



Meeting Minutes - Final Committee of the Whole

Thursday, May 11, 2017

6:00 PM

City Hall

Roll Call

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

Staff: Tammi Saddler Jones (Interim 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), Roy Acree (Fire Chief), Jered Sigmon (Budget Officer), David Lee (Police Chief), Richard Garland (Parks & Rec Director), Kay Bolick (HR Director), Chris Addicks (IS Manager), Frank Martin (Assistant Public Works Director), Jennifer Bennett (Community Relations Director), Mary Moore (Library Director), Ann Kirk (KSB Director), and Maxwell Ruppensburg (Government Management Fellow).

Guests: Larry Terry (Croy Engineering) and Bart Kreps (Raftelis Financial Consulting)

Absent: Mayor A. Max Bacon, Councilmember Susan Wilkinson

Call to Order

Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

City Administrator Report

[2017-180](#)

May 11, 2017 Administration Report

Attachments: [May 11, 2017 Administration Report.pptx](#)

Interim City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones began with the administration report and highlighted the intersection improvements at the Campbell/Carolyn/Spring intersection. Larry Terry of Croy Engineering mentioned that the paving was complete and striping remained, but the concrete work and landscape finishing would be performed by Public Works crews. She also showed photos of the Concord Road Linear Park landscaping and mentioned that there was a fence to be put up along the park, but it had not been done yet. Mr. Larry Terry spoke to the estimates for pedestrian lighting along Spring (\$983K) and Atlanta Roads (\$849K). He said Georgia Power had not done a hard design, which would take 3-4 weeks, so those numbers were costs based on other projects. He said these projects were not in SPLOST. Interim City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones said Council now had the information if they ever chose to move forward or discuss further. Councilmember Derek Norton inquired about the lighting he requested for the pedestrian bridge at Argyle Elementary, and Ms. Christiana Craddock informed him that the installation cost would be \$750 with \$45/month for maintenance, and there was consensus to move forward. Ms. Craddock said she would find out a timeline from Scott Stokes.

Councilmember Andrea Blustein inquired about a bike rack near the fireworks store and car wash at Spring Road and Jonquil Drive, with Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz also supportive of the request, and staff said they would look into it. The last updates were regarding the Google Fiber and the Reed House slate roof. It had been determined that the value of the original slate roof was negligible, so the better pieces would be saved for possible local art projects and the remainder would be ground up for the parking lot, as was the original plan.

Water/Sewer/Stormwater Rate Study Presentation - Raftelis

[2017-181](#)

Water Rate Study - Raftelis

Attachments: [May 11, 2017 Raftelis Presentation on Stormwater Study.pptx](#)

Finance Director Kristin Robinson introduced Mr. Bart Kreps and said staff had been working with he and his staff since last August, and he would be sharing the results of the study with the recommended changes for the water/sewer/stormwater rates. She said it was important to get Council's thoughts on the recommendations so they can budget accordingly.

Mr. Bart Kreps began with reviewing the objectives of the study (review current rate structure, customer base, CIP projects), considerations (industry best practices), and assumptions (wholesale cost increases and consumer conservation efforts effecting usage) that went in to the study. He began with a review of the 2017-2021 CIP Capital Program and reiterated how expensive these systems are to run. He said the City mostly finances major projects as a "pay as you go" situation, but this year the large Jonquil Sanitary Sewer Outfall projects was using some reserves (14% of the total coming from reserves). Councilmember Corkey Welch said that as a Council they should decide how much they want to keep in the reserve account and use that as a guide. Mr. Kreps concurred and discussed further the need for transparency and policies for operating the reserve accounts, and to keep a minimum of 6 months OEM. He said the capital reserve fund was designed more for risk mitigation to improve liquidity for emergency repairs and projects. He mentioned their first recommendation was to increase the stormwater rate by \$0.50 this year to \$2.95/month and then increase it \$0.05 every year after to help fund the stormwater account, because the revenue it generates does not currently cover the capital needs.

