Cogle made a motion to allow the Air BNB owners in the audience to speak, seconded by Councilor Tucker and carried unanimously by the eight members present, with Councilors Barnes and Garrett being absent from the meeting.

Mr. Jared Huckabee (1434 16th Avenue, Columbus, GA 31901) approached the rostrum to speak as a short-term rental owner. He expressed his concerns regarding the new requirements.

Mr. David Goings (6746 Ranch Forest Drive, Columbus, GA 31904) approached the rostrum to speak as a short-term rental owner. He expressed his concerns regarding the new requirements and suggested the Ordinance that was adopted in 2018 be enforced to address the issues.

REFERRAL(S):

FOR THE CITY MANAGER:

- Let's look at putting a cap on how many short-term rentals a single owner or company can operate. *(Request of Councilor Begly)*
- Provide Council short-term rental ordinances adopted by other municipalities. *(Request of Councilor Davis)*
- Install a gate at Shirley B. Winston Park so it can be closed at 11:00 p.m. *(Request of Councilor Tucker)*
- See what can be done to improve the Wi-Fi connection at Shirley B. Winston for the security cameras. *(Request of Councilor Tucker)*
- There are electrical wires going through a tree at 108 8th Street. *(Request of Councilor Thomas)*
- Maintenance and landscaping on public right-of-way, particularly in the center of round-a-bouts. *(Request of Councilor Davis)*
- Have the bush and/or trees removed on the bike trail at the Manchester Expressway and College Avenue crossing. *(Request of Councilor Crabb)*
- Address low hanging trees on 2nd Avenue near Highside Market. *(Request of Councilor Cogle)*
- Check into installing measures to direct drivers to go into the round-a-bout at St. Mary's Road. *(Request of Councilor Huff)*

With there being no further business to discuss, Mayor Henderson entertained a motion for adjournment. Motion by Councilor Tucker to adjourn the May 30, 2023 Consent Agenda/Work Session, seconded by Councilor Cogle and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Mayor Pro Tem Allen being absent for the vote, Councilors Barnes and Garrett being absent from the meeting, and the time being 1:19 p.m.

Sandra T. Davis, CMC
Clerk of Council
Council of Columbus, Georgia