



City of Smyrna

2800 King Street
Smyrna, Georgia 30080

Meeting Minutes - Final Committee of the Whole

Thursday, June 1, 2017

6:00 PM

City Hall

Roll Call

Council: Mayor Max Bacon, Teri Anulewicz, Andrea Blustein, Ron Fennel, Derek Norton, Corkey Welch, Doug Stoner, and 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), Tommy Korver (Parks Superintendent), Tom Boland (Economic Development Manager), Scott Stokes (Public Works Director), and Maxwell Ruppensburg (Government Management Fellow).

Guests: Larry Terry and Dan Dobry (Croy Engineering), Jeff Smith and Kay Eller (VRS)

Call to Order

Mayor Bacon called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

City Administrator's Report

[2017-205](#)

Administration Update - June 1, 2017

Attachments: [June 1, 2017 Administration Report.pptx](#)
[Admin Report - 6.1.17.pptx](#)
[Admin Report - 6.1.17.pdf](#)

City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones began the City Administrator Report and gave status updates on the Market Village Crosswalk Improvements and the Concord Road parking lot completion. Mayor Bacon asked that "Public Parking" signs be placed at the new parking lots. Ms. Saddler Jones asked Council what they wanted to do with the two sets of tickets the City received with the purchase of the Braves Yearbook ad, and there was consensus to do an employee drawing for them. Mayor Bacon added that he would donate a set of tickets from his personal season tickets, and Larry Terry of Croy Engineering said they would donate a set as well. The last item under the report was a discussion about changing the first Council meeting in July from Monday, July 3rd to Wednesday, July 5th. There was consensus to move the meeting so there would be better Council, staff, and citizen attendance at the meeting.

South Cobb Corridor Study Presentation - Croy Engineering

[2017-206](#)

South Cobb Corridor Improvement Plan Presentation - Dan Dobry, Croy Engineering

Attachments: [South Cobb Drive Corridor Improvement Study Presentation Final.pptx](#)

Mr. Dan Dobry of Croy Engineering began the presentation and said the main goal of the study was to develop alternatives and options for improving South Cobb Drive from Concord Road to Windy Hill. There were several items that drove the study such as pedestrian and vehicle safety, connectivity, development and redevelopment, aesthetics, and quality of life. He detailed the multiple meetings for public input and public engagement in the process and also shared the list of planning partners who also participated in the study, as South Cobb Drive is a state route. He shared that the study area consisted of 147.5 acres, with 400 residential parcels and 153 commercial parcels, 15% of which were autocentric. He showed a map that highlighted 7 different areas that would be perfect to focus redevelopment on and recommended that the proposed areas be reflected in the future land use plan as mixed use.

Mr. Dobry elaborated on some specific design concepts, such as a pocket park at Church Street and South Cobb Drive, multi-use paths on both sides of the street, sidewalk connectivity and sharrows on the side streets, landscape and beautification, and improvements to the intersection of Powder Springs and South Cobb. The pocket park was discussed and although the City would have to acquire the property, it is in flood plain therefore cannot be developed, making it a desirable location for a pocket park. Mr. Dobry shared another rendering of the study area and said that there was no public support for bike lanes on South Cobb, but there was support for multi-use trails on both sides of the road. He added that because the R-W on South Cobb is close to 200 feet, all the proposed improvements stay within the R-W and would not encroach on any private property or require land acquisition/condemnations. He also addressed access management on the road with the suggestion of a median (fewer conflict points and reduces opportunity for crashes) as well as consolidating driveways. A windshield survey was done on the study area and they found 19 driveways that could be consolidated.

He reviewed other concepts, with Concept #2 adding bus pull offs to get Cobb Linc out of the thru traffic. There was discussion about the number of Cobb Linc stops on this stretch of the corridor (seven on each side), and Mayor Bacon said this needed to be looked at. Concept #3 was the same as #2, but with the addition of a median, giving an opportunity for more landscape for aesthetic appeal as well as multiple benefits from a safety and traffic standpoint. Concept #4 was the most transformative option, creating a multi-use boulevard where the thru lanes were kept next to the landscape median, and a smaller barrier was created to separate the multi-use trail and street parking and another thru lane for local traffic. He said with the potential for redevelopment this option would allow people to park on the street in front of the business and enable the Cobb Linc buses to get out of the thru lanes and do their drop-offs in what would be a 25 mph side road, parallel to the thru lanes. He said this concept did not get a lot of support from the citizens during the public meetings. Mr. Dobry said after all the responses from the website and public meetings were tabulated, there was almost a 50/50 split between Concepts 2 and 3. Citizens liked the bus pull offs and multi-use trail, but the median was the controversy that people either liked or disliked (the difference between Concept 2 and 3). A cost estimate was done for both as well as the "boulevard" concept. Concept 2 without the median was roughly \$6M, Concept 3 with the median was around \$8M, and the boulevard concept was \$11.5M.