He further went on to review the City's current rate structure, with the base rate charges being based on class (residential or commercial) and then meter size and the water volume usage rates were based on 4 tiers. He mentioned that multi-family housing meters and commercial meters were all given the Tier 2 rate, Sewer was a uniform rate, and the Stormwater was \$2.45/unit based on impervious area. He said typically they do not see places have their fixed charges based by both class and meter size. He said the fixed charges are meant to cover customer service costs, running the system, operating costs, all of which are charges necessary to the system no matter who the customer is, therefore their recommendation was to allocate some costs into the fixed charges to help with revenue stability and consistency. Their suggestion was to remove the classes on the base charge and have it only be tied to the meter size.

He showed several slides detailing the current rate structure and the proposed changes. They also recommended moving the irrigation customers into the Tier 4 rate since it is elective consumption. Mr. Kreps mentioned the pros and cons of the recommended adjustments, with the positives being the structure would be better aligned with industry standards, with a direct link to cost causation and increased

revenue stability. He said the negatives would be that the increase to the fixed charge would impact the low volume customers the most in the year the City chooses to do it.

In summation, the proposed rate adjustments would get rid of the classes and only charge by meter size for the base/fixed charges, with an increase to the fixed charges, however the volumetric rates would go down slightly due to the revenue generated from the increase to the irrigation rate. Councilmember Derek Norton clarified that their recommendation was for the City to lower the cost for high end users, and shift the cost to the lower end users (residential customers) who vote. There was discussion about the recommendations. Councilmember Ron Fennel asked how the proposed rate structure compared with other municipalities, and Mr. Kreps said it was difficult to compare apples to apples, but he showed a chart that compared local counties and cities, and it showed that Smyrna was in the middle. As the conversation wrapped up, Mr. Kreps said that the study also came with a model that allowed for plugging in different rates and numbers and that it was designed to be a "living model" that could be updated and monitored. There was discussion about apartment communities having a master meter and being considered commercial customers.

FY18 Budget Review - Kristin Robinson and Jered Sigmon

[2017-182](#)

FY18 Budget Presentation

Attachments: [May 11, 2017 FY18 Budget presentation.pptx](#)

Budget Officer Jered Sigmon began the presentation by saying the budget did include the proposed rate changes for water/sewer/stormwater as recommended by Raftelis in the schedule of fees and charges, so if Council was not comfortable adopting those, then he needed to know now so he can make the adjustments prior to the hearing. Councilmember Derek Norton said he did not like the idea of raising the residential rates and thinks Council needs to discuss it further, and Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz agreed and said especially since the Mayor was absent they would need to have the conversation again. Ms. Robinson said the revenue amounts would not make a significant difference in the budget, but she did recommend adopting the \$0.50 increase to the stormwater rates because the costs are not being covered as it stands now. There was agreement on Council to do that increase only, but to leave the rest of the fees alone. Councilmember Corkey Welch requested a copy of the rate model and the report from Raftelis.

Finance Director Kristin Robinson said this budget session would go over any final changes made to the budget before the first hearing on Monday, May 15th. She began with the reclassification of the Water Systems Manager to Assistant PW Director. She said staff had spoken with Scott Stokes and that he was in support of this, and that this second Assistant Director position would have a concentration on the water side of the department. She said the reclassification of a vacant police officer position to a Certification Manager was going to help the PD as they go through their accreditation process. She also mentioned conversion of the PT Community Liaison position to the FT Management Analyst position. The 6 firefighter trainees, 5 crew workers, and truck driver would be delayed to the last half of the fiscal year, and \$25K was added as signing bonuses for the "hard to fill" vacant positions, however she said that PW Director Scott Stokes did not feel that there was a need to offer any signing bonuses for any of his positions in PW. She added that the line item was not department specific, and would be used for Public Safety positions, but the qualifications and policy around this needed to be created and finalized. Councilmember Corkey Welch reiterated what a competitive market the

engineering world was, and that all engineer firms in the private sector were offering bonuses and struggling to find engineers. The possibility of a co-op opportunity with a local university was discussed again in regards to the Assistant City Engineer position.

There was discussion about the pay class and compensation study of \$15K scheduled for July, with implementation in January 2018, pending Council adoption. Councilmember Derek Norton stated that at the last COW meeting, Council discussed the mini study that was done in the fall, and they expressed their frustration with the lack of a full study prior to the budget being set. He said on Friday, May 5th, at the Special Call Budget Meeting, the results of the mini study were shared with Council and that was the first time Council had seen that information. He expressed his frustration with not having seen that information before, and if they had seen that information it would have saved time on many conversations about the pay grade reclassifications.

