



City of Smyrna

2800 King Street
Smyrna, Georgia 30080

Meeting Minutes - Final Committee of the Whole

Thursday, May 28, 2020

6:00 PM

Magnolia Room, Smyrna Community Center

**Smyrna Community Center Magnolia Room / 200 Village Green Circle SE
Parking and entrance to meeting on Powder Springs Street Side of Building via Service
Entrance
MASKS REQUIRED / TEMPERATURE WILL BE CHECKED**

Roll Call

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

Also Present 1 - Scott Cochran

Staff 13 - Tammi Saddler Jones, Roy Acree, Jennifer Bennett, Richard Garland, Robert Harvey, Penny Moceri, Kristin Robinson, Carol Sicard, Jered Sigmon, Ashley White, Kevin Moore, Landon O'Neal, and Tina Monaghan

1. Call to Order

Mayor Derek Norton called the May 28, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2. New Business

A. Smyrna Arts Council Project - Lisa Hawk

Ms. Lisa Hawk, a member of the Smyrna Arts Council was in attendance to present the idea of participating in a fence gallery exhibition. The City of Marietta has previously participated in this kind of exhibit and it was quite successful. The intention is to do this in January/February 2021 but they wanted to put it before Mayor and Council now so that the planning could begin well in advance. There are a little over 100 selections to choose from and it would up to the city to use as many or as little as they thought would be needed. This is an outdoor exhibit so placement that would maximize visibility would need to be discussed. Cobb Travel and Tourism promoted the event last year when Marietta did it and will continue to do so this year.

Mayor and Council all seem to agree that this is a wonderful idea and a great way to bring the arts to Smyrna.

B. FY2021 Proposed Budget - Kristin Robinson / Jered Sigmon

Finance Director Kristin Robinson explained that there were no changes to the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget since the presentation at the May 18, 2020 Mayor and Council meeting. The legally required public hearing had been held although the plan is to allow people to speak at the upcoming Mayor and Council meeting as well. Final approval of the FY 2021 budget will be on the June 1, 2020 Mayor and Council meeting agenda.

C. Proposed Code of Conduct for Elected Officials - Councilmember Travis Lindley

Councilmember Travis Lindley brought the information forward regarding the Council Code of Conduct. This type of document was last visited by the city back in 1977. He felt that the city should have something in place that shows the dedication and focus on ethics and transparency of Mayor and Council. The draft was based on research from other cities but came primarily by way of a template from the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA). Management Fellow Landon O'Neal, City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones, and City Attorney Scott Cochran all worked with Councilmember Lindley on this ordinance. The intention is to move forward and have this voted on at the June 1, 2020 Mayor and Council meeting.

Councilmember Wilkinson expressed concern over what she considered to be confusing wording. She felt that the wording restricted her ability to represent the people in her Ward.

City Attorney Scott Cochran reviewed the document and addressed any concerns that came up.

It was the consensus to support the document and add it to the upcoming agenda.

D. Temporary Sign Permit Extension

City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones gave some insight into the sign permit fee and how waiving it has really helped businesses during this difficult time. The goal is to extend the no fee period through August 31st and then assess again at the time. This allows businesses to put up temporary signs letting patrons know that they are open.

3. Review of the June 1, 2020 Mayor and Council Agenda

Item 4A will be tabled to the June 15, 2020 Mayor and Council meeting.

Special Projects Coordinator Penny Moceri provided Mayor and Council with background information on the Smart Cities Challenge Grant. The maximum amount of the grant is \$100,000 and this would require a \$25,000 match from the City. This money will come out of the contingency line item. The ordinance shows the city's willingness to provide the match so that the grant process can move forward. This

grant will go toward a walk ability/bike ability micro transit project in the Oakdale Road area.

Councilmember Charles "Corkey" Welch volunteered to serve on the Water Authority beginning in August when Mr. Max Bacon's four year term expires. An elected official from each of the cities serves on the board and Mr. Welch has knowledge and experience in that field to bring to the table.

