

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE/WORK SESSION

Tuesday, June 18, 2019 @ 6:30 pm

City Hall, 875 Main Street, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083



CALL TO ORDER

Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:33pm.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Mayor determined that a quorum was present. Councilmembers Little, Mailman, Hollis, Johnson, Waller and Bryant were present.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Councilmember Hollis gave the Invocation and Councilmember Waller led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZEN COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Mayor Wheeler advised that there would be no citizen comments on the millage rate until the reading of the resolutions and ordinances later in the agenda.

Rev. Parker, St. Paul AME Church, 821 Third Street

Asked the Council to consider the financial struggles of the citizens of the City of Stone Mountain when making any financial decisions.

Mark Keyton, 5380 Poole Street

Expressed concerns of a change order from 2016 for a project to widen Second Street which he says caused an alteration of his property line to his home which he wants corrected.

Gary Peet, 5495 E. Mountain Street

Advised Council that there was never any change order to the 2016 project as 90% of the plans were approved by Department of Transportation at that time.

Claus Friese

6655 JBR Memorial Drive

Invited Council to attend Volunteer Appreciation Day on July 14 from 2p – 4p.

Melvin Woods, 514 Rockborough Drive

Asked for support from the Council to allow the citizens of Rockborough subdivision to finish their subdivision sign.

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS

Mayor had no communications to read.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE DAY – *Request to move New Business Item A. Presentation of the FY2018 Audit and New Business Item B. Presentation of the DeKalb County Transit Master Plan forward, to be entertained before Committee Discussion Items.*

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson moved for the adoption of the Agenda of the day with a request to move New Business Item A. Presentation of the FY2018 Audit and New Business Item B. Presentation of the DeKalb County Transit Master Plan forward, to be entertained before Committee Discussion Items; seconded by Councilmember Hollis.

Approved 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Presentation of the FY2018 Audit Report – City Auditor James Whitaker

The City Auditor, James Whitaker, presented the FY2018 Audit Report to the Council and informed Council that the audit has been completed and a modified decision was issued meaning that the City is in accordance with general accepted accounting principles for government. He reviewed some of the financial statements with the Council.

B. Presentation of the DeKalb County Transit Master Plan – Grady Smith - Transit Master Plan Manger

Grady Smith, representative for DeKalb County, presented the Transit Master Plan for DeKalb County to the City Council.

City Council followed up the presentation with questions and comments regarding the Transit Master Plan.

City Manager Thornton asked Council to consider a vote of the Resolution 2019-17 related to the DeKalb County Transit Master Plan during a Special Called Meeting to be held Wednesday, June 26, 2019 after the Public Hearing in order to hand over to the County by June 27, 2019.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Planning and Zoning

No report. Assistant City Clerk Alicia Daniels advised Council that there were no items to be heard this month therefore there was no meeting.

B. Economic Development/Downtown Development Authority

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson gave report for Downtown Development Authority Director Allen Peterson II as he was not present for the meeting.

C. Historic Preservation Commission

No report. Assistant City Clerk Alicia Daniels advised Council that HPC will meet tomorrow with four items on the agenda to consider.

D. Sub-committee on Busking

Councilmember Little gave report on updates from their committee meetings.

E. Parks and Recreation Committee

Councilmember Waller had nothing new to report but advised Council of their next meeting to be held July 1 at 6:30pm.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT – City Manager ChaQuias Thornton

City Manager Thornton informed Council they have all the staff reports in their packets and we would suspend staff reporting because of the lengthy agenda; however, if they had any questions, please reach out to the Department Heads.

City Manager reported on the E-Host (Equalized Homestead Options Sales Tax Distributions) discussions between the County and the City if all of the entities can come to a consensus on a distribution method for remaining E-Host proceeds and the agreement of how to issue those distributions; new employee, Chantel Chase, for Court Services; City working on full opening of the Visitor’s Center along with letter of request sent to DeKalb Community Development for an opportunity of block grant funds for Phase III project of the Visitor’s Center; the City’s financials.

STAFF REPORTS (reporting by Department Heads suspended)

- A. Code Compliance Officer – Sgt. Roseberry
- B. Public Works Director – Jim Tavenner
- C. Chief of Police – Chief Troutman
- D. Assistant City Clerk – Alicia Daniels
- E. Tourism Manager – Kim Cumbie

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Hearthstone Subdivision Covenant Restrictions – update

City Manager Thornton gave update to the Council that City Attorney has been in touch with the legal representative for the investor regarding the 15% cap on the rental and leased properties to the investor, but no response yet if they are willing to negotiate that term; there have been no new building permits issued since this conversation.