Mr. Jered Sigmon went over a few changes to the General Fund CIP, which involved pushing back the \$150K resurfacing of the police parking lot to FY19 and changing the funding source for the \$100K drainage project for Jonquil Park to CDBG, instead of CIP. They also reduced the Vehicle Replacement fund by 2 police cars, which allowed the reduction of the use of previously committed funds from \$250K to \$180K. Councilmember Corkey Welch asked about the CIP forecast for the next 5 years and wanted to make sure too many things were not being pushed back that would require an increase to the mileage rate, and Mr. Sigmon responded that some of the projects in CIP were placeholders and may or may not be funded, such as a million dollar IT project.

Ms. Kristin Robinson handed out a paper that detailed personnel and reclassification changes that she wanted to review and make sure everyone was on the same page before the public meeting on Monday. Councilmember Ron Fennel spoke in support of the Risk Management Coordinator position that was not currently in the budget, and said that in light of the City's increase to the property liability insurance as a result of accidents and lawsuits, this position could be needed to focus on training, safety, and the risk side of the City's business. Ms. Kay Bolick spoke to the proposed position and said the position would be responsible for investigating accidents, performing site inspections for safety issues, working with department heads for training, and worker's comp claims. She said currently the City cannot go out to bid for its property liability insurance because with the amount of risk other companies do not want the City's liability. She said if the City wants to get multiple bidders with more competitive rates, then the City has to start controlling its risks before that is a possibility. Councilmember Fennel asked if GIRMA recommended this position, and Ms. Bolick said that yes, and Smyrna was probably one of the few cities of its size that does not have a dedicated risk person in place. She added that she was willing to ask for just half of a year of this position being budgeted just to get it started.

Councilmember Derek Norton asked about data regarding cost savings from the City's peers after implementing such a position, and Ms. Bolick said she did not have that info, but Ms. Kristin Robinson said she could call her contacts at Douglas County to get some of that info because they hired a Risk Management person and she knows they put similar data together. Councilmember Corkey Welch asked if departments have safety training now, and Chief Lee said he was developing a driver training program, but other departments, such as Parks and Rec and Public Works do not. Ms. Kay Bolick said she appreciates the consideration of this position very much because she has tried to get it approved for the past four years. Councilmember Ron Fennel recommended it be put back into the budget. Ms. Robinson said they would do that, but mentioned that Mayor Bacon did have some

issues with the position. Councilmember Fennel commented that this may be the only position with potential cost savings and cost recovery. Councilmember Norton requested that some metrics be built to gauge the success and further justify the position after three years. There was consensus from Council to add this position, and there was also consensus from all Council in attendance that they approved of the reclassifications of other personnel positions. Ms. Kristin Robinson finished by saying the first public hearing would be during the Council meeting on Monday, May 15th, followed by the second hearing on Wednesday, May 17th at 12:00pm, and the final hearing would be when it is formally adopted on Monday, June 5th.

Review of May 15, 2017 Mayor and Council Agenda

The first item reviewed was the zoning request on Hayes Drive. Councilmember Doug Stoner said the developer was requesting a rezoning from R-15 to R-15 Conditional instead of R-15 to RAD, which worked out well. He is going to put in a cul-de-sac and build the homes so they are integrated into the neighborhood with R-15 conditions that work. He said the neighbors were thankful and happy.

The next zoning request was in Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz's ward, with a rezoning from R-15 to RAD-Conditional for the development of two single family homes. She says she received only one call on the item, and people in the neighborhood were happy to see the project. The site plan was pulled up. She asked about price point, and Mr. Ken Suddreth said he was not sure, but the applicant would be at the meeting on Monday.

The next item was a zoning request from CBD Conditional to RAD Conditional for three single family residences on Nichols Street. Mr. Ken Suddreth said that years ago the lots were included in the master plan for development of an office and was scheduled to be parking lots. He said the ask is to turn the two lots into three single family lots zoned as RAD. The site plan was pulled up, and Mr. Ken Suddreth said it was unanimously approved at P&Z, and there were some setback differences between the three lots due to the pie shape of the bottom lot. The lots are directly behind the DDP Yoga parking lot.

