



Meeting Minutes - Final Committee of the Whole

Thursday, February 2, 2017

6:00 PM

City Hall

Roll Call

Council: Teri Anulewicz (Mayor Pro Tem), Andrea Blustein, Susan Wilkinson, Ron Fennel, Corkey Welch, Derek Norton, Doug Stoner

Staff: Mike Jones (City Administrator), Tammi Saddler Jones (Assistant 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), Robert Harvey (Deputy Chief of Police), Kay Bolick (Human Resources Director), Jennifer Bennett (Community Relations Director), and Maxwell Ruppensburg (Government Management Fellow).

Call to Order

Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

City Administrator

City Administrator Mike Jones said Community Relations Director Jennifer Bennett had some ideas about formal headshots and a group photo for Council. Ms. Bennett said there was a local photographer who could do the photographs at her home studio, or come to City Hall on an arranged date, or do a combination of both. She said the photographer, Kelly K., had also done work for the Public Safety Foundation. She said the options would be for Councilmembers to make individual appointments with the photographer on their own time or they can do a group before a Council meeting on a set date. She said if that was agreeable, then she would move forward with scheduling this. Council was in favor.

The next item Mr. Mike Jones brought for discussion was regarding the half day off for Christmas Eve, which the Council took action on for the past two years and made a full day off for employees. Ms. Kay Bolick said that every city in Cobb County offers the whole day of Christmas Eve off (10 full holidays in the calendar year) except for Smyrna. She said keeping the City's benefits competitive has been a challenge, and offering the full day for Christmas Eve would help with that. She also asked Council that if they approve this, to observe the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day holidays on Monday, December 25th and Tuesday, December 26th, since Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday. She said this was how surrounding municipalities and the County were observing the holidays. Councilmember Derek Norton suggested Council move forward with Ms. Bolick's recommendation. Councilmember Andrea Blustein asked about Public Works crews, in regards to how their holiday pay and leave is handled, and Ms. Bolick said there were already policies in place for them and that is included in the way they accrue their annual leave.

The next item Mr. Mike Jones discussed was the Reed House contingency budget.

He said when Council voted on the Reed House project, they voted on a budget of \$1.5M, with \$930K awarded to the contractor, \$300K from CDBG funds, and \$200K allocated to contingency. He said that some of the contingency funds would have to be used for the slate roof of the home, which has not stood up to the wear and tear of the construction and demolition in the home. He said galvanized nails had been used on the roof, and with all the demo work, many had come loose, and there were holes in the roof. He said there were options for new slate or synthetic slate, with the synthetic being significantly cheaper, and he said that only replacing the broken ones would be very difficult to match. He added that they would need to use the contingency funds to also provide insulation for the roof. There was discussion on the pricing of these items. Councilmember Corkey Welch suggested getting bids from companies in Savannah because those are where the majority of historic homes are in Georgia, with slate roofs.

Mr. Mike Jones informed Council that the paving for Spring Road would begin at 9:00am on Saturday morning, and signs would be up notifying the public of this. Councilmember Derek Norton inquired about a fine per day that it is not finished.

Councilmember Susan Wilkinson asked about the CDBG monies being used for the Reed House, and Ms. Christiana Craddock informed her all the funding was being used for the outside site work (ramps, handicapped spacing, lighting, etc).

Mr. Mike Jones reminded Council about the upcoming retreat and said that the start time for the executive portion would begin at 8:00am. Councilmember Derek Norton said he would like to talk about doing an overnight retreat again in the fall, to get talking about the next year, and also give Council and staff more time to be together. He said a lot of productive discussions happen outside the structure of a one-day meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz agreed and said since it was not an election year, there was no reason to not do it later on in the year, off-site.

Review of February 6, 2017 Mayor and Council Agenda

Mr. Ken Suddreth said the first item was a 100% annexation request for a piece of property off of Pierce Avenue, in an existing island that was slowly annexing into the City, one parcel at a time. He said the owner was going to tear down the existing home and build a new one, in keeping with the style that is current in that area. He said the next item on the agenda was a short public hearing for the beginning of the Comp Plan update, which was a requirement of the state. He said there would be one hearing at the beginning, and then one at the end when Council votes on the final plan. He said that at the Council meeting he would be giving a quick presentation about the comp plan process.

