



City of Smyrna

2800 King Street
Smyrna, Georgia 30080

Meeting Minutes - Final Committee of the Whole

Thursday, June 15, 2017

6:00 PM

City Hall

Roll Call

Council: Mayor Max Bacon, Teri Anulewicz, Andrea Blustein, Ron Fennel, Derek Norton, Corkey Welch, Doug Stoner, Susan Wilkinson

Staff: Tammi Saddler Jones (City Administrator), Scott Cochran (City Attorney), Christiana Craddock (Executive Assistant to the City Administrator), Christy Ullman (Executive Assistant to Mayor and Council), Terri Graham (City Clerk), Ken Suddreth (Community Development Director), Kristin Robinson (Finance Director), Jered Sigmon (Budget Officer), Richard Garland (Parks & Rec Director), Scott Stokes (Public Works Director), Jodi Mills (Parks Senior Program Coordinator), Theresa Galletta (Parks Facility Events Coordinator), and Maxwell Ruppensburg (Government Management Fellow).

Guests: Jim Croy, Don Hicks, and Larry Terry (Croy Engineering); Carlos Perez (Perez Planning)

Call to Order

Mayor Bacon called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

City Administrator Report

Administration Update

City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones gave her Administrator Report and informed Council of a new email address set up exclusively for their use regarding service requests, citizen complaints, and other action items. She said this will help her to more efficiently execute tasks and keep them organized to insure follow-through. The next item she shared was the creation of an e-newsletter from the City Administrator's office to begin in July. Updates were given on the Market Village Pedestrian Crosswalk, Concord Road Linear Park, and the Fire Station 2 temporary signage and location site. She completed her report by handing out the Summer Leave Calendar for key staff and reminded everyone of the Public Safety cookout on Friday at 11:30am.

Parks Master Plan Proposal - Perez Planning

Parks Director Richard Garland shared that seven different consulting groups presented proposals in response to the Parks Master Plan RFP, and the committee that was put together to review all the responses narrowed the list down to three consultants. These three were brought in for interviews and presentations, and the committee had unanimous support for Perez Planning to engage their services for this master plan. He said that Carlos Perez would be presenting to Council so they

can see the quality of effort that has been put into the process up to this point, with the hope that they will support taking the next step and begin the process of completing the master plan.

Mr. Carlos Perez began by saying his firm was based in midtown, and they specialize in parks system planning, and have done 80 master plans throughout the United States. He said he and his staff were passionate about parks, truly enjoy their work, and were looking forward to working with the City of Smyrna.

He said the purpose of the master plan is to analyze the parks system to see if the City is getting the best use out of its parks system, and it will also propose a realistic and financial implementable plan for now and in the future. He added that as the City was in the middle of updating its Comprehensive Plan, now was a good time to do this study as there are some potential land use considerations in the Comp Plan. He and his staff already spoke with residents and visited all the parks during the proposal process to find out what is working/not working. He said the plan would address where the City is today, where it is going tomorrow, and how it gets there, and the beginning piece of that will be analyzing the existing conditions and taking into consideration previously completed plans and other plans for the City. From that analysis, needs and priorities will be established through qualitative and quantitative information (data, industry standards, interviews, surveys, experience, etc.) He described an example of a public meeting and how they engage the public to maximize their input and time, and also touched on the project website that would be created to guide people through the process. In the final report, recommendations would be given for capital costs, operational costs, and a funding specialist will help identify various financial sources that can be leveraged with city funds to complete some of the recommendations.

Mayor Bacon asked how this study would be different from the previous study, and Mr. Perez said the previous study was a valuation of the existing system, with no vision or implementation on how to move forward – that is the big difference. They will be developing a custom vision and plan for the City. Councilmember Corkey Welch said he liked the scope and approach, but he does not want a repeat of what happened with the previous study, where they spent a lot of money and never did anything with the plan. Mayor Bacon said he wanted to hear from City Administrator Saddler Jones and Parks Director Richard Garland. Ms. Saddler Jones said she was extremely supportive of the proposal and was involved in the process from the beginning. She said that Perez Planning was head and shoulders above the rest and she is confident they will do good work for the City. Mr. Richard Garland said the plan will be a tremendously valuable tool for the City to have moving forward. He said the City is coming from a situation where the former director was in place for almost 3 decades, and then there was another director who was in place for a negligible amount of time, and now he is new and in place. He said there was no transition of knowledge or strategic operations, and he thinks it is important for the City to engage in the master plan process now so the Parks system has an implementable and systematic approach to the way it is developed. He said this study would give Council the tools they need to deal with citizen questions and it takes the City from a point of being reactionary to being proactive. From a fiscal standpoint, he said this plan would provide instruction and guidance on where the City should physically be spending money and where it should not. He echoed what Ms. Saddler Jones stated about Perez Planning being above the rest of the fray in that they are committed to a unique plan for Smyrna, not a cookie-cutter approach. He concluded by saying that Perez would be conducting statistically valid surveys, community meetings, and engaging a crowd sourcing website so there are multiple connection points for people to have a voice in this process. Councilmember Wilkinson asked for more information about the surveys and website.

