

CITY OF STONE MOUNTAIN  
WORK SESSION COUNCIL MEETING  
875 Main Street  
Stone Mountain, GA 30083  
May 16, 2016  
MINUTES

**PRESENT:** Mayor Patricia Wheeler, Mayor Pro-Tem Chakira Johnson, Council Members: Susan Coletti, Steve Higgins, Richard Mailman and Andrea Redmond.

**ABSENT:** Council Member Steve Wells.

**STAFF:** City Manager Gary Peet, City Clerk ChaQuias Thornton, Executive Director DDA Mechel McKinley, Chief of Police Chauncy Troutman, Public Works Director Jim Tavenner, Assistant City Clerk Kate Settle.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Wheeler called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE:** Council Member Higgins gave the invocation. Council Member Redmond led the pledge to the flag.

**READING OF COMMUNICATIONS:** None.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE DAY:** **Motion** by Council Member Johnson, seconded by Council Member Coletti to adopt the agenda of the day.

**Motion** Approved 5-0.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS-NON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:**

Joan Monroe, 5499 Woodsong Trace, thanked Kim Cumbie for her efforts regarding Color Vibe. Ms. Monroe was upset to learn vehicles are allowed to be parked on the lawn. She needed clarification regarding when the ordinance was changed. She expressed her concerns regarding the functioning and the appearance of the City. Ms. Monroe hoped the ordinance would be revisited.

Al Capagrossi, 5262 Poplar Springs, reported on an overgrown vacant lot. He indicated the growth is waste deep. He asked, if the owner cannot be found, is the City responsible to mow the lot and charge the owner? Mr. Capagrossi has heard the City is interested in annexing property into the city limits. He felt that the City needs to take care of what is currently within the City limits before taking in other areas. Mr. Capagrossi gave the example of car repair shops on James B. River.

Sara Abrams, 976 Ridge Avenue, enjoyed Color Vibe and the amount of community involvement. She thanked staff for their hard work on the event. Ms. Abrams gave an update on initiatives to renovate Medlock Park. The first meeting of the committee will be held on June

14, 2016 at 6:30 pm at Cafe JAYA. She reported that the Downtown Development Authority will be advising her on which non-profit the Committee can work under for their fundraising efforts.

Diana Hollis, 733 Mountain Village Drive, spoke of her frustration with the process of working on the removal of transitional homes in her neighborhood. In particular, she was frustrated with the Municipal Court Judge Dear's tardiness.

Debbie Golightly, 5496 Woodsong Trace, has lived in Stone Mountain for over 20 years. She felt that there is a lack of concern or care regarding the way the City appears; parking cars in yards, steps falling away from buildings. She felt one code enforcement officer can only do so much.

Clifford Monroe, 5499 Woodsong Trace, also expressed his concerns regarding parking cars on the lawn and hoped the City would revisit the ordinance.

#### **COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- A. ***Planning and Zoning:*** None.
- B. ***Community Affairs:*** None.
- C. ***Economic Development/Downtown Development Authority (DDA):*** Mechel McKinley had amended the report submitted for the packet and distributed the updated version at the meeting.

There will be a grand opening for Gym on Fitness on June 17. The Farmers Market and Tunes by the Track are doing well. Eight new jobs have been created in the City from new businesses. There should be a few more jobs to report on next month.

She reminded Council that the DDA did not budget for the agenda item regarding splitting cost for police presence at Tunes by the Tracks. DDA is requesting that the cost be split equally between DDA and the City. The request is provided in a budget amendment on the agenda.

The DDA received \$2500 Market Manager Scholarship. They have hired the manager, Brandon Brant. Ms. McKinley reported he has provided her with assistance at the Farmer's Market, particularly with SNAP. Façade grants have been awarded to ARF and Wells Cargo, each for \$1,850. The recipients of the grants have six months to complete the project. Sweet Potato Café received a Boost Award to purchase a new oven.

The next Comp Plan meeting update will be held on June 14 at 7:00 p.m. at the Farmer's Market. Ms. McKinley thanked the Police Department, Public Works and the Administration for their assistance during the Color Vibe Event.

- D. **Finance:** James L. Whitaker presented the FY 2015 audit report to the Council. A question and answer period followed. Mr. Peet suggested Council change the Pension Plan from a defined benefit plan to a defined contribution plan. Mr. Whitaker reported that the General Fund owed the Stormwater Fund \$553,000 at 2015 year end.

Council thanked Mr. Whitaker and his associates for their hard work on the audit.

- E. **Community Outreach:** Council Member Redmond asked for clarification on why the ATM in the parking lot by the Depot was not with the City's local bank. Mr. Peet reported the property is owned by the railroad (CSX) and they have a lease agreement with the ATM's bank. She was also concerned that the sidewalk project on E. Mountain Street would affect the appearance of the historic street. Messrs. Peet and Tavenner clarified the extra space needed for the sidewalk will be taken from the road and/or the right-of-way. She was assured that there will not be encroachment on private property.

She asked that the flag be replaced at the Gazebo and hoped that Cool Breeze would receive a bike rack or perhaps, put the item on the agenda for discussion.

