

MINUTES OF THE
CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE/WORK SESSION
Monday, July 20, 2015 @ 6:00 p.m.
City Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Patricia Wheeler called the Committee/Work Session to order at 6:05 p.m. Present were Council Members Susan Coletti, Steve Higgins, Chakira Johnson, Richard Mailman, Andrea Redmond, and Steve Wells – which constituted a quorum.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Council Member Higgins gave the invocation and Council Member Wells led the pledge of allegiance.

READING OF COMMUNICATIONS

None.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE DAY

Council Member Johnson made a motion to adopt the agenda of the day. Seconded by Council Member Susan Coletti.

Motion passed 6-0.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Nan Nash of 5379 E. Mountain Street asked that Ray of Hope be reminded to display signs advertising the football program to be held at Medlock Park.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ITEMS

Finance – No report.

Planning and Zoning – No report.

Community Affairs – Council Member Coletti reported on a proposed program that will serve to celebrate those local military service men and women that are returning home from military service. A flag would be flown over the City in honor of the service person. A certificate would also be given to the honoree in an open meeting. The flags would be purchased by those sponsoring each show of commemoration. The flags are \$43.00* each. City Manager Gary Peet informed Council that he will check with the City attorney to make sure that this program would comply with the gratuities statute in Georgia. Council Member Wells expressed his appreciation of this personalized way to recognize local members of the armed forces for their military service. Council Member Coletti asked that members of Council explore dates in October 2015 for the city wide yard sale.

*(*It was noted during approval of the minutes that the cost for each commemorative flag is \$47.00/each.)*

Economic Development/Downtown Development Authority – Executive Director Mechel McKinley gave the DDA report. She informed Council of her activity for the month of July 2015. She informed Council of meetings attended and of a Main Street 101 session that she will be helping to teach at the Department of Community Affairs on August 4th, 2015. Ms. McKinley informed Council that she has been assigned to an economic development task force. Ms. McKinley reported on the Farmers Market and that the EBT and SNAP programs are continuing to grow; that she and City Manager Gary Peet are working to present draft of the abatement ordinance to Council during the August 2015 work session; that the BOOST investment group will make two awards to area businesses on Friday, July 31, 2015; that Mayor Wheeler, Council Member Wells, herself and others – along with the State Historic Preservation – toured the Sycamore Grill and are exploring options for the building; that the Sweet Potato Café has completed work on its façade and another façade grant will be voted on next week; that a meeting was held with City Manager Gary Peet, Mary Beth Reed, herself and DeKalb County Community Development Block Grant representatives to discuss the possibility of using CDBG funds for train depot renovations; that letters will be sent to those that have not renewed their Main Street

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Memberships for 2015; that planning is taking place for the next Tunes By the Tracks event in September 2015; that the Christmas Parade will be held November 27, 2015; that filming for Sleepy Hollow has been cancelled for this week; and that National Night Out is to be held Tuesday, August 4th, 2015 at which time it is planned for the citizens to have an opportunity to interact with the public safety officers in a friendly and inviting environment. Ms. McKinley was asked to explain the EBT and SNAP program that is offered at the Farmers Market. She explained what the program is and how the program dollars are doubled for the purchase of produce at the Farmers Market.

Community Outreach – Council Member Redmond reported on the information given to Mayor and Council regarding the proposed mosquito control program. She gave details on the cost of the mister and the pesticide and on the use of larvicide. Ms. Redmond informed Council that information on the program was provided to her by the City of Sugar Hill whose climate and population is similar to that of the City of Stone Mountain. The application of the pesticide would be twice per year. She further informed Council that Public Works Superintendent Jim Tavenner has information on the logistics of and licensing for the program. The pesticide would be sprayed down the City's streets – 150 feet in both directions. Council Member Mailman asked that City Manager Gary Peet will look into the legalities of the proposed program. He also suggested that citizens be proactive in deterring the breeding grounds and habitats for mosquitoes and that the City do more to educate the citizens regarding such. Council Member Wells thanked Council Member Redmond for bringing this issue before Council. He suggested that other cities/counties be researched regarding such a program. He also asked about the total cost of the program. Ms. Redmond further reported to Council that she is promoting signage noting the fines for littering within the City. She informed Council of some of the negative ramifications of litter within the City's communities. Council Member Mailman asked that the City check into the legality of the City setting the fines for littering. Council Members Coletti and Wells weighed in on the conversation inquiring about trashcans to be placed near the signs and the cost associated with purchasing and posting signs.

