



City of Smyrna

A. Max Bacon City Hall
2800 King Street
Smyrna, Georgia 30080

Meeting Minutes - Final Committee of the Whole Work Session

Thursday, October 28, 2021

6:00 PM

City Hall

Roll Call

Present 8 - Mayor Derek Norton, Councilmember Glenn Pickens, Councilmember Travis Lindley, Councilmember Austin Wagner, Councilmember Charles Welch, Councilmember Susan Wilkinson, Mayor pro tem / Councilmember Tim Gould, and Councilmember Lewis Wheaton

Also Present 1 - Jeffrey Tucker

Staff 11 - Joe Bennett, Kristin Robinson, Roy Acree, Russell Martin, Jodi Mills, Bo Jones, Carol Sicard, Mark Binicewicz, Heather Peacon-Corn, Jill Head, and Tyler Addison

1. Call to Order

Mayor Derek Norton called the October 28, 2021 meeting of the Committee of the Whole to order at 6:00 PM.

2. New Business

A. [COW21-87](#) 2022 Employee Benefits Recommendations and Presentation by John Knop, Broker, Oakbridge - HR Director, Carol Sicard

Mr. John Knop of Oakbridge Insurance presented the Employee Benefit Renewal Presentation.

OPEN ENROLLMENT 2022 Items to Review:

- Anthem and Stop Loss
- Rx (ProCare, ElectRx and Veracity)- \$10 (current) to \$12 PEPM (2022)
- Ancillary Carrier Quotes (City wants to decrease dental rates and decrease STD elimination period)
- Health Equity (Health Savings Account for CDHP) \$2.95 PEPM (employer paid-current and 2022 – no contract)
- Flexible Spending Account (Dependent Care and Health Care) with Discovery Benefits/WEX
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through Guardian
- Health Advocate

(Please see attachment on C.O.W. Agenda of 10/28/2021)

Notes:

With the Stop Loss Quote, there will be a no additional cost to the employee contributions for the second year in a row.

Bariatric Surgery will now be covered under a bariatric rider beginning in 2022.

Carol provided some clarification as to how the conversation was started with an employee.

Discussion was had regarding the prescriptions and the formulary and controlling the costs of particular drugs.

Quotes were requested from the following carriers:

- Ameritas
- Guardian (Incumbent)
- Lincoln
- Met Life
- Mutual of Omaha
- Standard
- Unum (Declined to Quote)

Dental, Vision Life and Disability were also reviewed.

HR Director Carol Sicard spoke about the wellness benefit as well as the disability benefit. She reviewed the cost savings to the employees who use the CHP Wellness.

The following is the overview:

What stays the same?

- Anthem/Blue Cross will remain the medical provider.
 - o Our current HMO HIGH (\$500 deductible), HMO BASE (\$1,000 deductible), PPO, and Consumer Driven Health Plan (CDHP) options will be offered with NO RATE INCREASE!
- Spousal Surcharge (\$100/mo.)
 - o This only applies to employees whose spouse has health insurance available through their own employer but opts to be on the City's insurance instead.
- AFLAC and Colonial supplemental plans will be available.
- Veracity Rx will remain for our Prescription Drug program
 - o Co-pays remain at no increase
 - o Preferred pharmacy program
 - ☐ \$25 co-pay differential for non-preferred pharmacies
 - o Pharmacist Concierge Services for
 - ☐ International formulary
 - ☐ Specialty Medications
- CHP will be our wellness vendor for 2022. The wellness discount is a \$105 monthly reduction of your health insurance cost.

What changes will you see?

- Guardian
 - o Dental AND vision rates have DECREASED. On ALL tiers of coverage! Dental annual max increased to \$1,750.
 - o Guardian will now be our provider for Basic Life, AD&D, and Short/Long Term Disability!
 - ☐ Short Term Disability waiting period is now 14 DAYS instead of 29!
- HSA IRS maximum contributions increase to \$3,650 for employee only and \$7,300 Employee +1 and Family.
- FSA IRS maximum increase by \$100 to \$2,850 annually.
- 457b maximum contribution increase to \$20,500 annually.

B. [COW21-81](#)

Civic Ready Discussion - Fire Chief Roy Acree

Fire Chief Roy Acree reviewed Civic Ready. This is the mass notification system that we have used internally for the last 45 days and now we will use the attached PDF to get notifications from citizens.

An electronic PDF will be sent to Mayor and Council for usage in notifying constituents.

Councilmember Corkey Welch asked what the relation was to See, Click, Fix. These all work in conjunction with each other. These are opt in services.