- F. **Public Safety:** Council Member Mailman was pleased with the Police Department and Public Works during Color Vibe. He thanked Officer Roseberry for her work as a Code Compliance Officer. Council Member Mailman assured the public that each Council Member cares deeply about the City of Stone Mountain and does their best to affect positive changes for the citizenry.

- G. **Public Works:** None.

- H. **Historic Preservation Commission:** Al Capagrossi reported on a Special Call meeting of the Historical Preservation Commission in order for Mr. Moody to begin work on the project at 970 Main Street.

- I. **Visitor Center:** Kim Cumbie distributed and reviewed her monthly report. She thanked everyone for their kind words regarding her involvement with the Color Vibe event and wanted to make sure the Council knew it was a team effort. The unofficial number of those in attendance was 6,000 people. The Color Vibe organizers consider the Stone Mountain event to be one of their top ten events.

#### **STAFF REPORTS:**

- A. **Code Compliance Officer:** Officer Roseberry reported on recent activities for code enforcement. She highlighted the eighty decks that are being replaced at the Dwells; overgrown vacant lots are being addressed; an infestation of rodents on Rankin Street and an infestation of roaches at an apartment complex. The owners of the farm animals on Mountain View have been informed to remove the animals. She updated the Council about the situation with the transitional homes in the Pepperwood neighborhood.

Council Member Coletti asked when the ordinance changed regarding parking on the grass. Mr. Peet reported Council had adopted the new ordinance on March 14. The newly adopted ordinance was silent on the topic of parking on grass. The omission was not intentional. He indicated he would like to research how other municipalities handle the issue and bring back an amendment to the existing ordinance at the July meeting.

- B. **Public Works Director:** Mr. Tavenner reported that the number of community service people has increased. He assumed the increase was because of the warmer weather. Mr. Tavenner reported on the upkeep of the cemetery, removal of trees at McCurdy Park and repairing the fence at VFW.
- C. **Chief of Police:** Chief Troutman reported the crime rate has significantly gone down from last year. He reported on recent crimes in the area and how the police were addressing those problems. (Copy of the report is filed with the minutes.)
- D. **City Clerk:** Ms. Thornton reported that 5444 Rockbridge is making progress. She had a meeting with Safebuilt, Code Enforcement, the owner and the tenants in order to ensure all parties were clear on what needs to be completed before the businesses can be opened at that location. One Certificate of Occupancy (CO) has been issued and she hoped to complete the rest of the COs in the next couple of weeks.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. **Consent Agenda.** None.
- B. **Facility Use Agreement: DeKalb County School District and the City of Stone Mountain re: Rock Gym** –The proposed lease was reviewed. Council Member Mailman reported he walked through the gym. He thought the investment to repair and maintain the Rock Gym is insurmountable. The appraisal of \$165,000 for the building was discussed. Council Member Coletti felt the Rock Gym holds so many memories for members of the community; she has mixed feelings about how to proceed. She asked how the School District came up with the appraisal amount. Council Member Mailman asked if they would be willing to sell the gym for that amount. The cost of maintaining the building was discussed. Mr. Peet reported, he assumes the County to rent the facility out for events and citizens or groups can deal directly with DeKalb County Schools.
- C. **Local Government Entities Agreement between American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers and the City of Stone Mountain.** - No discussion.
- D. **Facility Use Agreement: Ray of Hope and City of Stone Mountain – Use of Medlock Park for Football July 11, 2016-December 10, 2016 - \$4,800** – Mr. Peet reviewed the changes to the agreement and reported Ray of Hope will be required to have a police officer on duty during their games.

- E. **Publication of Property Tax Notice and Public Hearings – Tentative adoption of 2016 Milage Rate-** Mr. Peet asked Council to look at the memo regarding the timeline of advertising and adoption. He explained the anticipated increase in digest discussed during the budget was at 8%. Preliminary digest reports came in at an increase of less than 2%. The proposed increase in milage rate is to cover the short fall in the Stormwater Fund. Ms. Thornton asked Council Members to please mark their calendars for two public hearings on June 27 (one in the morning and another meeting in the evening) and the third public hearing and the final adoption will take place on July 5th.

**NEW ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

- A. **Resolution 2016-18, Solid Waste Collection Fees:** No discussion.
- B. **Resolution 2016-20, FY 2016 Budget Amendment:** Resolution 2016-20 represents the cost of Police Officers for Tunes by the Tracks. No discussion.

**CITY MANAGER’S REPORT:** City Manager Peet reviewed his City Manager report with Council (a copy of the report is filed with the minutes of the meeting). He reported that at this point, the City is close to being on budget. Mr. Peet also informed Council of new procedures being put in place on how the City processes warrants.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR:** Mayor Wheeler thanked the volunteers that helped with Color Vibe.

Council Member Coletti asked for the process needed in order to extend public comment.

Council Member Johnson announced the Community Garden Open House will be held at 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

Council Member Redmond encouraged all to attend Tunes by the Tracks on Friday.

**ADJOURNMENT:** **Motion** by Council Member Johnson, seconded by Council Member Coletti to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.

**Motion** approved 5-0.

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Patricia Wheeler, Mayor

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ChaQuias Miller-Thornton, City Clerk