

COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

CITY COUNCIL MEETING **MINUTES**

Columbus Civic Center
400 4th Street, Arena Floor
Columbus, Georgia 31901

September 29, 2020
9:00 AM
Consent Agenda - Work Session /
Budget Review

CONSENT AGENDA / WORK SESSION

PRESENT: Mayor B. H. “Skip” Henderson, III and Mayor Pro Tem R. Gary Allen and Councilors Charmaine Crabb, R. Walker Garrett, John M. House, Bruce Huff, Toyia Tucker and Evelyn “Mimi” Woodson (arrived at 9:04 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, Glenn Davis and Judy W. Thomas were absent.

<p><u>The following documents were distributed around the Council table:</u> (1) 2021 Proposed Legislative Agenda; (2) Mott’s Green Update Presentation; (3) 2nd Avenue Streetscape Study Presentation; (4) J.R. Allen Parkway / US 80 Corridor Study PI #0016425 Project Status Update Presentation; Budget Review Add/Delete List</p>

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

INVOCATION: Offered by Rev. Christopher Poirier at River Valley Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Mayor Henderson

MINUTES

1. Approval of minutes for the September 22, 2020 Council Meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Councilor Garrett and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilors Barnes, Davis and Thomas being absent for the meeting.

FORMER MAYOR AND COUNCILOR BOB POYDASHEFF:

Mayor B. H. “Skip” Henderson, III stated former Mayor and Councilor Bob Poydasheff recently passed. He explained Mayor Poydasheff was a moving force in the community, always thinking of the people first and foremost. He expressed condolences to the Poydasheff Family for their loss.

UPDATES:

2. An update on COVID-19

Mayor B. H. "Skip" Henderson, III gave an update on COVID-19, stating the numbers have remained relatively flat. He explained there were ten new cases yesterday, but the desire of citizens to get tested has decreased.

3. Census 2020

Mayor B. H. "Skip" Henderson, III gave an update on the 2020 Census, stating the deadline to complete the survey is tomorrow at midnight. He commented on the event held at the Columbus Civic Center over the past weekend with the help of State Representative Carolyn Hugley, the Fair Count Organization, and the City Manager's Millennial Roundtable.

CONSENT AGENDA

ORDINANCES

1. **Ordinance (20-045) - 2nd Reading - REZN-07-20-2197:** An ordinance rezoning 0.66 acres located at 7290D Blackmon Road (parcel id # 101-030-007). The current zoning is GC (General Commercial). The proposed zoning is RE1 (Residential Estate 1). The proposed use is Detention Pond. The Planning Advisory Commission and the Planning Department recommend approval. The applicant is Ben Billings. (Councilor Allen) Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Councilor House and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilors Barnes, Davis and Thomas being absent for the meeting.

RESOLUTIONS

2. **Resolution (293-20):** A resolution cancelling the October 6, 2020 Proclamation Session. Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilor Woodson and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilors Barnes, Davis and Thomas being absent for the meeting.
3. **Resolution (294-20):** A resolution excusing Councilor Jerry "Pops" Barnes from the September 22, 2020 Council Meeting and September 29, 2020 Council Work Session / Budget Review. Councilor Woodson made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Allen and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilors Barnes, Davis and Thomas being absent for the meeting.
4. **Resolution (295-20):** A resolution excusing Councilor Glenn Davis from the September 22, 2020 Council Meeting. Councilor Tucker made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Allen and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilors Barnes, Davis and Thomas being absent for the meeting.

5. **Resolution (296-20):** A resolution receiving the report of the Director of Finance concerning certain alcoholic beverage licenses processed during the month of August 2020 and approving the same. Councilor Huff made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Allen and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilors Barnes, Davis and Thomas being absent for the meeting.

WORK SESSION AGENDA

- 1) Presentation of Check to Support a Non-Profit Organization– Glen Wilkins, Director of Public Affairs & Government Relations

Attendees: Porsha Moore – Store Manager 1338

Corleny Jackson – Store Manager 1311

Hubert Frierson – Store Manager 4283

John Nickerson – Store Manager 4426 (Neighborhood Market)

Quacheryl Pugh – Store Manager 4200

Elise Hackstall – Market Manager Neighborhood Market

Shawn McCullum – Market Manager Supercenter’s

City Manager Isaiah Hugley explained State Representative Carolyn Hugley, who was in attendance, told him about Walmart offering a small grant opportunity to a non-profit organization. He explained that he had Deputy City Manager Pam Hodge to complete the application and submit it on behalf of the Liberty Theatre. He added that the Walmart Funding would go directly to this local nonprofit organization and not to the City of Columbus; therefore, the City of Columbus is not the fiscal agent and has no responsibility for the funding. He explained the efforts to support this organization as the Liberty Theatre is one of the jewels of this community.

Director of Public Affairs & Government Relations Glen Wilkins, Walmart approached the rostrum to give each Store Manager an opportunity to introduce themselves. He explained that Walmart had some money and wanted to give back to Georgia. The funding was to go towards work within the African-American community to support some historical legacies. He then presented a \$50,000 check to Liberty Theatre Representatives.

Dr. Shae Anderson, Liberty Theatre Director came forward to express her gratitude to Walmart and the City Manager for the opportunity to be awarded the grant.

- 2) Mott’s Green Update - Rick Jones, Planning Director

Planning Director Rick Jones approached the rostrum to give an update on the Mott’s Green Project. During the presentation, Director Jones gave a brief history of the project, and explained the plans to use the existing monuments to display information about the history surrounding the development of the Riverwalk and Downtown Area. He explained approval is needed from Council to cover the additional construction cost in the amount of \$500,000, which would come from the Paving Fund.