Public Safety – Council Member Mailman reported during this time that the Back to School Bash will be held Saturday, July 26, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Baptist Church pavilion. School supplies will be distributed to those students from Kindergarten to 8th grade. The supplies have been purchased through sponsorships and donations. Those supplies not distributed during the event, will be divided between area schools and churches. He encouraged citizens to attend and to volunteer if they wish to do so. City Manager Gary Peet announced that the supplies have been purchased through sponsorships and donations, and that further contributions are welcome.

Public Works – No report.

Historic Preservation Commission – No report.

Visitor Center – Kim Cumbie, VC Manager reported that the Visitor Center had 236 visitors from 19 states and 5 countries during June 2015. She informed Council that the VC has partnered with the cities of Decatur and Lithonia/Arabia Mountain for a Bicycle Tourism Program and that a portion of the extra monies raised during the Color Vibe event will be utilized for participation in the program. Mrs. Cumbie also informed Council that the next AMTA meeting is to be held at The Strand in Marietta on August 12, 2015. She reported that she will attend the Governor's Tourism Conference in Savannah from August 31 to September 2, 2015 and will continue to pursue the Georgia Convention and Visitors Bureau Leadership in Excellence Certification. Mrs. Cumbie also reported that staff from the Tallapoosa Visitor Information Center will visit on September 8, 2015 and that she has submitted her continuing education hours to Nija Torrence at the GDEcD office for 2015.

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STAFF REPORTS

Code Compliance – Code Compliance Officer Sanja Roseberry reported for Code Compliance. She gave her monthly status report and report of the code compliance related cases issued to date for the month of July 2015. Officer Roseberry discussed with Council vacant properties that are in violation of various code compliance regulations. Ms. Roseberry informed Council that she is also attending to cases of cruelty to animals and to dogs that are not retained on leashes. Officer Roseberry is to submit copy of the DeKalb County code section relating to leash regulation standards. She also informed Council that she is conducting a storm water audit and is continuing to conduct building code inspections for new occupation tax certification applicants. Council Member Mailman inquired about 5233 Cloud Street (VFW property). City Manager Gary Peet informed Council that investigation in the matter is ongoing and Officer Roseberry informed Council that the owner of the property is to appear in court this week on a code violation matter. Council Member Higgins inquired about the capture of stray cats by AARF for the purpose of spaying or neutering them and returning them back to the place of capture. He wanted to ensure that citizens would be informed of the initiative, so as to deter the unwanted capture of some pets. The business owner has informed Council that the public will be notified. A resident of Tina Court asked if the City will work to make more resources available for Officer Roseberry to function in her job capacity. He informed Council of a trash situation that has been ongoing on his street, near his home, for several months. He also expressed that it is his opinion that Officer Roseberry doesn't have the support of other departments that she needs to get her job done. City Manager Gary Peet informed Council that the newly adopted Nuisance Abatement ordinance will help to rectify matters such trash left at a vacant property.

Public Works

Public Works Director Jim Tavenner gave the Public Works Report. He informed Council that there were 23 community service workers for last month and 10 to date for July 2015. He informed Council that the City has received information on its 2016 LARP funding. State funding is \$48,991.56, with the City's match to be \$14,690.00, for a total of \$63,681.56. Mr. Tavenner gave details on the East Ponce DeLeon paving project that is scheduled to commence on July 27th, 2015 and to end on July 28th, 2015. The paving contractor for that project will be in charge of traffic control. Mr. Tavenner also reported on the Rock Gym Parking Lot paving project. Bid opening for the project will be held Friday, August 7th, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. at City Hall. He informed Council that mulch has been purchased to be placed at McCurdy Park. Mr. Tavenner further informed Council that a large tree limb fell through the fence at the dog park. He also informed Council that SM&E is proposing to perform another operation that will attempt to draw the free product out of the wells on the property on East Mountain. Performance of the operation will not cost the City any more money. Mr. Tavenner reported that Rockborough drainage issues continue and new report of a drainage issue has been made near 5075 Leiland. He reported on the amount of trash picked up year to date and that the cost of "No Littering" signs is \$45.00 for each sign and \$20.00 for each sign post. The street light for the corner of Main and Mountain is still waiting on the lighting package before it can be installed. He reported that options have been explored, but that there is no other good place to string an event banner. Mr. Tavenner reported on the proposed mosquito control program. At this time, there is no special license that the application operator has to have. He has not figured a cost for overtime of an employee to administer application of the pesticide. Council Member Higgins asked that the City consider placing recycling cans throughout the City to help to deter littering and to promote recycling. Mr. Gary Peet informed Council that he and Director Tavenner would explore options for pick-up of the recycling cans.