C. [COW21-85](#)

Review of Annual Leave Sell Back Policy

Finance Director Kristin Robinson spoke about the previous policy regarding annual leave sell back. Due to COVID, we have many employees unable to use annual leave time and now in 2021 there is additional accrual.

In order to remove some time from the books, staff recommends a one time 40 hour sell back if you have 120 hours on the books as of November 1, 2021. Additionally information will be provided as to the timing of the issuance of the payout.

There was discussion regarding having 80 hours on the books as of November 1 instead of 120.

The Council is in favor of this request and wants Ms. Robinsons to clarify the numbers prior to the vote on Monday.

3. Review of the November 1, 2021 Mayor and Council Agenda

A. [COW21-83](#) Review of the November 1, 2021 Mayor and Council Meeting Agenda.

Mayor Norton reviewed the agenda with staff present and allowed for them to present their items first as follows:

City Engineer Eric Randall spoke about item 6A under formal business and stated The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) requires local jurisdictions with Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permits to adopt ordinances, or update existing ordinances when necessary, for compliance with their MS4 permit, in order to address development and redevelopment, and enforce post-construction controls. Recent updates to the MS4 permit now require the stormwater management system to be designed to retain the first 1.0 inch of rainfall on the site, to the maximum extent practicable, and has prompted an update to existing ordinances.

Mr. Randall recommends approval of Ordinance ORD2021-19, to amend Section V, an ordinance of the City of Smyrna Mayor and City Council, "STORMWATER MANAGEMENT" of the code of Ordinances, as Amended, to delete Article V, Section 46-140 to 46-148 in its entirety, including any amendments thereto, and replace it with new a Article V, "STORMWATER MANAGEMENT" to repeal conflicting provisions; and for other purposes, and authorize the Mayor to sign and execute all related documents.

Councilmember Corkey Welch asked about detention ponds and Mr. Randall spoke about us working through the 750+ detention ponds in the City and working with EPD to manage.

Assistant Public Works Director Paul Osburn spoke about item 6B. This is a request from Public Works to amend ordinance 102-48 (I) Currently section 102-48 (I) requires water distribution system main lines to be ductile iron pipe class 51. Public Works is requesting to change material to Class 350 ductile iron pipe from 51 matching Cobb County specs along with amending verbiage to add to existing ordinances stating that the Director of Public Works and or Environmental Inspector may shall change class of pipe and size if deemed necessary.

The newly adopted amendment will include the following if adopted by Mayor and Council.

(I) Main Lines.

Water Distribution system main lines shall be ductile iron pipe class 350. Minimum pipe size shall be eight inches. Director of Public Works and or Environmental Inspector may approve change in materials and sizes. Fire hydrants shall be installed according to current NFPA standards but shall be spaced no more than 500 feet apart. The city fire marshal may modify hydrant spacing. All hydrants shall be M&H or U.S. three-way, nozzles sizes two, 2 ½-inch NTS and one 4 ½-inch NTS. Hydrant barrel

size shall be a minimum of 5.25. New hydrants are required to be painted silver by the manufacturer. Each hydrant shall have an M&H hydrant grate valve installed with complete valve box and concrete valve pad to finish grade. No fire hydrant shall be buried below the hydrants bury line. Anchor couplings and thrust blocking is required on all fire hydrants and hydrant leads.

Public Works and staff recommend approval of Ordinance ORD2021-21, to amend Section 102-48 (I), an ordinance of the City of Smyrna Mayor and Council, "MAIN LINES" of the code of Ordinances, as amended, currently section 102-48 (I) requires water distribution system main lines to be ductile iron pipe class 51. Public Works is requesting to change material to Class 350 ductile iron pipe from 51 matching Cobb County specs along with amending verbiage to add to existing ordinances stating that the Director of Public Works and/or Environmental Inspector may shall change class of pipe and size if deemed necessary and authorize the Mayor to sign and execute all related documents.

City Attorney Jeffrey Tucker clarified that as the ordinance is written it is specified as to the type of material and this change allows staff to use a comparable material in lieu of the recent construction material shortages.

Mr. Osburne continued and spoke about item 6F under formal business. This is a request for approval to award RFQ 22-013 City wide resurfacing project re-bid to Baldwin Paving, 1014 Kenmill Drive NW, Marietta, GA, 30060, in the amount of \$870,326.46

(\$425,936.37 LMIG and \$444,390.09 SPLOST) for paving and resurfacing of four City streets (Campbell Road, North Cooper Lake Road, Camp Highland Road and Hawthorne Avenue).