Under the Consent Agenda, City Administrator Mike Jones began discussing the item to terminate the memorandum of understanding with Howard's Wrecker Service. He said that once Council votes to terminate the agreement, then at the next meeting there will be a contract for Barrows Wrecker Service, authorizing them to be the sole towing vendor for Smyrna. Deputy Chief Robert Harvey said that very simply, the SPD has a service with two vendors, Barrows and Howards, and it has been complicated to be fair and swap off and on using each vendor every time there is a need for one. He said it became an issue with the vendors getting upset. He added that there was a long list of problems they have been having with Howard's Wrecker Service, and the SPD wants to do a professional job for the community with professional vendors. City Attorney Scott Cochran asked if Howard's knew this was on the agenda, and Deputy Chief Harvey said that Mr. Scott Cochran's office had the termination letter for approval, but it had to be voted on by Council first before sending it to Howard's.

Mr. Mike Jones spoke to the next Consent item, a pay grade change for the Lead Marshal position with the City. It is currently at paygrade 14, and it will move to pay grade 17 due to the supervisory position of the role. He said that the City is not altering his pay, but reclassifying the position so there is room for several more pay raises without capping out.

Ms. Kay Bolick spoke to the next item, the formal adoption of the Defined Benefit Changes, which would update and correct any loop holes and issues about pre-retirement death beneficiaries. In late October, Randy Logan from GMA came out to discuss all the issues and proposed changes with Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz asked if there was anything else to add to the agenda, and City Attorney Scott Cochran said he had something to add, but it needed to be discussed in Executive Session.

Other Business

Councilmember Ron Fennel thanked those who came to the SBA Luncheon, hosted by the Arch Diocese. He said there was a focus on Cristo Rey, a school for underprivileged children. Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz expanded on the topic of the school and said it was run by the Jesuits, and there were 35 schools throughout the United States, one being in downtown Atlanta. She said it is a private Catholic school, and students can only attend if they are low income, but also demonstrate a need for guidance and role models, for example children who come from single-parent households. She said the students at the school get a very high quality education 4 days a week, and then the 5th day they work in a company, such as Delta, Coca Cola, and Home Depot. She said the list of companies involved with this school program is filled with high caliber names that train these kids not just in tasks, but how to talk to adults, what they term as "soft skills." Councilmember Ron Fennel said it would be mutually beneficial for the Arch Diocese and Smyrna if they would consider Smyrna for their next Cristo Rey school location. There was further discussion about the benefits of such an opportunity for Smyrna, as well as the issue of generational poverty in minority populations in Smyrna. Councilmember Ron Fennel also mentioned the non-profit, Great Promise Partnership, founded by Mr. Mike Beatty, and focusing on Smyrna businesses to get involved with it. He said there was an arrangement with GMA to recognize cities that are complying and supporting the program, and the SBA was already behind it, as well as the Battery, Braves, and Wade Ford.

There was discussion among Council about creating an Ethics Board. Mr. Scott Cochran said that opens up the City for a lot of exposure with ethics complaints. He said that would need to be discussed at a separate meeting.

Councilmember Ron Fennel said that during the COW on February 16th, there would be an annexation discussion to focus on annexation from a service delivery standpoint.

Councilmember Andrea Blustein made mention of her pursuit of having designated swimming hours for handicapped children at the Wolfe therapy pool. Parks and Rec Director Richard Garland said he was looking at implementing that, but was in the process of researching to make sure they had necessary staff with required certifications and training to support this. He said it was important to be prepared, due to the sensitivity of the children and their special needs. Councilmember Susan Wilkinson said that it was her understanding that children with disabilities could swim at the pool now, and Mr. Richard Garland replied that yes, there was a caveat in the

membership that allows them to get a membership. He said there was a family who did try to take advantage of that in the past, and they felt like the seniors were not cordial or welcoming to their family/child when they came to swim, which was very unfortunate and disappointing. He added that he thinks this would be a necessary component of the spectrum of special needs programming that is lacking in Smyrna. There was discussion on other special needs programs the City could implement to get more of those families involved and serviced, such as a Miracle League baseball field.

Councilmember Doug Stoner gave an update on the Comp Plan Steering Committee meeting that occurred that morning, saying the consultants would be putting together a map of surrounding Cobb areas with their land uses. He also said draft reports and updates for the multiple studies that are being done would be included in the Comp Plan, as well as provided in COW meetings over the next several months. He added that the ARC visit on Friday, January 27th went incredibly well, and the key members were laying out conversations to discuss funding for a transit study.

Executive Session

Councilmember Ron Fennel made a motion to move into Executive Session for the purpose of legal and property acquisition; seconded by Councilmember Corkey Welch. The motion carried with a unanimous vote of "aye" by all voting members.

Councilmember Ron Fennel made a motion to exit out of Executive Session; seconded by Councilmember Derek Norton. The motion carried with a unanimous vote of "aye" by all voting members.

Councilmember Corkey Welch said The Optimist was hosting an oratorical contest, and anyone who wanted to could submit a student, grades K-12, to enter the contest.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm.