



Meeting Begins at 10:00 am

January 16, 2020 City Council Workshop

SAVANNAH CITY GOVERNMENT
SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION & CITY MANAGER'S BRIEFING
January 16, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

The Work Session of the City Council was held at 10:01 a.m. in the 2nd Floor Media Room of City Hall.

- PRESENT:** Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding
- Alderwoman Kesha Gibson-Carter, At-Large, Post 1
 - 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
 - Alderwoman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz, District 5
 - Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

- OTHERS PRESENT:**
- City Manager Pat Monahan
 - Assistant City Manager Heath Lloyd
 - Interim Chief Operating Officer Bret Bell
 - Assistant to the City Manager Daphanie Williams
 - City Attorney Bates Lovett
 - Deputy City Attorney Jen Herman
 - Clerk of Council Mark Massey
 - Deputy Clerk of Council Margaret Fox

Workshop Agenda Items

[1. Council Organizational Items Discussion](#)

Mayor Johnson welcomed everyone to the work session and briefly mentioned that the organizational items have previously been discussed, including the officer positions of Mayor Pro-Tem, Chair of Council and Vice-Chair of Council. He also indicated that he requested the City Manager, City Attorney and Clerk of Council to prepare a draft of procedural rules for meetings that can be considered by the Mayor and Aldermen. Mayor Johnson then requested the Clerk of Council to introduce the next presenter.

[2. Robert's Rules of Order Presentation](#)

[Exhibit 1: Robert's Rules of Orders.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Helpful Scripts.pdf](#)

Mr. Massey introduced Ms. Carol Johnson Davis, CP-T, PRP, by giving a brief background and history of her experience in parliamentary law.

Ms. Davis thanked the Mayor and Council for inviting her to speak. Her presentation included the following:

- She identified books Council should consider obtaining.
 - Robert's Rules of Order
 - Robert's Rules of Order in Brief
 - The ABC's of Parliamentary Procedure
- An overview of Parliamentary Procedures was presented in detail.
- She provided an example of scripts for Motions and Call for Orders of the Day.
- She recommended Council familiarize themselves with the ABC's of Parliamentary Procedure, especially pages ten and eleven.
- She informed the Council that if there ever is a conflict, the City's Charter (or any Federal or State Laws) takes precedence over Robert's Rules of Order.

Alderman Palumbo asked Clerk of Council Mark Massey to provide background to the Council why the procedures are important and why adopting Robert's Rules of Order will help facilitate the Council meetings.

Following the presentation, there followed questions by Council which were answered by Ms. Davis.

[3. 2020 Operating and Capital Budget Update](#)

[Exhibit 1: Budget Overview .pdf](#)

City Manager Monahan gave a brief overview of the prior Council's adoption of the 2020 Budget. He explained that Melissa Carter, Senior Director of Budget, will give a quick description of the Budget, but a work session will be held for Council in the future that will go into a more in depth description/discussion.

Ms. Carter and David Maxwell, Finance Director presented a quick slide presentation outlining the 2020 Operating and Capital Budget Updates.

Following the presentation, there was a discussion and questioning session with Ms. Carter, who responded to all questions.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter requested the following:

- A breakdown of grant funding received
 - Look at redistributing the allocated monies to community organizations
 - Alderwoman Lanier suggested Ms. Carter compare what other municipalities are doing in relations to what the City of Savannah is doing
- List of all the banks City of Savannah maintains an account
 - Investment Program
 - Balances on hand
- The balances on SPLOST IV, V, VI and VII
- A Total Forensic Audit
 - Real Estate Properties

Alderwoman Miller Blakely requested information as it relates to other cities comparable to Savannah and how Savannah compares.

[4. 2020 Legislative Priorities](#)

[Exhibit 1: 2020 Legislative Agenda DRAFT.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson requested the City Manager to move Item #4 to Item #3. He informed Council that he has requested the City Manager to keep Work Sessions to one hundred and fifty minutes. Mayor Johnson indicated the Legislative Agenda is just a draft.

City Manager Monahan reminded Council Members they submitted drafts of their legislative priorities two weeks ago. This Item is on the Regular Meeting Agenda today for a vote.