The last zoning item was for the development of a daycare facility and retail building on South Cobb Drive near the Cooperlake intersection. The site plan was pulled up, and Councilmember Doug Stoner explained the original application had an oil change place and a daycare, but it was modified to retail and daycare. Councilmember Welch was concerned about stacking of cars during drop-off and pick-up, and Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz commented that was less of an issue with a daycare because it is not like a school, and parents are in and out at various times in the mornings and afternoon. Mr. Ken Suddreth mentioned two things the applicant was requesting: a start time prior to 7:00am because of the daycare facility and putting the HVAC on the ground with screening rather than the roof due to the design of the roof (pitched).

Mr. Ken Suddreth reminded Council he would be on vacation this week, and City Planner Rusty Martin would be handling the zoning requests at the Council meeting.

Under Formal Business, the Chuck Camp Park playground funded by CDBG was reviewed, and Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz said a lot of conversation had occurred around it. She said it was wonderful that federal tax dollars were finding their way back to Smyrna, and mentioned the strict limits as to where the funding can be spent in the City, and by using CDBG funds for eligible parks, it leaves money in the budget for other parks. Councilmember Ron Fennel asked what other parks were eligible, and CDBG Coordinator Christiana Craddock said that monies could be spent on

projects in Rose Garden, Ward, Chuck Camp, Cobb, and Jonquil. He said he wanted to make sure that priorities stay current and Council is kept informed. Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz mentioned the citizen requests for lights at the basketball courts in Rose Garden Park as a possible CDBG project.

Councilmember Ron Fennel noted that his ward has only one park, and he understood his ward did not qualify for CDBG funds, but he said connectivity and a sense of community (and signage) throughout the whole City was important.

The next item reviewed was a bid award under Consent to Bartow Paving Company for the City's resurfacing projects. The paving was list was pulled up and reviewed. Council inquired about the funding source for this, and Staff said they would follow up the next day and let them know.

The next item under Consent was a transition of the City's flex spending administration from Guardian to Wage Works. Ms. Kay Bolick said it would be a seamless transition with no additional fees, and the City has already worked with Wage Works because they handle the COBRA administration. She said the transition would be in July.

Other Business

Councilmember Corkey Welch asked if there was still a rezoning item coming up on the property at North Cooper Lake near the park, and Mr. Ken Suddreth said they tabled the item from the P&Z Agenda because it was not ready, but it is still happening eventually. Councilmember Welch mentioned he wanted to schedule a public meeting regarding that zoning.

Councilmember Derek Norton praised the PD for their efforts and management of all the recent incidents that have occurred in Ward 1. He also inquired if anyone else had experienced issues with the City's towing company.

Councilmember Doug Stoner thanked City Planner Rusty Martin and Community Development Director Ken Suddreth for their help with the rezoning issue in Forest Hills. He also mentioned that the City may receive an application in the near future for the rezoning of the property between the Reed House and Charter Bank by John Wieland homes. He said the developer wanted to do 41 townhomes there based on what they just finished doing on Atlanta Road next to the new Wellstar facility (Gates at Vinings). He said the property next to the Reed House was very deep, and between all three parcels they are going to acquire, they will have 8-9 acres. He said he wanted to make Council aware of this and there was some discussion about the development.

Councilmember Ron Fennel mentioned the next CMA event in Acworth on June 13th, which would be an outdoor social event at the Acworth Beach House. He asked that Council plan accordingly and RSVP so the host city can plan ahead. He also mentioned the following day there would be a joint Service Delivery Strategy Meeting for local counties and cities. He finished by thanking Chief Lee for his help on a road rage traffic incident in Ward 7 (the incident is still being investigated and worked out).

Councilmember Derek Norton asked Councilmembers if they were going to be available for a Sunday evening dinner during GMA sponsored by his wife's firm. There were several "maybes."

Executive Session

Councilmember Ron Fennel made a motion to move into Executive Session for the purpose of personnel; seconded by Councilmember Derek Norton. The vote carried by a unanimous vote of all voting members present.

Councilmember Derek Norton made a motion to exit out of Executive Session; seconded by Councilmember Doug Stoner. The vote carried by a unanimous vote of all voting members present.

Adjournment

Mayor Pro Tem Teri Anulewicz declared the meeting adjourned at 8:36pm.