Mr. Perez said the surveys will insure the responses match the demographics of the community, and will be mail-based. He said their goal is to match demographics and have a 95% level of confidence in the validity and accuracy of the responses, which is a big part of the process. He said anyone will be eligible to take the online survey. He added that cost implementation and considerations would also be considered up front so that they are not recommending in the final report items that are not feasible for the City.

Review of June 19, 2017 Mayor and Council Agenda

The first items reviewed were the privilege license requests. There was discussion about the first one, for Nam Dae Mun, located at the old Publix location on South Cobb Drive, and why this was coming before Mayor and Council since it was a previously licensed location. Community Development Director Ken Suddreth explained that they were trying to open soon, and they missed the cut-off for doing a change of agent through License and Variance Board (which has to be advertised for two weeks). He said allowing Mayor and Council to do it was the best way to handle it so they could open with no issues. There was discussion about the second privilege license for Wade's Place, and Councilmember Teri Anulewicz said their soft opening would be July 20th, and she had seen the menu which looks great.

Under Formal Business, the first item reviewed was for the adoption of the budget. Finance Director Kristin Robinson handed out the updated budget pages and said there had been no new changes since the June 5th meeting, and the six recommended positions were still in the budget. Councilmember Corkey Welch asked about the four communications positions that corresponded with the Powder Springs E-911 contract, and Ms. Robinson said they still had no word on that, but if the contract does not come to fruition, then those four positions will not be needed and will be removed. Mayor Bacon said he was good with the budget.

The next item was for the adoption of the South Cobb Corridor plan. Mayor Bacon said the City needed to make a commitment to the funding of their portion and said he wanted Council to take action on the study and not sit on it for several years. He said he prefers Council adopt the plan and move forward, but he would like a commitment for the City's funding first. He referenced a Councilmember saying that GDOT had "plenty of money, we just have to go get it," and he asked whoever has a connection down there to facilitate this process should the City choose to adopt and move forward. There was discussion about whether or not Council needed to pick one of the specific concepts in the study to adopt. Councilmember Doug Stoner said Council needed to adopt the study with all the recommended concepts and commit to specific funding and a plan at a later date, following further discussion and research. He added that two of the concepts had equal support from citizens, and the other more expensive concept had more staff support. He said it would be necessary to dig further before choosing one. Councilmember Ron Fennel asked when it would become obvious as to which path the City should pursue, and Councilmember Stoner replied that would depend on money and also what GDOT wants to support. He said the best plan is for City to adopt the study, then begin conversations with GDOT because it is their ROW and most of their money and gauge their interest on the three different concepts. There was discussion about Council's willingness to commit funds to the project for future use. Mayor Bacon said he had no problem adopting the study, but Council needed to be aware that by adopting it they are committing between \$2M-\$5M for the City's portion of the project and long-term upkeep. Councilmember Doug Stoner reiterated that the City has not yet made a financial commitment, and that this was just a study, and if the City does choose to move forward then they can commit the funds then. Councilmember Fennel said it was possible to use this project as a request for the 2022 SPLOST. Councilmember

Susan Wilkinson said all the concepts had multi-use trails, and perhaps the City could at least begin implementing the installation of those for pedestrian safety.

Councilmember Stoner said that when the City adopted the LCI study, they were not committing to do everything in the study. He said the studies provide difference scenarios for Council to consider and move forward with after talking to the State and see what options exist for funding assistance. He added that the corridor improvements could also be a phased project, beginning with multi-use trail and landscaping, and maybe the rest is done in a different phase. Councilmember Welch reminded Council they were talking about 1 mile in the City of Smyrna, and even if the City puts in a trail and a median and landscaping, the rest of South Cobb Drive will look the same. He asked the question – what about the rest of South Cobb Drive? Councilmember Fennel added that with the importance of the South Cobb and I285 interchange, GDOT would have an interest in a study and improvement at that location. Councilmember Welch said he would love to improve the entire corridor with bike paths and a median, but could the City potentially afford \$3M times 5 miles? Councilmember Fennel asked what the City was spending on Windy Hill Boulevard, and Mr. Don Hicks of Croy Engineering said \$42M. Councilmember Fennel said the South Cobb improvements would not require any purchase of ROW. Councilmember Wilkinson suggested picking the least expensive study and get started, but there was not consensus to do that.

