



Meeting Begins at 10:00am

October 24, 2019 City Council Workshop

**SAVANNAH CITY GOVERNMENT
SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION & CITY MANAGER'S BRIEFING
October 24, 2019 – 10:00 a.m.**

The work session of the City Council was held at 10:00 a.m. in the 2nd Floor Media Room of City Hall.

PRESENT: Mayor Eddie W. DeLoach, Presiding

Mayor Pro-Tem Carolyn H. Bell

Alderman Julian Miller, Chairman of Council

Alderman Brian Foster, Vice-Chairman of Council

Alderman Bill Durrence, District 2

Alderman John Hall, District 3

Alderwoman Dr. Estella E. Shabazz, District 5

Alderman Tony Thomas, District 6

ABSENT: Alderman Van R. Johnson, II, District 1

OTHERS PRESENT:

City Manager Pat Monahan

Assistant City Manager Heath Lloyd

Assistant to the City Manager Bret Bell

City Attorney Bates Lovett

Deputy City Attorney Jen Herman

Assistant City Attorney William Shearouse

Clerk of Council Mark Massey

Assistant to Clerk of Council Brittany Hunsaker

Mayor DeLoach called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Workshop Agenda Items

[1. Interstate 16 @ Interstate 95 Improvement Project](#)

[Exhibit 1: Presentation - Improvement Project at Interstate 16 and Interstate 95.pdf](#)

City Manager Monahan announced that he and Mayor DeLoach attended a briefing session of the Interstate 16 widening project and based on that meeting and because of the significant impact of the

highway project to the community, an invitation was extended to GDOT representatives to present to Mayor and Council. The City has agreed to supply additional public information regarding the project through its cable channel.

Mr. Ron Nelson, Project Principal, began the presentation by thanking the GDOT Commissioner Russel McMurry and Board Member and Chair Ms. Ann Purcell for the opportunity to present the project to the City of Savannah. He introduced Mr. Quinton Alberto, Project Manager, to offer more detailed information.

Mr. Nelson gave a brief overview of how the project came including the following:

- Major Mobility Investment Program (MMIP)
 - An \$11 billion program
 - 11 projects open to traffic or under contract by 2026
 - Public-private partnerships to accelerate projects
- I-16 at I-95 improvement projects
 - Benefits of the widening projects
 - Interchange Plan
 - Details of the projects
 - Emergency Management Response
 - Lane closure/Detour limitations
- Current Project Timeline
 - Project timeline from 2016 through 2022

Mr. Alberto explained in more detail the above listed items. He provided a map that contained the boundary lines and the contact information for the I-16 @ I-95 Improvement Projects:

- www.majormobilityga.com/projects/i1695improvements/@1695Improvements@dot.ga.gov and 912-480-9625 project hotline.

Alderman Miller asked regarding the I-16 @ I-95 Interchanges, are they also responsible for the continuation on White Bluff into town. (No).

Alderman Foster asked for lighting information at the interchange of I-16 @ I-95 and if it could be put in place now before the project completion. There is a Maintenance Agreement for lighting in place and Ms. Ann Purcell was very instrumental in getting the lighting at that intersection. The lighting cannot be placed at the intersection until the project is complete.

[2. Trustees' Garden Club Update](#)

[Exhibit 1: Presentation - Trustees' Garden Club.pdf](#)

Ms. Meb Ryan, Co-Chair, and Eleanor Rhangos, Chair, from the Trustees Garden Club gave a presentation on the Forsyth Park Project.

In March 2019, the City of Savannah entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Trustees Garden Club for a Master Plan for the Forsyth Park Project. The Trustees Garden Club would provide the funding for the Master Plan and the City would review, and if approved, adopt the Plan at the end of the process. Ms. Ryan thanked Gordon Denny and Assistant City Manager Heath Lloyd for their support and cooperation on the Plan.

Ms. Ryan gave an update on the Project:

- In 2016 the Trustees Garden Club voted on a legacy project to create a stewardship plan for Forsyth Park as a gift to the City
- Project has two goals:
 - Master Plan for the Park
 - Recognition and achieving the Park's historic significance
 - Work to secure a historic designation of the Park as a national historic site
- Assess the current conditions of the Park
- Collect background information and stories from the community about the Park
- Secure community input
 - Initiating a series of public outreach meetings to introduce the Project across the City
 - Reached out to neighborhood associations informing them of the Project
 - Public Input Survey will be created, when the time arises
 - Community meetings will be held for feedback
- Identify tools needed to involve citizens throughout the process
- Created a website to keep the community informed and solicit feedback
 - friendsofforsythpark.org
 - [friendsofforsythpark@gmail](mailto:friendsofforsythpark@gmail.com)
- Developed a postcard directing the community/neighborhoods to the website
- Solicited Request for Proposals (RFP) from four qualified planning firms to lead the process
 - Currently waiting for the responses to begin the final selection process

Ms. Rhangos discussed the timeline in detail of the Project going forward. She explained the steps in arriving at the name, logo, tag line and mission statement of The Friends of Forsyth Park. She listed a number of grants received from non-profit organizations.

Mayor Pro-Tem Bell asked if the Trustees Garden Club was including the children in the community and reaching out to the high schools and colleges. She suggested reaching out to local churches and senior organizations (grandparents) for input as well as offering naming rights as an object of fundraising. Once the planning firm is secured, they will reach out to the communities, which will include all ages of children and adults.