Public Safety

Chief Troutman reported that department Z Scores will no longer be provided, however, individual police activity reports have been provided for all officers. Leave time for training, sick leave, etc. is a factor in determining each officer's score. City Manager Gary Peet informed Council that the activity report ratio for day

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and evening watches is 0.50 and the ratio for morning watch is 0.35. Chief Troutman reported the June 2015 statistics for citations and warnings issued. He informed Council that DUI arrests have gone up and that reserve officer Joshua Croft has taken a large part in that. Mr. Troutman further reported that the department has received its license reader and that two officers are licensed for use of the device. 52 citations have been issued and 6 arrests have been made with use of the device. He also reported on the burglaries occurring in the City. There were four burglaries reported for the month of June – one each on Ridge Avenue, Brittany Drive, W. Mountain Street, and Stillhouse Road. He thanked Council Member Wells for his concern regarding crime mapping, and he reported that the department has found a tool known as Crime Reports. The program is free of charge and can be implemented through the existing Courtware Solutions software now being used by the department. Information is to be submitted for program reporting daily and the tool is expected to be available next week. Chief Troutman mentioned to Council that he has seen signs that have been placed throughout the city that say “No Littering”. He is to check to see if these are actually signs that have been posted by the City.

City Clerk ChaQuias Thornton gave the City Clerk’s report. Mrs. Thornton reported to Council that Application for Variance has been submitted for 1050 Griffin Street. Variance is requested for the minimum lot size and for the minimum lot width. The matter has been heard by the Planning and Zoning Committee and written recommendation in the form of meeting minutes has been submitted to the City Clerk. It is the Planning and Zoning Committee’s recommendation to approve the variance application, contingent upon resubmittal of architectural revision to, and approval of the revisions by, the Historic Preservation Commission. Initial application for Certificate of Appropriateness was approved by the HPC in June. Public hearing on the matter, as required by statute, is requested to be set for August 17, 2015. Mrs. Thornton also gave updates to Council on the 901 4th Street – Mountain View, Third Street – Habitat, 1054 Main Street – Westgate Plaza, 1048 Main Street, and 5444 Rockbridge Road projects. Permanent power release has been approved for a major portion of the units at 901 4th Street. Certificates of Occupancy have been issued for 785 and 789 3rd Street. Insurance carrier for the property at 1054 Main Street is requesting verification of structural load requirements for the plaza. Zoning certification request has been submitted for 1048 Main Street by Paws-n-Paradise, a previous occupant of the fire-damaged West Gate Plaza. Two zoning certification requests have been submitted for tenant spaces within the building at 5444 Rockbridge Road – one proposing a thrift store and the other proposing a convenience store. Council Member Wells inquired about placing audio on the City’s website. City Clerk Thornton asked for the direction of Council regarding the time frame for posting the audio files of the minutes on the City’s website. Audio files can be posted on the site at no cost as opposed to costs that would be associated with the City attaining the ability to live stream. Council Member Johnson asked general consensus of Council to allow for 48 hours after open sessions of Council to post audio file of the sessions to the City’s website for public listening. Council concurred.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Consent Agenda

None.

Increase in Compensation – City Clerk

Council Member Johnson made a note that the proposed increase in the City Clerk’s compensation is in line with the Clerk’s one year anniversary of appointment as clerk. City Manager Gary Peet informed Council that the budget resolution to be discussed later on the agenda, will consider an amendment to the budget to cover the cost of the increase in compensation.

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East Mountain Street Sidewalk Proposal for Construction Management – Atwell, LLC

City Manager Gary Peet informed Council that he has not received any response to the counteroffer submitted to Atwell. He further informed Council that the City will be negotiating with Atwell because the administration cannot justify recommending to City Council to approve the agreement as submitted. He explained to Council that final plans for the project were submitted and the Georgia Department of Transportation required final plan revisions, therefore two invoices were submitted by Atwell (LAI Engineering) for final plans. That is why costs for final plans is listed twice in the memo to Council for the administration's estimate of fees to be paid to Atwell. Mr. Peet further informed Council that Mayor and Council's approval of the Updated Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Agreement for the East Mountain Street Sidewalks Project, will be the last document to be executed before the City can receive notice to proceed to bid on the project. The matter is to be left on the agenda for the upcoming voting meeting in hopes that there is a resolve in the terms of the agreement by that time.

Lease Agreement between the City of Stone Mountain and Georgia Municipal Association – Vehicles

City Manager Gary Peet informed Council of the circumstances surrounding the reason that new lease agreements for the purchase of vehicles will be needed.

Lease Agreement between the City of Stone Mountain and Georgia Municipal Association – Vigilant License Plate Reader

Discussion had on the previous item applies.