Interim Chief Operating Officer Bret Bell briefly outlined last year's legislative priorities. He then introduced Acting Assistant to the City Manager Joseph Shearouse to discuss the 2020 Legislative Priorities.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely requested a copy of last year's legislative priorities activities report from Mr. Bell.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter requested a copy of the litigation reports received and paid out by the City of Savannah.

Mr. Shearouse read a list of the items on the legislative priorities list for Council to accept (consensus), amend or propose a new item.

- Confiscated Weapons - consensus
- Common-Sense Gun Measures - consensus
- Private Solid Waste Disposal Fees - consensus
- Sovereign Immunity (cap at \$500,000.00) - ask State to give the City some form of Sovereign Immunity
 - Council had in depth discussion as to the amount of the cap
 - Alderwoman Lanier suggested the City establish a Litigation fund for damage issues
 - Alderwoman Miller Blakely suggested \$1 to \$2 million dollars and Alderwoman Dr. Shabazz stated that even \$2 million dollars is not enough
 - Alderwoman Linda Wilder-Bryan agreed with a cap but did not state an amount
 - City Attorney Lovett advised Council to cap the Sovereign Immunity and increase the amount as needed on a case-by-case basis
- Decrease Members from 25 to 17 for the Savannah Development Renewal Authority - consensus
- Smoke Alarms in Rental Properties (increase penalty amount) - consensus
- Logistics Technology Corridor - consensus
- Non-Property Tax Revenue Options to Rollback Property Taxes - consensus
- Commercial Property Tax Assessments Annual Growth Cap - consensus
- Staggered Term Limits for Savannah City Council - consensus
 - Add Full-Time Aldermen instead of Part-Time
- Safe House Facilities and Support for Abused and Exploited Victims - consensus
 - Alderwoman Gibson-Carter corrected the language to read "Commercial Child Sex Exploitation minus Domestic Abuse"
 - Mr. Shearouse read into the record some changed wording as presented by Alderwoman Gibson-Carter
- Increased Small Business Personal Property Tax Exemption - consensus
- Port Container Fee - consensus
 - Reach-out to Garden City to Partner with their Programs (Fee for Local Maintenance of Roads)
 - Add the LMEGS Consideration
- Home Rule Items - consensus
 - Abandoned Shopping Cart Ordinance
 - Short-Term Vacation Rentals
 - Alderwoman Miller Blakely requested further information as to increasing the area to be granted the ability to participate in short-term vacation rentals
 - Alderwoman Dr. Shabazz asked if there was wording to expand the entire area, namely District 5
 - Oppose Any Prohibition of Fees on Property Tax Bills
- Alderwoman Gibson-Carter requested the following to be added to the list:
 - Federal Code Compliance Coding
 - Taxable Income for Elba Island (Annex Elba Island)
 - Eliminating the Downtown Business Tax
 - Tourism Saturation Study
 - Drainage Study for the Springfield Basin Area
 - Reallocation of SPLOST Dollars to other Capital Projects
- Letter of Opposition to the construction of Casinos, Off-Track Betting or any other gambling establishment in our area
 - Mayor Johnson recommended this item can be handled with a local Resolution
- Alderwoman Miller Blakely requested pulling funds from Hotel/Motel Tax to support other smaller local non-profit Chamber organizations
 - Mayor Johnson recommended meeting with the local non-profit Chamber before moving forward
 - City Attorney Lovett will research the Hotel/Motel Tax to define the requirements of allocation
- Mayor Johnson requested adding Mental Health funding
- Alderwoman Lanier requested to seek funding for an Urban Development Fund
 - The City needs to identify an amount

[5. Litigation, Real Estate, and Personnel](#)

Alderwoman Lanier moved to recess the meeting for a closed executive session regarding real estate, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The executive session began at 12:59 p.m.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely moved to close the executive session regarding real estate, Alderman Leggett seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The executive session ended at 1:50 p.m.

[6. Agenda Procedures Discussion](#)

Mayor Johnson indicated that he requested the City Manager, City Attorney and Clerk of Council to prepare a draft of procedural rules for meetings that can be considered by the Mayor and Aldermen.

[7. Review of Agenda](#)

The Agenda was reviewed by Mayor and Council.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 1:59 p.m.

The video 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=NocA2eNW7cjP>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Initials: _____

