



Mayor and City Council Work Session

Tuesday, May 21, 2024 at 6:30 PM

City Hall, 875 Main Street, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Minutes

Mayor and Council: Dr. Beverly Jones – Mayor | Post 3 :Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Smith

Post 1: Council Member Anita Bass | Post 2: Council Member Mark Marianos

Post 4: Council Member Gil Freeman | Post 5: Council Member Shawnette Bryant

Post 6: Council Member Teresa Crowe

**Staff: Darnetta Tyus - City Manager | Shawn Edmondson - Assistant City Manager - City Clerk |
Danny Mai - Assistant City Clerk | Jeff Strickland - City Attorney**

City of Stone Mountain, GA Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CityofStoneMtn/>

Link to join Webinar: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85727715572>

Call to Order

Determination of Quorum

PRESENT

Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass

Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos

Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith

Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman

Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

Mayor Beverly Jones

Invocation and Pledge

The Mayor Led the Pledge at [06:33] PM ET [18:33]. The Mayor Led the Invocation at [06:35] PM ET [18:35].

Citizen Comments – Including comments from public/stakeholders (3 minutes per comment)

Comments from the Public

The public comments are reserved exclusively for comments from the public and not for immediate reply. The purpose of public comment is to allow the public to voice city related requests, concerns or opinions only during the public comment portion of the City Council meeting. I. The Mayor and City Council reserves the right to extend or limit the length of public comments based on: (1) the issue under discussion; (2) the number of items on the agenda; and (3) the extent to which the speaker remains constructive in their comments and questions. II. The public may not directly confront the public speaker but must direct all comments and questions to the Mayor and City Council. III. Public harassment of or confrontation with a public speaker will not be tolerated. Members of the public violating tenets two or three will be asked to sit down or leave the premises.

Citizen Comments – Including comments from public/stakeholders (3 minutes per comment)

Comments from the Public

Citizen Comment #1 (Natasha Hendricks): Hendricks noted that she is the Principal of Stone Mountain Elementary School. Hendricks highlighted the benefits that the students at the school will receive from this partnership, and thanked City Manager Tyus, Mayor and Council for the consideration.

Citizen Comment #2 (Cheryl Dudley): Dudley noted that the city is moving towards the right direction with the adoption of the Elementary School. Dudley expressed the importance of city constituents having the right to be heard. Dudley noted the state laws regarding political signs. Dudley also noted that political signs cannot be removed if it is on personal property. Dudley mentioned that item #17 and expressed her opinion on the subject matter.

Citizen Comment #3 (Grace Kelly): Kelly expressed her excitement with the adoption of the Elementary School. Kelly also noted that the recent Clean Up event was a success.

Citizen Comment #4 (Phyllis Broughton): Broughton expressed the importance that the city needs to work towards road improvements.

Citizen Comment #5 (Michael Nunley): Nunley noted the success of the City-Wide Cleanup. Nunley noted their desire to have additional usage of the green space for additional events.

Citizen Comment #6 (Susan Taylor): Taylor noted the desire to keep the green space green and mentioned the importance of having events there.

Citizen Comment #7 (Clint Monroe): Monroe discussed the contract proposal with POND and suggested that there needs to be a representative sample of the citizens for the POND study, and the naming of the Baptist Lawn.

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Review of the Journal (Assistant City Manager & City Clerk Edmondson)

1. Request Minutes from City Council Meeting [05.07.2024] be approved.

CM Bryant noted that City Council Meetings should not have time stamp for when Council Members are entering the meeting.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

2. Request Minutes from City Council Special Meeting [05.16.2024] be approved.

No Discussion Made.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

Reading of Communications

Adoption of The Agenda of The Day

City Manager Tyus stated that she would like to amend item #13 to include the words "request and approve". According to City Manager Tyus, the Historical Society is applying for a grant, and failing to vote on the item will result in missing the grant deadline. City Manager Tyus stated that the line item for these funds is already budgeted for the current fiscal year.

MOTION TO ADJUST.

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman

CM Crowe noted that she would like to add New Discussion item #20 to the agenda, "Discussion on adding streetlights to main street". Thus moving Executive Session to item #21.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 6 Crowe.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

CM Freeman would like to add Discussion item #21: Discussion on questions and concerns about the DDA.

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 5 Bryant.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA OF THE DAY WITH THE FOLLOWING ABOVE CHANGES.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3

Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Committee Discussion Items

3. Planning Commission

Grace Kelly spoke on behalf of the Planning Commission. Kelly stated that the Planning Committee discussed adding definitions to the city ordinances in order to provide clarity on retail stores. Kelly also mentioned that the Planning Commission considered limiting short-term rentals, similar to AirBNB.

Mayor Jones asked for the locations and names of stores and smoke shops.

4. Economic Development/Downtown Development Authority

Carl Wright spoke on behalf of the DDA. Wright stated that the DDA is negotiating a contract with a landscaper. Wright also stated that there have been four interviews with potential DDA committee members. Wright also mentioned that the DDA could be used in other ways. According to Wright, the landscapers will work on the middle island in downtown, maintaining the landscaping from City Hall to the cemetery. The landscapers will not work through the cemetery. Wright pointed out that the city has numerous vacant buildings that should be designated as nuances. Wright stated that every DDA member is enthusiastic about the organization and the city itself.