Deputy City Manager Pam Hodge approached the rostrum to respond to a question asked by Councilor House. She explained there would be no impact to any other project if Council were to approve the additional allocation.

City Manager Isaiah Hugley explained he spent time yesterday visiting various shops, apartments, and the hotels being constructed in the Downtown Area. He commented on the beauty of the area and how all the projects are coming together.

REFERRAL(S):

FOR THE CITY MANAGER:

- Provide Council a detailed list of the projected expenses associated with this project, to include the additional funding being requested. (*Request of Mayor Pro Tem Allen*)

PROJECT AWARD OPPORTUNITY:

Planning Director Rick Jones explained the community is up for an award from the American Association of State Highways and Transportation Officials. He stated the City of Columbus is in the finals, where we would be recognized as having the best project in the last year. He encouraged citizens to go vote on the Planning Department's webpage.

- 3) 2nd Avenue Streetscapes Study - Rick Jones, Planning Director and Mickey O'Brien, Urban Design/Landscape Architecture Manager, AECOM

Planning Director Rick Jones remained at the rostrum to introduce the forthcoming update on the 2nd Avenue Streetscapes Study, which he stated was conducted to see what could be done to improve the overall quality of 2nd Avenue; since, it is ultimately the gateway into our city.

Urban Design/Landscape Architecture Manager Mickey O'Brien, AECOM came forward to give the presentation on the 2nd Avenue Streetscapes Study and the findings from that study. He explained they explored a lane reduction concept known as a "Road Diet", but it was determined that concept would not be feasible. He stated keeping four lanes and adding a median would preserve operations of the road and improve safety for pedestrians, with an approximate construction cost of \$10 million.

- 4) J. R. Allen Parkway Study - Rick Jones, Planning Director and Keith Strickland, P.E., Senior Transportation Engineer, Stantec

Planning Director Rick Jones returned to the rostrum to introduce an update on the J. R. Allen Parkway Study. He explained though Phenix City, Alabama does not currently have the funding to continue this project into the State of Alabama, they have been involved with the process and will continue to be included.

Senior Transportation Engineer Keith Strickland, Stantec came forward to give the presentation on the J. R. Allen Parkway Study, giving various improvement recommendations based off the study conducted on the corridor. He stated there are several highway improvement recommendations with the J. R. Allen Parkway Corridor being ten miles long. He explained since the study is complete, the next steps include holding a virtual public meeting, respond to comments and prepare a Feasibility Report by the end of October.

- 5) Steam Mill Road Corridor Study - Donna Newman, Engineering Director and Mitchell Greenway, Stantec

Engineering Director Donna Newman introduced an update on the Steam Mill Road Corridor, stating much of that corridor is residential, including an elementary school and a recreation center. She explained there have been several fatal vehicle and pedestrian accidents that have occurred on this road.

Transportation Engineer Mitchell Greenway, Stantec approached the rostrum to give the presentation on the Steam Mill Road Corridor Study, explaining the objective for the study is to include safety enhancements and improve mobility options. He stated they are currently in the Alternative Evaluation Phase, and the next step is to have virtual public meetings to get input from the community.

REFERRAL(S):

FOR THE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT:

- Provide the list of citizens who will be receiving mailers regarding this project. (*Request of Councilor Tucker*)

At the suggestion of City Manager Hugley, Mayor Henderson entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting for a ten-minute recess. Motion by Councilor Garrett to go into recess, seconded by Councilor Tucker and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilors Barnes, Davis and Thomas being absent for the meeting, and the time being 11:11 a.m.

Budget Review Vice Chairman John House called the meeting to order at 11:25 a.m. to go into the Budget Review Session as a part of the Work Session Agenda to conduct business as it relates to the Add/Delete List.

- 6) Budget Review Session - Angelica Alexander, Finance Director

Mayor B. H. "Skip" Henderson, III explained the purpose of the session is to cover items that were delayed due to the uncertainty of the impact COVID-19 would have on the budget. He stated in his opinion the appropriate time to address those items is at mid-year, but this is a great opportunity to look at how the numbers are trending.

City Manager Isaiah Hugley stated we are in the first quarter of the fiscal year, with that, the revenues and expenses are unknown. He cautioned the Council to remember that even though sales

tax numbers are up, that is only a small portion of revenue for the city at 25%. He stated it is his opinion that it is not currently the time to spend money, and they should not assume revenue will continue to grow with so much being unknown about what the future holds.

Finance Director Angelica Alexander approached the rostrum to express that she shares the same sentiment as the Mayor and City Manager. She stated she would be providing a finance report to Council at the next meeting, and she hopes to know more as they close out the month of September. She explained that at the close of August, the General Fund was down and she hopes there will be enough revenue to cover that decline from the month of September.

Mayor Pro Tem Allen made a motion to delay any action on the Add/Delete List for 90 days, seconded by Councilor Woodson and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilors Barnes, Davis and Thomas being absent for the meeting.

With there being no further business to discuss, Budget Review Vice Chairman House entertained a motion for adjournment. Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Allen to adjourn the September 29, 2020 Consent Agenda- Work Session / Budget Review Meeting, seconded by Councilor Woodson and carried unanimously by the seven members present, with Councilors Barnes, Davis and Thomas being absent for the meeting, and the time being 11:34 a.m.

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