The next item reviewed was the MOU for the Smyrna Museum. Councilmember Welch said that over 2 years ago it was suggested to Council that the City take over the operation of the museum. He said it took almost two years to get the MOU and plan together, but there was agreement now on how to move forward. He said they want to bring Brockington in to do an initial analysis of the museum and simultaneously have an employee in place to understand what they are doing and eventually take over as the museum curator/manager. He said there was discussion about this new position, and he said in his opinion this person would be full-time at about 30 hours/week. He said there would also be a process established for the City to get rid of an item, meaning that it has to be offered to the historical society or donor first, and then if they do not want it there would be a process to get rid of it. There was discussion about the display space and purging things that are not “Smyrna.” Councilmember Teri Anulewicz said many of the items were not curated and do not tell the story of Smyrna, and the point of the museum is to tell the story.

The next item was the proposal for Brockington to organize and catalog the museum in order to get it set up for the City to take over, and everyone was in agreement on that item.

The last item under Formal Business was the final agreement with Cobb County for Windy Hill Boulevard. The County approved the agreement on Tuesday, June 13th, and City Attorney Scott Cochran said the agreement only had few small tweaks that work to the City’s advantage.

Under the Consent Agenda there were bid awards for three replacement F450s for Public Works and a rear-loading garbage truck. The adoption of the Parks Master Plan proposal by Perez Planning was also on it, followed by the Reed House Site Plan bid award. The award was for \$246K, which was \$54K lower than what was budgeted for the site work, which included widening the circular driveway and chipped slate parking lot install. Councilmember Wilkinson asked if SPLOST was paying for it, and that was confirmed. There was discussion about the cost for the site work and if all the work was necessary. Mr. Richard Garland said Council did not have to adopt it, but due to fire code standards, if there is no parking lot, then the building cannot be occupied. Mayor Bacon said he wanted to meet with the fire

marshal office to talk about the driveway. Public Works Director Scott Stokes said that the contractor, Tucker Grading and Hauling, did the parking lot for Concord Road Linear Park and they did a good job. He said they can start immediately. Councilmember Wilkinson asked to see the site plan for the work.

Councilmember Derek Norton said he had his Parks and Rec Commission appointee, Nicholas Bergeron, to be added to the Agenda.

Other Business

Councilmember Corkey Welch said he would be having a meeting about the rezoning on North Cooper Lake.

Councilmember Doug Stoner said there was a potential new business in Ward 1, a high-end cigar shop. He said a cigar shop existed in the same location (shopping center next to Carrabas), but had been acquired by a new owner who wanted to upgrade it to a more upscale shop, and they want to be able to provide high end scotch and whiskey. He said he would be reaching out to Community Development and Scott Cochran to look at the City's ordinances to see if this can be accomplished. He added that they wanted to make sure that this does not allow for every vape shop in town to be able to sell alcohol. He said the new owner only bought the location because of the Braves development. Councilmember Stoner also added he would be having a neighborhood meeting soon regarding the properties next to the Reed House requesting to be rezoned.

Councilmember Andrea Blustein asked why police officers do not carry the narcam injectable pens for overdose victims. Councilmember Teri Anulewicz said she had a conversation with Chief Lee about this, and due to the cost associated with the pens, it was more affordable for the first responders in the fire department to carry them, as they are typically the first on the scene for medical emergencies. It did not make sense financially to purchase them for the police officers.

Councilmember Ron Fennel said Smyrna was well-represented at the CMA event in Acworth. He said he also attended the service delivery seminar the next day where an accountant from Rankin, Georgia came to speak about service delivery strategies. He said it was important to look into the financials of the City/County and make sure things were properly reflected on the balance sheets, respectively.

Councilmember Wilkinson said she went to the Open House event for the Comp Plan, and there were about 30 people there, most from Ward 5.

City Clerk Terri Graham reminded Council that they had campaign contribution disclosures and financial disclosures due.

Mayor Bacon asked that the City reach out to the EPD to see if they can get a variance for the Market Village fountain. Council also requested that the photo of the Market Village Colonnade be updated on the website and other places where it is shown.

Adjournment

Mayor Bacon declared the meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.