CM Bryant requested clarification on Wright's title. Wright stated that he is Chairman of the DDA. CM Bryant inquired whether DDA Members were up to date on DDA training. Wright stated that the majority of the DDA are trained or are in the process of being trained.

CM Freeman inquired about the timeline for training requirements. Assistant City Manager and City Clerk noted that training must be completed within 12 months of being assigned a role within DDA.

5. Historic Preservation Commission

Elaine Vaugh spoke on behalf of the HPC. She mentioned that the HPC had two certificates of appropriateness. She also discussed and elaborated on the COAs. She mentioned that both of these COAs were approved. She mentioned that there are two seats available with the HP. On May 29th at 6:00PM, Mary Beth Reed will host an event in Council Chambers to discuss the HPC's architectural history. The next HPC meeting has been moved to Juneteenth.

6. Parks and Recreation Committee

The Parks & Recs committed that on June 3rd, a survey will be distributed throughout the community to gather information on additional benefits that the city can provide to the community. The representative also stated that they are still working on the Book Bench Project and would like more information about updates to the Park bathrooms.

Committee Discussion Items

7. Public Safety- Police Chief- James Westerfield Jr

Police Chief James Westerfield discussed the statistics regarding the Police Department and Police Department Administration.

(Statistics are attached in the Agenda Packet and are also on the City Website).

Police Chief James Westerfield also re-introduced Sgt Stone to the community. Police Chief James Westerfield also discussed internal Police Administrative items: (1) Amy Hall is a Lead Detector for the City Administration (2) David Stone has re-entered the Stone Mountain PD as a Sergeant (3) Julio Aponte is now a Lieutenant.

8. Administration- Assistant City Manager-City Clerk- Shawn Edmondson

Administration Assistant City Manager & City Clerk Shawn Edmondson introduced the items from the City Clerk's Office to City Council.

(Statistics are included within the Agenda Packet and can be found on the City Website)

City Manager's Report

9. City Manager - Darnetta Tyus

City Manager Darnetta Tyus:

-City Manager Tyus mentioned that the Revenue and Expenses package is part of the Agenda Package. City Manager Tyus stated that this is the March report. City Manager Tyus specifically noted certain pages for the Council and wanted to bring them to their attention.

-City Manager Tyus congratulated all participants in the City-Wide Cleanup. City Manager Tyus noted that there were over 200 volunteers for the City-Wide Clean Up and reminded the community that each team played an important role.

- City Manager Tyus thanked the business community and Atlanta Gas Light for their support of this initiative.
- City Manager Tyus discussed the LCI contract, mentioning that the city received a grant and will use it to study a walking trail connecting all of the city's parks.
- City Manager Tyus displayed images of the old Police Headquarters in order to demolish the dilapidated area of the depo.
- City Manager Tyus provided an update on Rockbrough signage and informed council of the city's timeline for the signage update project.
- City Manager Tyus provided an update on the outdoor gym, highlighting the fact that there has been a lot of activity at the site.
- City Manager Tyus provided an update on park bathrooms and mentioned that a call has been scheduled to discuss park work.
- City Manager Tyus stated that the city has applied for a grant to work on the Caboose. City Manager Tyus stated that the Caboose is not a historic item, but rather a different item.
- City Manager Tyus provided an update on the 8-entry way signage, stating that the vendors are being unresponsive.
- City Manager Tyus is working with Code Compliance and the Chief of Police to find a way to allow digital signage, as it is currently not code compliant. CM Crowe requests that City Manager Tyus include updated signage on all future City Manager reports. City Manager Tyus agreed to do so.

Council Policy Discussion Topics

New Business

City Mayor Jones moved item #12 in front of the other items.

10. Discussion on the approval of a revised Change Order Proposal from A&S, reducing the previously proposed amount from \$64,999.94 to \$47,999.96. (City Manager Tyus)

A&S Paving's representative spoke to City Council and stated that the firm recommended additional Geo Technical fabric to redo a portion of the street. The Representative also stated that the change order reduces the amount of money spent on the project. The Representative stated that once the change order is approved, this project will take a few days, possibly a week, depending on the weather. CM Marianos inquired whether The Representative anticipated any additional delays for this project. The Representative stated that the firm anticipates additional issues because the previous planner performed poorly with the initial creation of the streets.

City Manager Tyus is seeking approval for the change order.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE CHANGE ORDER.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

11. Discussion on the approval of the estimates received for the interior demolition project, with Kissberg Construction submitting the lowest bid at \$29,950.00 (City Manager Tyus)

City Manager Tyus requests approval for the item. CM Crowe expressed concern about the building being gutted due to rodent activity. Crowe also noted the importance of involving an exterminator. According to City Manager Tyus, this is more than just a rodent problem and will necessitate the Depot's internal demolition.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEM

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe, Mayor Jones

Mayor Jones requested that City Staff look into securing the other section of the Depot. City Mayor Jones requested that Exterminators investigate the other building. CM Marianos requested a timeline, and the City Mayor requested that this item be re-explored by the next session. CM Bass has requested an air quality test to ensure staff safety. CM Freeman wants to confirm that rodents in one section of the Depo do not spread to the second section.