The City of Smyrna requested bids for various resurfacing projects per the City's time frame. Three (3) bids were received. Please see bid tabulation below:

Baldwin Paving - \$1,183,061.29

MHB Paving Inc. - \$1,191,072.42

PLB Construction Services - \$1, 326,899.25

Due to budget limitations, we requested line-item pricing from the low bidder to complete four roads (Campbell Road, North Cooper Lake Road, Camp Highland Road and Hawthorne Avenue). The total for this work is \$870,326.46.

Mayor Norton clarified that this is the rebid from the company in Missouri. Assistant Public Works Director Bo Jones noted that the other roads previously on the Donelson Construction list will be added to next years LMIG.

Councilmember Corkey Welch asked about the remaining streets and spoke about the resurfacing line item as a SPLOST line item.

Mr. Jones noted that the cost of paving increased by approximately \$40,000 but the LMIG was not increased.

Councilmember Wilkinson asked about the roads not included and those were reviewed by Mr. Jones.

Item F under Consent replaces Deputy City Administrator Penny Moceri with Assistant City Administrator Bo Jones on the License and Variance Board.

Jodi Mills, Parks and Rec Sr. Program Coordinator, Jodi Mills spoke about item H under consent to approve the road closures for the Home for the Holidays Event. Requested street closings are to ensure a safe environment for this Smyrna Parks and Recreation family event. Local school groups will start performing at 5:00 pm. The groups will be performing on W. Spring St between Spectrum and The Vineyard. We will also have school groups performing on W. Spring St between Edward Jones and therapy place. The annual tree lighting will take place in front of city hall. Along with

the performances previously stated, we will have performances in front of the tree after it is lit. This is an annual event put on by the Smyrna Parks and Recreation Department to kick off the holiday festivities.

Mayor Norton continued to review the agenda:

Poppy Day in recognition of Veteran's Day.

Community Development Director Rusty Martin spoke about the support of the ARC for the CObb Parkway Pedestrian Bridge.

The concept of a safe, coordinated pedestrian crossing over Cobb Parkway/US-41 north of I-285 was first identified as a project need through the Cumberland Community Improvement District (CID) Blueprint Cumberland 3.0 Master Plan, adopted by the Community Improvement District Board of Directors in 2017.

The City of Smyrna developed and adopted the Spring Road Corridor Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Plan, which echoed a need for an alternative pedestrian crossing of the parkway, as well as in Guide Smyrna, the City's Comprehensive Plan also updated in 2017 and the City has previously committed 2022 SPLOST Transportation Improvements Program funding, in an amount not to exceed \$3,680,000.00 for the construction of the Cobb Parkway/US 41 pedestrian bridge.

The Atlanta Regional Commission conducts an annual solicitation for project funding proposals in its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which allocates federal funds for use in the construction of the highest-priority projects in the Regional Transportation Plan with applications for the 2021 solicitation due by December 2, 2021.

The Cumberland Community Improvement District (CCID) desires to submit a TIP project funding proposal for the Cobb Parkway Pedestrian Bridge reduce its potential cost and streamline its implementation that the City of Smyrna City Council supports the Cumberland Community Improvement District's submission the Cobb Parkway Pedestrian Bridge to the Atlanta Regional Commission's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Item D. In order to improve the City's ability to communicate with its citizens, the City has been evaluating several potential software solutions. One potential product is SeeClickFix which is a smart phone app that allows citizens to send requests to the City directly from the phone with geographic data and optionally pictures of issues. This then creates work flows to insure that the request is properly resolved and updates the citizen when it is completed. In order to allow us to fully evaluate the product, CivicPlus is offering the first year free of charge.

Councilmember Corkey Welch is concerned about whether it will be used or not. Cobb County is currently not forwarding information submitted to the City that they receive via the County's App.

Item E is regarding the approval of the proposed agreement and scope of work with the Atlanta Regional Commission for technical assistance in the development of the 5-Year update to the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) requires a 5-year update to the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The Atlanta Region Commission (ARC) provides technical assistance to local communities for the development of the 5-year update free of charge. The 5-year update to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan is due to be drafted, reviewed/approved by DCA, and locally adopted, by October 31, 2022.

Georgia DCA requires that the Atlanta Regional Commission develop a basic agreement on the scope of work when engaging with a local government to update its

Plan. Attached is a proposed agreement and scope of work. It outlines the division of responsibilities between ARC and the City.

As part of the scope of work for the 5-year update, ARC will check on and update the Needs and Opportunities, Vision/Goals, and Key Elements (like land use, transportation, housing, economic development, etc) of the City's Comprehensive Plan. In general, ARC will facilitate three steering committee meetings, one public meeting, and a project website (if requested) that can include a survey. Also, ARC will be available to present at the two DCA-required hearings if requested (one at kickoff and one before transmittal for review).

