

**Pre-Council Meeting - Preliminary**  
**January 7, 2019**  
**6:00 PM**

*Present: Mayor Max Bacon Charles "Corkey" Welch Tim Gould  
Maryline Blackburn Derek Norton Andrea Blustein  
Susan Wilkinson Ron Fennel*

*Also Present: Tammi Saddler Jones (City Administrator), Scott Cochran (City Attorney), Scott Andrews (Assistant City Administrator), Ken Suddreth (Director of Community Development), Richard Garland (Director of Parks and Rec), Jennifer Bennett (Director of Community Relations), Ashley Youmans (Management Fellow), Christy Ullman (Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Council), and Tina M. Monaghan (Deputy City Clerk)*

**Mayor Max Bacon called the Pre-Council Meeting to Order at 6:00 PM.**

**City Administrator Report**

City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones asked Assistant City Administrator Scott Andrews to speak about some updates and changes regarding Keep Smyrna Beautiful (KSB).

Mr. Andrews said that there has been confusion in the past between the City Department division of Keep Smyrna Beautiful and the non-profit organization with the same name including checks going to the wrong area which causes accounting issues. The suggestion was to change the City Department to a different name such as Department of Environmental Services and Programs.

Councilmember Blackburn wanted more information as to why the name change was necessary. Councilmember Fennel, Chair of the Finance Committee, explained that it is an effort to add clarity to avoid financial confusion as has occurred in the past. People thought that they were writing a check to one division but wound up sending it to the other and so on.

Mayor Bacon inquired as to the possible new name which is Department of Environmental Services and how this suggestion was going over. He had concerns it was going to cause confusion when people were trying to contact someone in regards to other environmental issues.

Councilmember Charles "Corkey" Welch said that he sees the logic in the name change but wants to make sure whatever name is chosen, will properly reflect the department.

Mayor Bacon stated that the decision did not have to be made right away but doesn't want it to turn into a long, drawn out process. He also wants to make sure it does not require an ordinance change since the department has a specific name in the Code of Ordinances.

Mr. Scott Andrews let everyone know that the name change should not cost anything and that there is no building name change required.

After meeting with Ms. Janet Liberman, Director of Keep Smyrna Beautiful, Mr. Andrews said that she will be requesting that an additional car charging station be added in the City at a cost of \$2000 a year for five years in the upcoming budget. Ms. Blackburn stated that Georgia Power is currently offering incentives for installation of those types of charging stations.

In other KSB news, Mr. Andrews shared that there is an interest in moving the outdoor market to the circle drive around the fountain from the grassy area by the Community Center where it was in 2018. The vendors would be lining the sidewalk and no traffic would be blocked as a result of the new set up.

Councilmember Blustein inquired about having it on the steps in front the Community Center. Mr. Richard Garland expressed concern that placing it there would block people from entering and leaving the Community Center for scheduled events that usually take place on Saturdays.

Councilmember Susan Wilkinson expressed her concern that the new set up would impede the flow of traffic.

Ms. Blustein recommended reserving the first ten parking spots where employees normally park, for the elderly that like to shop the outdoor market but are not able to walk long distances. Mr. Garland stated that he thinks it is a good idea to have all staff park in the auxiliary parking lot not just on market days, but on a regular basis.

The Mayor inquired about having it at Taylor Brawner Park although it may not get the desired visibility there.

Ms. Wilkinson thought that the market should be held in front of City Hall which would draw people to the downtown. Ms. Blustein stated that location would not offer any visibility from Atlanta Road.

Mayor Bacon suggested giving the proposed location a try and the majority agreed with him.

Assistant City Administrator Andrews spoke of the progress on the green house which included the completion of the asbestos survey and that demolition was set to occur in the next three weeks.

Ms. Wilkinson asked for clarification on the demolition since she was under the impression that there was no formal decision made to demolish the green house. Mr. Fennel explained that the structure was not usable and in very poor condition. Mayor Bacon added that it made sense to move forward with the demolition.

Smyrna Museum Board updates included the fact that they received their 501c3 status and progress on the building is moving along.

Councilmember Tim Gould wanted to know if they were receiving enough help in emptying the museum so that construction work can begin. Mr. Andrews informed that two interns have been a huge help in getting things organized and moved around for the Public Works Department.

Smyrna Fire Station 2 is working on the final touches for a grand opening including pressure washing the outside per the Mayor's request. Some of the furniture was moved into the building the week before.

Special Projects Coordinator Maxwell Ruppertsberg had recently returned from medical leave. Mr. Scott Andrews thanked Management Fellow Ashley Youmans for the terrific job she did filling in for Mr. Ruppertsberg in his absence.

Ms. Saddler Jones reminded everyone to buy their tickets for the Dancing with the Smyrna Stars event which will take place on January 19, 2019. Councilmember Blackburn and Assistant City Administrator Scott Andrews are participating as dancers and Mayor Bacon is going to be a judge.

### **Review of the Agenda for the January 7, 2019 Council Meeting**

Mayor Bacon announced that there was a change and that Michael Cason will be leading invocation.

Councilmember Maryline Blackburn inquired as to the Recreate Smyrna logo and whether to not it was still alright for the Parks and Rec Department to continue using that particular logo. She wanted to know if it was part of the vote for the Master Plan. Ms. Saddler Jones was going to have Jennifer Bennett add it to the City's Brand Book as an update.

Ms. Jennifer Bennett stated that it can be added to the Brand Book but she thought it was only temporary to be used in conjunction with the Master Plan.