4. Other Business (as needed)

Mayor Derek Norton reviewed the recent updates to the State COVID requirements as issued by Governor Kemp including that the group size went from 10 to 25, bars and nightclubs can now open with restrictions, professional and amateur sports may open with restrictions, the Shelter in Place Order is still set to expire on June 12th, and the Declaration of Emergency has been extended through July 12th. The Mayor explained some recent changes to Cobb County SPLOST. The predicted revenue amount was reduced and to account for that, all projects on the city's list were reduced by 7.04%. Cobb County Commissioners passed the SPLOST to go on the November ballot in a 5-0 vote. Cobb County also approved an amount received from the CARES Act to be reserved to help out small businesses in the form of a grant. Mayor Norton concluded by informing everyone that the city received notice that Zagster was pulling out and closing down which means that city will be without a bike service.

Councilmember Austin Wagner would like to see a portal on the City's website similar to the one that can be found on the Cobb County website where people can view all of the state mandated financial reporting forms of the elected officials. Mr. Wagner recently had someone contact him about Air BnB requirements for the city. He would like to see something the specifies regulations and ways to enforce said regulations. The last item on his list was asking for an explanation of how the cancelling and rescheduling of meetings is done. He wanted to see the Special Called Planning and Zoning meeting on the agenda to be voted on.

Councilmember Travis Lindley spoke of the possibility of Tillman House assisting with filling the holes in the food assistance service meant to make sure that children are receiving food as they would in school. He is continuing to work with City Engineer Kevin Moore on traffic calming solutions and would like to see a new draft of the list of areas that require attention and the possible solutions.

Councilmember Charles "Corkey" Welch said he wanted to make sure that those who had water leaks for one reason or another are not penalized for something beyond their control. Finance Director Kristin Robinson explained that there is a policy in place which takes the overages down to the lowest rate and is calculated based on an average of previous bills. Councilmember Gould asked for a written procedure to help guide citizens that contact them about things like water leaks. Something that helps explain the steps to take when dealing with a leak or even a problem with the bill. Mr. Welch was made aware of a problem with people receiving refunds for fees from the soccer association even though the season has been cancelled. He asked that this be looked into to make sure that citizens are not being taken advantage of.

Councilmember Tim Gould wants to see some further discussion about budget friendly, short term solutions to help with traffic calming and pedestrian safety. He was

contacted by the families of 8th graders at both middle schools to see if some sort of celebration could be arranged since COVID caused the cancellation of the graduation ceremonies at both schools. This would be for rising 9th graders that completed 8th grade at either one of the two middle schools that serves the City of Smyrna.

Councilmember Susan Wilkinson commented on how she has been hearing a lot of complaints about pedestrian safety. She hopes that things will continue to move forward and that solutions will be put in place to address these concerns. Ms. Wilkinson concluded her comments by announcing that it was her birthday.

Councilmember Lewis Wheaton had heard that residents within a two mile radius of the Sterigenics Plant were being offered a discount on their County property taxes. Ms. Kristin Robinson read aloud an email that she had received in regards to this. There is also an area in Ward 7 where there is a patch of roadway in need of paving. The problems are being caused by drainage issues. The neighborhood would like to see the city solve the drainage problem and then they will cover the costs of paving. Mr. Wheaton would like to see increased police presence as well as plans for improved infrastructure on some of the residential roads that have become high traffic and dangerous and are unable to safely handle the amount of cars that use these routes on a daily basis.

City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones read aloud a list of positions currently open in the City that Department Heads are asking to fill as soon as possible. Most are already existing positions that are just vacant and there are a few that are new. She asked Mayor and Council to review the list and then it would be brought back for further discussion.

5. Adjournment

Councilmember Charles "Corkey" Welch made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 7:47 PM to discuss real estate. Councilmember Travis Lindley seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Councilmember Travis Lindley made a motion to close Executive Session and return to regular session. Councilmember Lewis Wheaton seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole was adjourned by Mayor Derek Norton at 8:05pm.