It will not be as elaborate as the previous version.

Item G - Authorization to abandon the area in Land Lot 594 of the 17th District, 2nd Section, Cobb County formerly described as Elizabeth Street Extension but never built or dedicated to the City of Smyrna, and Quit Claim whatever interest of the City (if any) to the adjacent property owners to the center line and authorize staff to sign and execute all related documents. Decades ago, Elizabeth Street Extension was contemplated to be built but never was and was never dedicated to the city. This has never been part of the public road system but is shown on some old plats and is referenced in deeds. Although the area where the road was to be located was never dedicated to the city, the plats and deed references could cause potential title issues. The adjacent property owners have requested that the city release whatever interest it has (if any) in the strip, through quit claim deed to the adjoining owners to the center line of the area that was originally contemplated to be a road. This is consistent with city policy.

City Attorney Jeffrey Tucker reviewed this item and discussion with the owners making the request.

Discussion was started regarding item J under consent related to Police Department retention. This item is for authorization to implement the pay study from the Carl Vinson Institute specific to the Police Department to increase officer starting pay and address compression in Police Administration. This will be funded by General Fund reserves.

The City is currently working the Carl Vinson Institute of Government on a Classification and Compensation Study. We anticipate receipt of City wide recommendations in January 2022 that will be brought to Council for consideration. Due to the shortages we are currently facing in Police, Administration, Finance, and Human Resources, we felt that we needed to address the immediate need. We asked the Carl Vinson Institute to do a breakout of the Police Department and analyze where the City was in respect to other jurisdictions. As part of this process, they looked at DCA submissions and also contacted these organizations for updates to the pay amounts reported earlier this year. The Carl Vinson Institute also applied an aging factor to the amounts to get them more in line with where we are now. They found the City was lagging the market and that we were still one of the lowest paid even after the 4% grade adjustment made a few weeks ago. They also confirmed that we had compression problems in our Police Department.

The Carl Vinson Institute has presented the City with a plan to address starting pay and compression based on these findings. Please note, the full study will be completed and we anticipate further police specific adjustments to come forward in January; this is just a measure to put the City of Smyrna in a more competitive position.

There are 87 employees that were part of this specific study. Of these 87 employees, 35 employees will receive adjustments to the new grade minimums which will be approximately \$94,000. Of these same 87 employees, it was found that 66 of them

needed compression related adjustments of approximately \$150,000.

We are recommending that Council make these new pay rate adjustments effective on the pay period beginning November 15, 2021.

City Administrator and Public Safety Director Joe Bennett made a presentation regarding the issues with the differences in pay ranges as compared to other City's in Cobb County.

Bureau of Labor Statistics shows the annual mean wage in Atlanta metro area as \$51,350 and we are significantly less than the Metro average.

Ms. Sicard also reviewed the information upcoming in the Comprehensive Study and the interview process that is underway. This level of detail is what we can expect to see as a result of the Study.

Councilmember Welch asked if we can expect the same kind of increases across the Board with all departments and the consensus was yes.

Mayor Norton said we need to use the surplus to bring staff up to standard.

This item will go to vote on Monday, November 8, 2021.

Mayor Norton asked about the sanitation adjustments and short term incentives and if they were working. Ms. Robinson replied that moral and staffing has improved.

Greg Teague of Croy spoke about the E-SPLOST on the upcoming ballot. There will be a new elementary school in the South Cobb area as well as another career academy in the northern portion of the County as well as maintenance and upgrades to existing facilities.

4. Other Business (as needed)

Councilmember Lewis Wheaton spoke about the loss of his father and spoke about his appreciation for the letter, cards, calls and texts.

He wanted to remark about his removal from his normal he was aware of needing to encourage all of the Council to work from the same page and have good communication whether it be bad, good or indifferent. He has concerns and frustrations regarding decisions made as a body. There has to be trust amongst the Council and communicate with honesty.

Councilmember Corkey Welch asked about the abandoned Google Fiber Huts.

A. [COW21-61](#)

City Administrator's Project Review / Updates.

Mr. Bennett reviewed the weekly report items.

Ms. Robinson spoke about the water / sewer matching grant will be submitted tomorrow.

The public safety \$1000 is being worked on to be dispersed to the public safety employees.

We received the bids on Commercial sanitation and they will be bring a recommendation in November.

A drop box in Ward 7 will be added to Fire Station 5 for Utility, Court , tax payments.

Mayor Norton spoke about the upcoming Aunt Fanny;s cabin discussion on Monday.

5. Executive Session (as needed)

6. Adjournment

Mayor Derek Norton adjourned the October 28, 2021 meeting of the Committee of the Whole at 7:48 PM.