NEW ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Ordinance 2015-09 – Vacant Property Registry

Council Member Johnson rendered the first read of “An Ordinance by the Governing Authority for the City of Stone Mountain, to Provide for Vacant Property Registries; to Provide for Definitions; to Provide for Guidelines for Vacant Property Registries; to Provide for Exemptions; to Provide for Maximum Fees and Penalties for Registration and Failure to Register; to Provide for Appellate Rights; to Provide for Severability; to Provide and Effective Date; to Repeal all Ordinances and Parts of Ordinances in Conflict Herewith; and for other purposes.” City Manager Gary Peet informed Council that this will be another tool for Officer Roseberry. Anyone who owns vacant property within the City will have to register that property with the City, so that the City will have someone to contact if there is ever an issue with property maintenance for the property. Tax bill addresses will be compared with site addresses to aid in the notification of property owners of the requirement to register the property.

Resolution 2015-23 – FY 2015 Budget Amendment

Council Member Johnson rendered read of “A resolution of the Mayor and Council of Stone Mountain, Georgia to amend the budget for the year ending December 31, 2015”.

Resolution 2015-25 – Sale of Surplus Property

Council Member Johnson rendered a reading of Resolution 2015-25 “Whereas, Section 6.33 of The Charter of the City of Stone Mountain, Georgia Authorizes the Sale of Disposal of Surplus Property; and...” for the sale of a 2002 Mercedes Benz and a Clean and Beautiful Sign. City Manager Gary Peet informed Council that the vehicle was a confiscated asset and proceeds from that will go into Fund 6 for use by the police department exclusively. The sign is wanted by one of the local businesses, but will still have to go through the sale of surplus property process, and the business would have to be the high bidder in order to attain owner of the sign.

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CITY MANAGER'S REPORT – City Manager Gary Peet first gave the Revenue and Expense Report. Mr. Peet provided detail on the General Fund Revenue Analysis Report and on the annualized shortfalls for municipal fine revenue, court fee revenue, and motor vehicle ad valorem and sales tax revenue. He reported that the overall revenue shortfall in the general fund is estimated at \$27,548. Mr. Peet informed Council that the mid-year budget review for all other funds will be completed by the next work session scheduled for August 17, 2015. Mr. Peet then gave the City Manager's Report. He informed Council that 1) the administration will sponsor the annual Plein Air competition managed by ART Station in the amount of \$250.00, with the event to be held on September 26, 2015; 2) on July 1, 2015 he and Code Compliance Officer Roseberry met with John Binders of Community Champions regarding the use of the foreclosure registry database to locate responsible parties for nuisance properties in foreclosure; 3) the administration completed and transmitted to the Tax Appraisers Office a database containing all the real property parcels in the City with their zoning classifications, with the information provided to be used to update the online information database on the Tax Appraisers website; 4) the auction for three vehicles from Public Works ended on July 17, 2015 rendering \$21,348.50 in revenue; 5) City Attorney Joe Fowler is preparing a complaint form to prosecute violations of the nuisance ordinance adopted on July 7, 2015, with the first case to be brought against the property at 5429 East Mountain Street; 6) Larry Street was sworn in as the new Solicitor of the Municipal Court on July 9, 2015; and 7) the City is awaiting notice to proceed to bid for construction of the East Mountain Street Sidewalks and the City has received from Stantec the engineering work on the Five Way Intersection project for the City's archive. Mr. Peet requested a meeting of the Mayor and Council in executive session to discuss a personnel matter. Council Member Johnson made a motion to adjourn regular session and to enter into executive session to discuss a personnel matter. Seconded by Council Member Coletti.

Motion passed 6-0.

Executive session was held.

Council Member Johnson made a motion to adjourn executive session and to reconvene regular session. Seconded by Council Member Coletti.

Motion passed 6-0.

Mayor Wheeler announced that Council will add an item to the agenda under New Ordinances and Resolutions. Council Member Redmond made a motion to add to the August 4, 2015 meeting agenda Resolution 2015-26. Ms. Redmond rendered a reading of Resolution 2015-16 "...NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Stone Mountain, Georgia, this ____ day of _____, 2015, that a plan be prepared for consideration by the Mayor and City Council for the transition of ChaQuias Miller Thornton from the office of City Clerk to the position of City Manager". Seconded by Council Member Coletti. Council Member Johnson clarified that the vote is just to add the item to the agenda and is not a vote on the matter itself.

Motion passed 6-0

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR

Mayor Wheeler announced that she will read a letter during the August 4th meeting that is addressed to Mr. Ted Riddle of Specialty Car Company, thanking the company for granting the City the use of golf carts during the 4th of July holiday weekend.

Council Member Mailman thanked all of those present for attending and Council Member Higgins thanked them for staying until the adjournment of the meeting while Council meeting in closed session.

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ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Johnson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Coletti.
Motion approved 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:17 P.M.

Patricia Wheeler, Mayor

ChaQuias Miller Thornton, City Clerk