[3. Savannah Gardens Update](#)

[Exhibit 1: Presentation - Savannah Gardens & Cumming Street Update.pdf](#)

City Manager Monahan introduced Chief Community Services Officer Taffanye Young and Director of the Housing and Neighborhood Services Department Martin Fretty to give an update on Savannah Gardens and Cummings Street.

Ms. Young discussed the Savannah Gardens, and the progress made in recent years with the changes in housing and residential diversity.

Mr. Fretty began by thanking Darrel Daise, CHSA Director, Lou Gardner, Construction Administrator, and Anita Smith Dixon. Ms. Dixon has been appointed by the CHSA Board of Directors as the new CHSA Director when Mr. Daise retires at the end of this year.

Mr. Fretty outlined the housing and area development in Savannah Gardens including the new Savannah High School. He shared the site plan and planned unit development showing single family and multi-family dwellings, and the park. Mr. Fretty discussed the final phase of the project as it relates to a summary of numbers (cost), 608 family dwellings, and infrastructure.

- Action Requested Today
 - Authorize the cancellation of City and CHSA promissory notes to CHSA Development
 - Authorize the City Manager to enter into a \$1.75M public infrastructure development agreement with Mercy Housing

Alderman Miller asked if the Project was ever sold, would the funds come back to the City and what is the total number of dwellings once the project is complete. (If the final phase of Mercy Housing development is ever sold, any related profits from the land will return to the City and there will be 608 dwellings).

Alderman Foster asked how many of the units would be affordable housing. (Everything in the Project is affordable housing).

Alderman Hall asked what will happen to the former grocery store. (Mr. Fretty responded, it will be demolished and twenty apartment units and four single family homes on the back side will replace where the grocery store used to be).

[4. Cummings Street Update](#)

[Exhibit 1: Presentation - Savannah Gardens & Cumming Street Update.pdf](#)

Housing and Neighborhood Services Director Martin Fretty discussed the problems with Cummings Street:

- Blighted, abandoned property - eight to nine homes
- City used Eminent Domain to acquire 226 Cumming Street (2018)
 - As of October 17, house is nearly completed (September 2019 ground breaking)
 - The house will be sold to a first-time buyer at an estimated \$750/month
- Upcoming second Eminent Domain Court Hearing
 - 242, 218, 231, 220, 236 and 238 Cummings Street
 - When City acquires the properties, demolish and build
- What are the Next Steps
 - Property acquisition and redevelopment initiative
 - One thousand blighted, abandoned properties acquired and redeveloped in the next ten years
- 2020 Budget Request
 - \$500,000 General Funds to Start Acquisition in 2020
 - \$500,000 General Funds for Savannah Affordable Housing Fund (for Construction)
 - \$324,010 General Funds for Salaries & Benefits (four new positions to implement initiative)

Alderman Miller asked if there will be a program for the existing houses to be brought up to standards of the newly acquired homes. (Grants and loans will be offered to existing homeowners for renovations).

Alderman Foster asked what do you anticipate the dollar number of leveraged housing for this year. (Based on prior history, for every dollar put in we received nine dollars). Mr. Fretty will get the actual numbers to Alderman Foster.

[5. Tour Services for Hire Ordinance](#)

[Exhibit 1: Presentation - Tour Service for Hire.pdf](#)

Susan Broker, Director of Special Events, Film, and Tourism commended the Housing and Neighborhood Department on the work they have done for the community and stated how proud she is to be working at the City. She recognized appointees to the Tourism Advisory Committee, Melinda Allen, Chair and Michael Owens and her staff members. She stated that there will be a press conference at 1:00 p.m. to discuss all the numerous events of the weekend.

For organizational purposes and for business owners to navigate through the Codes for establishing their businesses, a portion of Quadricycles, Pedicabs and Horse-Drawn Carriages have been moved into the Tour Serves for Hire Ordinance.

- Quadricycle Ordinance Modifications
 - Boundary changes (move southern boundary to Oglethorpe Avenue)
 - Restrictions of alcohol consumption on the quadricycle
- Special Events Ordinance Modifications
 - Application process timeline language change

Alderman Durrence added that the use of parks does not normally go through the permit process, but some of these events are still legal.

Mayor Pro-Tem asked when is the surrounding public notified of street closings and parking for events. (Forty-eight hour notice and notices are sent out to neighborhood associations).

Mayor DeLoach asked what is the cut-off point to regulate requests. (Staff responded, no weddings back-to-back in a square on weekends. Greenscapes limits the number of people in a square at one time. Staff attempts to make other available areas in the community attractive to residents).

Alderman Hall asked if Forsyth Park gets a lot of requests for weddings during azalea blooming season in the Spring. (Yes).

[6. Quadricycles Ordinance](#)

[Exhibit 1: Presentation - Tour Service for Hire and Quadricycle.pdf](#)

See Item #5 (Items #5 and #6 were combined).

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

Alderman Durrence moved to recess the Work Session to conduct a closed Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel, real estate, and litigation. Alderman Miller seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The executive session began at 11:29 a.m. All members were present.

Alderman Durrence moved to adjourn the closed executive session, Alderman Johnson seconded. Hearing no objections, the closed executive session was adjourned.

There was no action taken in the closed executive session which ended at 12:03 p.m.

[8. Review of Agenda](#)

Reviewed.

The work session adjourned at 1:55 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=pRM1Z3kUn6EW>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Initials: _____