Mr. Ken Suddreth said he was only asking Council to adopt the study and they did

not need to choose a particular concept at this point, and this adoption would start the process and allow Council to move to the next step (funding) when the time comes. Councilmember Fennel reiterated this study was a justification for taking the next steps to get funding. Funding options were discussed, and it was estimated that GDOT could possibly fund around 80% of the construction costs, but would not cover preliminary engineering costs, R-W acquisitions, and environmental studies. Mr. Dobry stated again that GDOT owns enough R-W that would be sufficient for these projects. Councilmember Wilkinson asked Economic Development Manager Tom Boland which concept he favored, and he replied that he thinks all three would help, but from an Econ. Dev. standpoint, Concept 4 (the "boulevard") would have the most impact in the development/redevelopment along that portion of the corridor. Councilmember Welch said he supported the median for its purposes, but asked the question how much the City could really block the businesses on South Cobb Drive. Councilmember Doug Stoner agreed that Concept 4 was the most desirable for economic improvements in the area and stated that a deeper dive into the options needed to happen prior to selecting a concept. There was discussion about any cost associated with adopting the plan, of which there is no cost until the City moves forward with a grant application that would have a cost associated. Mr. Ken Suddreth emphasized that adopting the study did not obligate the City to anything and did not come with a timeframe. He added that the total expenditure for the study was \$150K, with the City only paying \$25K of that amount. Councilmember Wilkinson shared that GDOT said this portion of the corridor was one of the worst locations in the state in terms of # of accidents, and Mr. Dan Dobry said that was correct, and it had a rate much higher than the state average for a similar facility.

Final FY18 Budget Discussion

Ms. Kristin Robinson updated Council on some changes to the budget since their last meeting. Initially 20 new positions were added to the budget, but since then staff looked closer at CIP needs, vehicle replacements, insurance increases, and concluded that it was not in the City's best financial interest to pursue moving forward with all 20 positions. Through several conversations with staff and Council Committee Chairs, only 6 of the original 20 positions are being recommended to move forward – 4 Communications Officers for E911 (with addition of Powder Springs E911 management), fire inspector, and parks maintenance tech for the Reed House. The 14 positions that came off were 6 fire personnel for station 4 (and the heavy rescue vehicle they would have manned), 2 crew workers and a driver for sanitation, 3 crew workers for recycling, a traffic signal tech, and the risk management position.

Councilmember Fennel mentioned that if the heavy rescue truck was needed it could still be done in calendar 2018 as part of the FY2019 budget. Ms. Robinson said that was correct and added that Chief Acree and Deputy Chief Marcos said today that they would still like to keep the heavy rescue in this year's budget because they feel it will maintain and increase their current service level, and she asked Council to give their input on that request. There was discussion about the heavy rescues and why the FD is no longer using the SUVs for the non-fire calls. Ms. Robinson explained that with the changes in leadership in the FD, they began switching to the heavy rescue vehicles (for their increased equipment space and visibility) and repurposed the SUVs to employee vehicles. Station 1 currently has a heavy rescue vehicle that they transitioned to last year. Mayor Bacon said it concerned him that a change in leadership changed a system that Council had already adopted (with the SUVs). He said Council needs to be mindful of the adoptions that it makes and stick to them. He also referenced the "No Parking Signs" removed from Shawnee Trail and stated Council should take formal action on them, whichever decision they make.

Mayor Bacon went on to say that he supported the personnel changes in the budget because those monies would go into contingency so if Council sees the need for changes in the middle of the year, then the flexibility is still there. Councilman Fennel said if Council needed more time to review the changes, then the public hearing could still be on June 5th, with the final vote on June 19th. Mayor Bacon asked how close the City was with negotiations for the 911 Communications with Powder Springs, and Ms. Robinson responded that due to a change at the state level, negotiations have been slowed down. Mayor Bacon said if the City does not do their 911 Communications, then there was no need for the four additional officers, to which Ms. Robinson replied that he was correct and those positions would not be filled and will be removed if the deal with Powder Springs is not signed and put into place.

Budget Officer Jered Sigmon made mention of the crew workers taken out of the budget, and said that in the Finance Committee's review of the budget, there was a proposal from Public Works to have a \$1.20 sanitation increase, which the committee did not recommend, however that increase would have paid for the crew worker positions. He wanted to share that with Council and mention if they felt the need for those positions, they could add the sanitation increase into the budget to cover those costs. He said the reason it was initially not recommended was because of an increase in 2016. Mayor Bacon asked if the City has looked at privatizing the sanitation and recycling services, and Public Works Director Scott Stokes replied that there were major concerns about the level of customer service the citizens receive should that occur. He said having that service "in house" ensures more responsiveness and customer service, plus the City makes a good profit on the recycling that supplements the General Fund. He said that if the City could sustain another \$1.20 in sanitation then that would probably allow for no additional employees or price increases for the next 8-10 years. Mr. Sigmon added that Public Works included in the personnel justification form some time-stamped data for average completion times for sanitation routes, and it showed that Public Works' overtime costs are increasing for recycling and sanitation, and if we do not add those additional positions requested, then monies will have to be added to the budget for overtime.

