



[Meeting will begin at 4:30p.m.](#)

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April 23, 2020 City Council Workshop

**SAVANNAH CITY GOVERNMENT**  
**SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES**  
**COUNCIL WORK SESSION & CITY MANAGER'S BRIEFING**  
**April 23, 2020 – 4:30 p.m.**

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the work session was held at 4:31 p.m., via Zoom video communications.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding  
 Alderwoman Kesha Gibson-Carter, At-Large, Post 1, Chairman  
 Alderwoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2  
 Alderwoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1  
 Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2  
 Alderwoman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3  
 Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4, Vice-Chairman  
 Alderwoman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz, District 5, Mayor Pro-Tem  
 Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

City Manager Pat Monahan  
 City Attorney Bates Lovett  
 Assistant City Manager Health Lloyd  
 Bridget Lidy, Director, Planning, Zoning, and Urban Design  
 Clerk of Council Mark Massey

**Workshop Agenda Items**

[1. Discussion - Special Work Session Schedule](#)

Mayor Johnson opened the meeting by thanking all in attendance and asked City Manager Monahan to begin the meeting with the first agenda item.

Mr. Monahan started the Work Session by discussing future Work Sessions and the Council's priority list based on voting, that will be discussed during the Work Sessions. The following is the Council's priority list:

1. Rules of Council
2. Budget
3. Code of Ethics
4. Arena Canal District (which will be discussed in today's Work Session)
5. Rockingham Farms Fairground
6. The Airport

City Manager Monahan suggested a Work Session every Thursday to cover each priority list item. At Council's approval, the first Work Session will be this Thursday, April 30, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. to discuss Rules of Council. He will send Mayor and Council the material related to Rules of Council which include a.) Rules of Council Draft

7; b.) Rules of Council Draft 7 with sources; c.) Fulton County Procedural Rules for Meetings [provided by Clerk of Council Mark Massey]; and d.) Current Rules of Council and Order.

In light of Governor Kemp's recent Executive Order, Mayor Johnson asked Council if they wanted to continue the COVID-19 updates on Mondays and Thursdays or just have the Thursday Work Sessions.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely agreed with the Thursday Work Sessions and stated the Monday meetings would be unnecessary. Any items for discussion can be covered during the Thursday Work Sessions.

Alderman Purtee agreed that the Thursday meetings should be sufficient.

Mayor Johnson, with the consensus of Council, announced the Monday COVID-19 meetings will be discontinued and to hold various Council Work Sessions beginning next Thursday, April 30, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

## 2. Canal District Master Plan

[Exhibit 1: Canal District Master Plan \(revised 4.23.2020\).pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Canal District Action Playbook.pdf](#)

City Manager Monahan introduced Bridget Lidy, Director, Planning, Zoning and Urban Design who introduced Mr. Jeff Williams, Senior Project Designer, Principle, Urban Design, Perkins and Will, Cassie Branum, Senior Urban Designer, Associate Principle, Perkins and Will, and Denise Grabowski, Symbioscity.

Mr. Williams gave an in depth presentation of the Canal District Master Plan explaining all aspects of the Plan. Following the presentation, Ms. Lidy explained the next steps of the process.

Mayor and Aldermen had discussions with a questions/answer session with Ms. Lidy, Mr. Williams, Ms. Branum and Ms. Grabowski.

Some items for discussion included the following:

- Alderwoman Lanier - the presenters have heard the voices of the residents as evidenced by the presentation. She has concerns with the parking; the equity area of the Plan needs to be reevaluated to include as many local contractors as possible; and the green initiatives are important. She suggested the City Manager include an exit strategy in the contracts at no fault; establish a Community Benefit Ordinance, a comprehensive drainage plan; and a parking & traffic plan.
- Alderwoman Miller Blakely - questioned why the pump house are in SPLOST VIII & SPLOST IX and not in the current SPLOST. She suggested a Benefits Ordinance to benefit the whole City instead of a certain area. She asked Ms. Denise Grabowski what her role is in the project and suggested looking at alternative options for parking.
- Alderman Palumbo - discussed the positive and challenging aspects of the project.
- Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz - suggested keeping the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), minority, and women owned businesses in the loop as local contractors. She stated that all City contracts should display the population distribution of the City.
- Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan - stated she has fifteen years of environmental health and safety and the surface parking lot is suitable for parking, the due diligent has been completed and it will not present any health hazards to the local resident. The EPA has very stringent guidelines and would not allow the parking lot if it presented any health hazards.
- Alderwoman Gibson-Carter - concerned with the following: what will happen after the pandemic; what if SPLOST funds don't come through; is it feasible to build the Arena now; what is the contingency plan if the City doesn't receive all SPLOST VI & SPLOST VII funds as planned; has an EPA due diligence been completed; does the City have a budget to address the drainage issues in that area; parking issues need to be addressed; and she has concerns with the health effects of the residents if this project is completed.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter suggested Ms. Lidy's team reevaluation the Plan and consider the following options and return with a plan of action:

- Polices attached to those pieces related to a health impact assessment
- Community Benefits Agreements
- Assurance for minority contracts

Mayor Johnson thanked the presenters and stated COVID-19 will not end the City of Savannah. The Arena is a feasible project and will happen. The Canal District Master Plan is a necessary project for that community and is on target for completion. The City will move forward as planned with both projects.

Hearing no further business, Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 6:22 p.m.

The audio recording of the Council Meeting can be found by copying and inserting the below link in your url:

<https://savannahgovtv.viebit.com/player.php?hash=lj5sxBj99LMe>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