The Mayor reminded everyone that both Police and Fire created their own additions to the logo without prior Council approval so he did not see the need for it to be voted on for Parks and Rec Department.

Ms. Blackburn said that she felt any changes should go through Ms. Bennett since she is responsible for the Branding Book so she can at least have some say so in the matter.

Mr. Garland asked permission from City Administrator Saddler Jones to utilize the Master Plan logo and she didn't see it as a problem since the plan was going to be approved.

Ms. Wilkinson felt that once the plan was approved, the logo was no longer needed.

Ms. Bennett gave some background information about the Police and Fire logos that were created aside from what was included in the Branding Book. She said that she will get together with Mr. Garland in reference to size and details of the logo to be added into the Brand Book.

Ms. Wilkinson asked if the Parks and Rec Commission had recommended adoption of the Master Plan.

Mayor Bacon asked if the Parks and Rec Council Committee had approved the plan which it had.

Each item on the agenda was read aloud by the Mayor and he gave opportunity for comments and discussion.

When going through the consent agenda, the Mayor asked if all of the changes had been made that were discussed at the Committee of the Whole meeting. Ms. Bennett assured everyone that the changes were made.

Ms. Blustein wanted to know how the mural discussion came about at the Committee of the Whole meeting. Mayor Bacon explained that any mural would have to go through the Downtown Development Authority and he feels that it would violate guidelines put in place when the area was designed.

Mr. Welch said a lot of small towns have murals on old walls but not generally on newer structures. He does not feel comfortable doing something permanent such as a mural.

Mr. Fennel stated that art can be a good thing but he does not think that the mural is a good idea in the proposed location. He is a supporter of the arts and has loaned pieces to be displayed in the Administration Conference Room at City Hall. He does not like the permanence of a mural.

Ms. Blustein suggested something temporary rather than a permanent piece on a wall. She used the example of the trashcans which were painted in various themes sometime back.

Ms. Blackburn felt that it would be beautiful and a wonderful addition to the City.

Mr. Andrews supports the arts and would like to see something even if it is done on a removable surface.

Ms. Wilkinson added that she likes the look of murals but doesn't think the downtown area is the place for one. She suggested perhaps adding sculpture in the grassy area to integrate art in the downtown area.

A brief discussion was had about the painted pianos around the City. They were donated to the Parks and Rec Department and are moveable and temporary rather than permanent and affixed as a mural would be.

Councilmember Ron Fennel spoke about a neighborhood called Buckland Oaks located across from Whitfield Academy that is interested in potentially annexing into the City. He will be hosting an informational town hall meeting in the near future to help those seeking more information. Mayor Bacon suggested that everything be run through the City Administrator's office.

Mr. Fennel announced that the Whitfield Academy eclipsed the 23 million mark of fundraising so they can now begin construction on a new building which will replace the smaller one already in existence.

The City has been in talks with the County about East/West Connector signage and Mr. Fennel said that there has been forward progress although it may require some annexation of part of the Heritage Park property.

Mr. Welch wanted to know how much of the City area is by the East/West Connector. Mr. Fennel stated that it stretches along Wards 4 and 7 as well as part of Ward 6.

Ms. Wilkinson read the information from the Code of Ordinances regarding the Parks and Rec Commission for clarification in regards to their duties and how they should have been more involved in the Master Plan process.

Mr. Norton reiterated the fact that the Master Plan is just a guide regardless of who is utilizing the document to fulfill their duties.

Mayor Bacon feels that the Parks and Rec Commission has a lot of power including have a say so on the budget but they have not been very aggressive and rarely meet. He feels that they need to step up into their duties.

It is the opinion of Ms. Wilkinson that they should act alongside of the Parks and Rec Department much as the two facets of Keep Smyrna Beautiful do and the Mayor agreed.

Ms. Wilkinson felt obligated to reach out and notify her constituents of the possibility of a skate park at Cobb Park. She stated that the feedback she has received has been overwhelmingly against a skate park in that location.

Ms. Blackburn stated that the upcoming meeting is just a meeting to gather information.

While realizing that it is just a meeting, Ms. Wilkinson felt that people had a right to know and therefore she suggested that they come to the meeting and share their feelings during public input.

The Mayor received some emails in regards to Cobb Park and decided to respond because he felt that too much misinformation was circulating in regards to a skate park in the City.

Mr. Gould inquired as to whether or not the City had actually designed plans for a skate park.

Ms. Wilkinson stated that Mr. Garland sent her a skate park plan back in December that was created by a citizen. She also said that Mr. Garland specifically told her that Cobb Park was the intended park for the skate park and that he recommended the park for its layout and the possibility of CBDG funding.

Mayor Bacon made it clear that he has never seen any plans in regards to a skate park.

City Administrator Saddler Jones had met with Mr. Garland and discussed looking into other options for placement of a skate park.

The Mayor wanted to know specifically what Ward the park was located. Ms. Blackburn stated that the park is in her Ward. Ms. Wilkinson stated that some of the neighborhoods that use the park are in her Ward.

Ms. Blackburn feels that there was no point in giving information until more detailed information is had.

According to correspondence received by the Mayor, people were told that trees were being cut down and playgrounds were being removed for a skate park.

For clarification, Ms. Wilkinson restated what she had told her constituents when reaching out to them in regards to the skate park.

The Mayor mentioned looking into adopting some sort of ordinance prohibiting distribution of plastic straws similar to what was done in California.

**Mayor Bacon adjourned the Pre-Council Meeting at 6:56 PM.**