Councilmember Stoner asked how many houses the City was servicing now, and Mr. Stokes said 14,000, and prior to the recession it was 12,000, so roughly 2,000 more customers since 2008. He said they had not added any trucks since then. Councilmember Stoner clarified that now the City was serving 2,000 more residents with one route less and one truck less than before. Mr. Sigmon emphasized again that overtime costs will go up for sanitation and recycling, but when compared with adding more employees, the overtime costs were more favorable for the budget. Councilmember Corkey Welch brought up a point that Mr. Stokes was in agreement with and said that there are employees who do not want to work overtime, and as a result they quit or are fired. He said constantly rehiring these workers is not a good system of employment. Mr. Stokes replied that he did not want to overwork his people, and when he does, he starts losing them. Councilmember Teri Anulewicz said that all the overtime could also be a worker's comp liability issue. Councilmember Stoner said that if Council does not put in the new crew workers this year, it needs to be revisited next year because of the additional service (homes) that are being put in.

Ms. Kristin Robinson finalized the conversation by asking if there was a consensus among Council to move forward with only those six new positions, and there was agreement from everyone. Everyone also agreed to hold the final public hearing on June 5th and move the formal vote and adoption of the budget to June 19th.

Review of June 5, 2017 Mayor and Council Agenda

Mayor Bacon began to review the items and asked if anyone else was missing any appointments to the Parks Commission, and Councilmember Fennel said he had an appointment but needed to confirm. Councilmember Norton said he had one as well but it would need to wait until the next meeting.

There was some discussion on the CDBG-funded fieldwork at Chuck Camp park, and the Mayor said for the first time in a long time the City had someone who really knows what the fields need, referring to Parks Superintendent Tommy Korver. Mr. Korver said the turfplaner being used for this fieldwork is laser-guided and cuts a flat surface, getting rid of the need for extra work to regrade a surface prior to sodding. He said infield mix would also be laid on the baseball fields.

Government Management Fellow Maxwell Ruppensburg spoke on a new proposed ordinance for Racing Events, which would standardize the process and application for such events. He said the committee modeled it after the one for Marietta and Decatur. He said the goal was to formalize the process and require additional things from race organizers, such as an indemnity release form, comprehensive liability coverage of \$500K, permit fee app of \$250, and a professional race organizer. He said the process would start in the PD with final signature of approval with the Assistant City Administrator. It also requires an EMS plan approved by the FD, based on the size and details of the event, meaning it could be a first aid booth with basic needs or could require an EMS employee on site. The application process would require all items to be submitted to the City before the permit is finalized, and 30 days before the event. Mr. Ruppensburg said there would also be 2 or 3 pre-approved race routes for the applicant to choose from. There was discussion about a litter bond of some sort, and he stated one of the requirements is the event organizer is responsible for cleanup as part of the agreement, and if this does not occur, then they will incur the cost for City staff to clean up. There was also discussion about traffic management and signage requirements notifying residents of the lane closures in advance, and Mr. Ruppensburg said staff was hoping to come up with a template to provide the race organizers so all the signage will be recognizable and branded. He added that there were two events already scheduled for the fall that are ready to start the application process once Council approves the ordinance.

Guest Jeff Smith of VRS asked if the indemnity insurance was going to be a policy purchased from the City or if they would have to bring their own, and Mr. Ruppensburg replied that there were parameters for the insurance and it would have to be from a company that meets a certain standard. Mr. Smith stated he was the race organizer for the Spooktacular race. Ms. Kay Eller, also from VRS, asked if the staffing of police for the races were also their financial responsibility and she was informed yes. She asked more questions about the pre-approved race routes, and City Administrator Tammi Saddler Jones said she would get Ms. Eller in touch with Chief Lee regarding that.

There was discussion about the South Cobb Study that Croy would be presenting for Council to adopt on Monday, and Councilmember Susan Wilkinson said she had concerns about typos in the full report. Mayor Bacon said she had between now and Monday night to get them corrected. She said she also had questions and concerns from an email on April 5th that were never answered, and Mr. Larry Terry of Croy Engineering said he would make sure they are corrected and that they address her concerns.

The next item was a HAWK Signal that the state is paying for on South Cobb Drive. PW Director Scott Stokes said the only thing the City was responsible for was the maintenance of it, just like a traffic signal.

Other Business

Mayor Bacon asked if there were any considerations or plans to implement the leaf vacuum program the City used to have. There was brief discussion, and Councilmembers Fennel, Stoner, and Welch said they rarely hear citizens inquire about it. Mayor Bacon asked if he could get an update on the estimated costs of bringing it back, just so Council could have the data.

Councilmember Ron Fennel asked if the City sprayed for mosquitoes, and PW Director Scott Stokes said no. There was discussion about animal control issues with the presence of coyotes in the community, and a report of an attack on a small dog in Vinings Estates.

City Clerk Terri Graham reminded Council their personal financial disclosures statements were due on or before June 30th. They also needed to complete a Campaign Contribution Disclosure Report for June 30, 2017. The report needed to be turned in between July 1 and July 7th. She had sent out an email to Council informing them who had turned in affidavits and if they were not raising campaign funds over \$2500.00 those affidavits remained valid, otherwise they would have to complete a Campaign Contribution Report.

Councilmember Fennel reminded everyone about the CMA event on June 13th in Acworth.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:01pm.