B. Easement Agreement – 5197 Central Drive (18 090 04 015) – Bradford Botwick – Requestor

City Manager Thornton advised that she has reached out to Mr. Botwick's attorney, but she has not received word back from the attorney on either the adjusted easement cost for land value nor the scenario where they would clear off the property or easement area.

NEW ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Mayor Wheeler asked that we move item B. to the end of the meeting.

A. Ordinance 2019-05 To Amend Chapter 17 Offences and Miscellaneous Provisions by Adding Article VI. Unlawful Discrimination

Mayor Wheeler asked Council to review the Ordinance in detail and be prepared to discuss at work session in July. City Manager Thornton will send out a memo and pointed out some concerns that internally this will affect Administration and Court Services as this Ordinance would require us to employ a hearing office to have some litigation experience in Civil Law and this would add more responsibility to the City Clerk position.

Council commented on concerns for enforcement of this ordinance by the City and the Council taking their time to review this Ordinance.

C. Ordinance 2019-07 To Amend Chapter 9 Erosion Sedimentation and Pollution Control

City Manager Thornton advised that Section 10 will not need to be amended based on the structure of our ordinance just Sections 2 and 4; section 10 will be removed from the preamble. This amendment request is from the Environmental Protection Division requires local jurisdictions to amend their code whenever the Act of 1975 is amended.

D. Resolution 2019-17 Related to the DeKalb County Transit Master Plan

No discussion on this item.

B. Ordinance 2019-06 To Set the Rate for Ad Valorem Property Taxation for 2019 at 22.00 mils (First Read)

Mayor Wheeler informed everyone that at this time Council would have a discussion on the item and then they would allow citizens comment limited to 5 minutes per comment.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson asked City Manager for explanation of the item.

City Manager Thornton explained how SPLOST, EHOST and the millage rate may or may not correlate; and how the millage rate is determined for recommendation to the Council.

Council commented that a TAN (Tax Anticipation Note) will not be needed this year and that a millage rate has not been decided upon yet. Council also asked City Manager Thornton how would adopting the rollback rate of 19.194 instead of 22.00 affect the City.

City Manager Thornton advised it would affect the City's excess revenue in the amount of \$329,388 which is about the cost of the Court Services Department. We would be able to generate the same revenue that we generated in 2018, but in 2018 we still had projects that we could not fund, we still owed the storm water moneys, and we were still tapping into our general fund reserve to balance the budget.

Council also advised that there will still be information coming from the County and that the City will hold three public hearings before the adoption of the millage rate. City Manager gave the dates of those public hearings; June 26 at 11am and 6pm and July 2 at 6:30pm.

Mayor Wheeler then allowed for citizen comments at 5 minutes per comment.

Joan Monroe, 5499 Woodsong Trace
Thinks that adoption of this rate is the City's abuse of the money.

Gina Cox, 787 Fourth Street
Would like to know what programs are being offered to the citizens and asking Council not to raise the rate so high.

City Manager commented on where the exemptions list can be found. She will put a link out on the website to DeKalb County's website.

Gloria
811 Second Street
Would like to know how signs can be put up at Second Street, Third and Fourth street. Mayor advised that we are only taking comments on the millage rate and that she could obtain that information from Administration. Citizen then wanted clarification on the increase of the millage rate.

City Manager Thornton explained that in 2018 the millage rate was reduced from 22.27 to 22.00 and this year the recommendation is for it to remain the same and that the increase has come from property values increasing up this year.

Brandi Norwood, 764 Pepperwood Trail
Asked Council for explanation of the millage rate to remain the same for increase in the budget to avoid having a TAN.

City Manager Thornton advised that the City doesn't have enough money to meet the needs of the City because of Capital outlays and funding the City's infrastructure such as its storm water.

Clint Monroe, 5499 Woodsong Trace
Commented on the City's need to have a cushion in the budget vs. the citizen having a cushion as well.

Andrea Redmond, 5317 Mimosa Drive
She advised Council that she passed around to the audience the 2017 and 2018 millage rates of the cities in DeKalb County and how we compare to other cities.

Gary Peet, 5495 E. Mountain Street
Commented that millage rates for different cities cannot be compared because each cities' digest varies and therefore is the cause for those cities' millage rate being lower.

Comments were had by Council.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR

Mayor Wheeler had no announcements.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson moved to adjourn; seconded by Councilmember Hollis.

Approved 6-0

Adjourned at 8:34pm.