VOTE FAILED. TABLED TO NEXT SESSION.

12. Discussion on the Approval of the Livable Center Initiative (LCI) Project Selection (City Manager Tyus)

Major Jones moved this item in front of the other items.

City Manager Tyus stated that several representatives are here to present to Council. Moving forward, they will be referred to as "The Representatives" in relation to this item.

The Representatives stated that the project aims to set the city up for a better future by connecting the parks via a trail. The Representatives introduced themselves to the Council.

The Representatives stated that two engagement firms are working on this project in collaboration with POND. The representatives emphasized the importance of community involvement. They also stated that the project would take between 8 and 12 months to complete. The representatives emphasized the importance of engagement and expressed their willingness to collaborate with the city.

The Representatives stated that they will work to connect all of the parks with the downtown. CM Marianos asked the Representatives how they plan to combat Gentrification in the community. The Representatives stated that they believe in working within the community and will engage the community in various types of exercises to help prevent gentrification.

The representatives also stated that they will provide equity to the community's stakeholders. They emphasize the importance of removing barriers that may impede the project's success. The Representatives stated that they are working on a similar project with the City of Savannah and have worked to prevent gentrification.

CM Freeman mentioned several issues that the community had with POND. CM Freeman discussed and proposed that the community would like to see a statistical sampling of the community in order to obtain more accurate community feedback that represents the city's population.

The Representatives noted that the prior engagement was very situational because it took place during COVID (March 2022). The Representatives acknowledged and emphasized that the previous engagement was difficult due to a number of COVID-related factors. They noted that POND collected data both on the website and in person. During table talks, the Representatives emphasized the importance of community engagement and highlighted the city's large renter population (52%, according to CM Freeman).

The Representatives mentioned the various municipalities with which they had worked. Council and Representatives discussed equity issues and challenges that the city may face.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEM AS IT IS.

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant

13. Discussion on the Allocation of Funds (\$7,500.00) to Historical Society. (CM Marianos)

VOTE TO AMEND THE AGENDA WAS PASSED. NEW WORDING, "Request and approve the Allocation of Funds (\$7,500.00) to Historical Society. (CM Marianos)".

Mayor Jones thanked the firm for the hard work that they have done. Mary Beth Reed thanked the city as well.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEM

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

14. Discussion on a potential Installation of a Mirror on Ridge Ave in Front of Stone Bush Subdivision (CM Bryant)

CM Bryant is requesting the installation of the mirror to increase citizen safety. CM Marianos is in agreement that this is a safety issue.

ITEM WAS TABLED TO NEXT SESSION.

15. Discussion about Parking Deck Progress for the Blue House Foundation (CM Bryant)

CM Bryant asked City Manager Tyus for an update on this item. City Manager Tyus noted that the city will be able to provide an update regarding this item.

ITEM WAS TABLED.

16. Discussion on Potential Preparations for the 2026 World Cup Event; such as, short term rentals, long term rentals, parking, promotions, etc. (CM Freeman)

ITEM WAS TABLED UNTIL THE NEXT WORK SESSION.

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

17. Discussion on amending Council Meeting Procedures to include the removal of cellphones within council Chambers during City Council Sessions (MPT Smith)

MPT Smith stated that this council procedure would only affect city council members and not other participants. MPT Smith stated that this is to ensure that the city council can properly respect the speaker.

CM Bryant stated that it is critical for citizens to text council members live in order to discuss important issues that they would otherwise not have access to. CM Marianos raised the question of how this would be enforced.

NO ACTIONABLE ITEMS, TABLED.

18. Discussion on a Traffic Calming for Mountain View Drive. (CM Bass)

City Manager Tyus noted that she will provide CM Bass with a package that details the process for Traffic Calming.

NO OTHER DISCUSSION OCCURED.

19. Discussion on The City of Stone Mountain's 2021 Comprehensive Plan; specifically focusing on, (1) What has been accomplished since its adoption AND (2) What are the top 3 items that still need to be completed. (CM Bass)

CM Bass introduced the item to the council and stated that she wanted to activate the City Comprehensive Plan.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

20. Discussion on adding streetlights to main street (CM Crowe)

MPT Smith mentioned that some business owners approached him to suggest the installation of high-quality LED lights throughout downtown. CM Crowe noted that other communities have light nights, resulting in differentiation between cities. When CM Bryant asked if the light pole would be installed, Assistant City Manager & City Clerk Edmondson responded that the city is currently looking for alternative ways to light the city. NO ACTION TAKEN.

New Ordinances and Resolutions

Remarks of Privilege

Announcements by The Mayor

Executive Session to Discuss Personnel, Legal, and/or Real Estate (if needed)

Adjournment

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 5 Bryant.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 5 Bryant, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe