



SAVANNAH CITY GOVERNMENT
SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 25, 2021 – 6:30 p.m.

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the regular meeting of the City Council was held via Zoom video communications at 6:30 p.m. Following the roll call, Mayor Johnson recognized Aldерwoman Wilder-Bryan to introduce Pastor Candace Hardnett, Agape Empowerment Ministries who delivered the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

PRESENT: Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding

Aldерwoman Kesha Gibson-Carter, At-Large, Post 1, Chairman

Aldерwoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2

Aldерwoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1

Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2

Aldерwoman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3

Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4, Vice-Chairman

Aldерwoman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz, District 5, Mayor Pro-Tem

Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

OTHERS PRESENT:

Acting City Manager Michael Brown

City Attorney Bates Lovett

Clerk of Council Mark Massey

Mayor Johnson took a point of personal privilege to recognize and celebrate 200 years of Modern Greece (Bicentennial). He further indicated the Greece flag is hanging in City Hall.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

[1. Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda for March 25, 2021](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to adopt/approve the agenda as presented, Aldерwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2. Approval of Minutes for the Work Session and City Manager's Briefing Held on March 11, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.](#)

[Agenda Plus_WS DRAFT MINUTES_March 11, 2021 City Council Workshop.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #2 and #3, Aldерwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[3. Approval of Minutes for the Regular Meeting Held on March 11, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Agenda Plus_RM DRAFT MINUTES_March 11, 2021 City Council Regular Meeting.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #2 and #3, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA - (This section shall include all routine items for which it is anticipated there will be no debate or requests for public input. Any Alderman can remove consent items for discussion or separate consideration.)

[4. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Recycled Crushed Aggregate Stone with Savannah River Utilities \(Local\) for up to \\$54,325 \(Event No.7857\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Recycled Crushed Aggregate Stone.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Recycled Crushed Aggregate Stone.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Specifications - Recycled Crushed Aggregate Stone.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #4, #5, and #7, Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[5. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for HVAC Maintenance and Equipment Repairs for the President Street and Regional Water Plants with South Eastern Air for up to \\$43,360 \(Event No. 7277\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - HVAC Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - HVAC Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Specifications - HVAC Services.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #4, #5, and #7, Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[6. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for Towing Services to Jackson Brothers Towing, LLC for up to \\$65,750 \(Event No. 8202\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Towing Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Towing Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Specifications - Towing Services.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Miller Blakely did research and had concerns about Jackson Brothers Towing no longer being in business, and not a Savannah First contract or, given the business does not reside within the City limits but in Chatham County. She asked if City staff reached out to the thirty local towing companies for the bid. Acting City Manager Brown answered the bid was sent out as a Savannah First contract and no bids were received; the bid was resent and the City received the Jackson Brothers Towing bid. Mr. Brown contacted Roy Jackson, Owner, and was informed the business was sold sometime in 2020. Mayor Johnson asked since the business was sold, after the sale, did the new owner retain the name Jackson Brothers Towing. Mr. Brown answered, when the business was sold, it sold the name too.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely requested a copy of the bid package and asked when the bids were sent. Acting City Manager Brown answered, the original bid was sent out as Savannah First, the City did not receive any responses. The bid was resent and Jackson Brothers Towing was the only respondent. Mr. Brown believes local towing companies prefer individual tows rather than the City's light duty towing, being available day and night. Mr. Brown recommends approval.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely moved to approve Item #6, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[7. Notification of an Emergency Procurement for the Repairs to the Power Feed for the President Street Facility Lab to All Electric \(Local\) in the Amount of \\$29,482.75 \(Event No. 8310\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - President Street Lab Power Feed Repairs.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - President Street Lab Power Feed Repairs.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #4, #5, and #7, Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

PURCHASING ITEMS

[8. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Thermoplastic Pavement Marking Installation Services with Peek Pavement Markings, LLC for up to \\$300,000 \(Event No. 5326\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Thermoplastic Pavement Markings.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Thermoplastic Pavement Markings.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Specifications - Thermoplastic Pavement Markings.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #8 and Items #10 through #14, Alderman Leggett and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[9. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for a Gunfire Detection System with ShotSpotter in the Amount of \\$220,142 \(Event No. 5991\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - ShotSpotter Gunfire Detection Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - ShotSpotter Gunfire Detection Services.pdf](#)

Alderman Purtee reported numerous "shots-heard" calls on the Southside and asked if and when the Southside will be included in ShotSpotter. Acting City Manager Brown detailed the need for digital

high-speed internet for the ShotSpotter to operate. The City is in the process of investigating how to extend the fiber optic cable further down Abercorn Street and into the neighborhoods on the Southside. He recommends approval of Item #9 and he will give Council a follow-up report on how the City will proceed to install the fiber optic cable.

Mayor Johnson explained ShotSpotter in the downtown area was sponsored by SCAD, so the City did not have to pay for the infrastructure but partnered with SCAD. He asked Mr. Brown to investigate the cost to the City for the fiber optics Citywide.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked what SCAD was paying for. Mayor Johnson answered, SCAD paid for the initial infrastructure; the City is paying for the contractual service of ShotSpotter.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked how is the City prioritizing when taking care of neighborhoods and what is the designed area for the ShotSpotter. Mr. Brown answered, the network is primarily from East to West Broad to MLK, and from the River down to Victory Drive; it does not go South because of the lack of fiber optic cable. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter requested having a discussion in Executive Session to benefit the Council Members on representing their Districts.

Alderman Purtee stressed the importance to have a work session to discuss the plan and how to expand the ShotSpotter program throughout the City. He stated the 6th District needs ShotSpotter along with other neighborhoods in the City.

Alderman Purtee moved to approve Item #9, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Palumbo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[10. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Medical Fitness Exams for Savannah Fire Department Personnel with Saint Josephs Candler \(Local\) for up to \\$171,000 \(Event No. 4952\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - SFD Medical Fitness Exams.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Purchasing Notes - SFD Medical Fitness Exams.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Specifications - SFD Medical Fitness Exams.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #8 and Items #10 through #14, Alderman Leggett and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[11. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Modification for the Gwinnett Street Widening Project with Preferred Materials, Inc. in the Amount of \\$973,739 \(Event No. 7466\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Gwinnett Street Widening Project.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Gwinnett Street Widening Project.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #8 and Items #10 through #14, Alderman Leggett and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[12. Authorize the City Manager to Procure Replacement Ultraviolet Water Disinfection Equipment with Xylem and Associates for up to \\$230,000 \(Event 8309\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Ultraviolet Modules and Sensors.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Ultraviolet Modules and Sensors .pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #8 and Items #10 through #14, Alderman Leggett and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[13. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Modification for Heavy Equipment Rentals with Savannah River Utilities \(Local\) for up to \\$300,000 \(Event No. 7209\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Heavy Equipment Rental.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Heavy Equipment Rental.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Specifications - Heavy Equipment Rental.pdg](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #8 and Items #10 through #14, Alderman Leggett and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[14. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for SCADA Networking Maintenance Services, Equipment and Security \(for Monitoring the Water System\) with Layer3 Communications \(Local\) for up to \\$175,000 \(Event No. 7538\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification: - SCADA Network Maintenance and Equipment.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - SCADA Network Maintenance and Equipment.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #8 and Items #10 through #14, Alderman Leggett and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

[15. Discussion Regarding Appointment of Hearing Officer\(s\) Pursuant to the Unlawful Discrimination Ordinance](#)

No action taken; discussion to be considered at the next Work Session.

Alderman Purtee recommended a three person panel or a pool of qualified candidates ready to make selections when the need arises for a Hearing Officer. City Attorney Lovett recommended a pool of qualified candidates ready when a claim is submitted and a panel of three will be selected. Attorney

Lovett was pleased with the level of qualified candidate applications received after Clerk of Council Massey advertised for the position and after he sent the advertisement to the Bar Association.

Mayor Johnson asked Council for their recommendations:

Alderman Gibson-Carter asked who introduced the Unlawful Discrimination Ordinance. Mayor Johnson answered, City Council unanimously passed the Ordinance which requires that Council appoint a Hearing Officer; and the Ordinance was introduced last year by Alderman Purtee. Alderman Gibson-Carter recommends Council make certain the panel selected is representative of the community and not a representation of the previous kangaroo court hearing.

Alderman Palumbo called for point of order. He expressed the use of kangaroo court is defamatory and not to be used in Council meetings.

Mayor Johnson sustained.

Alderman Gibson-Carter asked Attorney Lovett if there is a method or process in place for recruiting the applicants for the Hearing Officer position. Attorney Lovett explained the process used to recruit and suggested Clerk of Council redistribute the list of panel candidates to Council Members. Alderman Gibson-Carter requested the panel be inclusive of the demographics reflective of the Council and the greater community; including gender and race.

Mayor Johnson noted the Ethics Panel is selected by City Council and Council does not want to impugn their character or function.

Alderman Purtee stated it is not just inclusive of race and/or gender; it is also sexual orientation and any LGBTQ persons. He explained, Mr. Lovett expended time and great effort to get quality candidates; and he is ready today to submit three names for the panel. Alderman Purtee recommended a work session at the next Council meeting, so Council Members can submit names and vote on the candidates.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz requested more time for Council and she agreed with Alderman Purtee.

Alderman Miller Blakely requested the Clerk of Council to send Council Members a copy of the Unlawful Discrimination Ordinance and a list of the names received prior to the work session.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz asked Mayor Johnson how to proceed. Mayor Johnson answered, no action taken today and directed the City Attorney to place the Unlawful Discrimination Ordinance discussion on the Council's next work session.

ALCOHOL LICENSE HEARINGS

[16. Approval of a Class C \(Liquor, Beer, Wine\)\(By the Drink\) Alcohol License with Sunday Sales to Benjamin M. Zheng for Top Crab Seafood and Bar at 7201 Memorial Drive \(Aldermanic District 4\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - Crab Seafood and Bar Restaurant.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - Crab Seafood and Bar Restaurant.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Alcohol Reports - Crab Seafood and Bar Restaurant.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Measurement Report - Crab Seafood and Bar Restaurant.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson opened the alcohol license hearings for Items #16, #17 and #19.

No Speakers:

a. Alderman Purtee moved to close the alcohol license hearings for Items #16, #17 and #19, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and Alderman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Alderman Palumbo moved to approve Item #16, Alderman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[17. Approval of a Class C \(Liquor, Beer, Wine\)\(By the Drink\) Alcohol License with Sunday Sales to William Hall for Vic's River Grill at 19 East River Street \(Aldermanic District 2\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - Vic's River Grill.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - Vic's River Grill.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Alcohol Reports - Vic's River Grill.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Measurement Report - Vic's River Grill.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson opened the alcohol license hearings for Items #16, #17 and #19.

No Speakers:

a. Alderman Purtee moved to close the alcohol license hearings for Items #16, #17 and #19, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and Alderman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Alderman Leggett moved to approve Item #17, Alderman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Palumbo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[18. Approval of a Class C \(Liquor, Beer, Wine\)\(By the Drink\) Alcohol License with Sunday Sales to John Boyce for Mellow Mushroom at 11 West Liberty Street \(Aldermanic District 2\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - Mellow Mushroom.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - Mellow Mushroom.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Alcohol Reports - Mellow Mushroom.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Measurement Report - Mellow Mushroom.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson opened the alcohol license hearing for Item #18.

Speakers:

1. Ms. Stephanie Croll - Opposed; the neighborhood has eroded due to loud noise, people congregating in the lane, standing and smoking.
2. Mr. John Boyce, Applicant - Supported

Alderman Leggett asked Mr. Boyce to provide a plan that shows the area residents quality of life will not decrease due to the Mellow Mushroom's operations. Mr. Boyce agreed to meet with Alderman Leggett and the community leaders to develop a plan best suited for all parties involved.

Acting City Manager Brown cited concerns of residents on West Harris Street about the noise coming from the business establishments in the area. Mr. Brown requested a representative of the Manager's office and the Police Department to develop a management plan for businesses that use loud speakers.

Alderman Leggett asked Mr. Boyce for the hours of operation and if the establishment will have live music. Mr. Boyce answered, the Mellow Mushroom will not have live music and the hours of operation are: 11:00 am to 11:00 pm on weekdays and 11:00 am to midnight on Friday and Saturday nights.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter suggested staff communicate with potential business owners prior to the purchase of the business and application submittal on the entire process for approval, including the alcohol license, and the responsibility of maintaining the business.

Mayor Johnson, Mr. Brown and Alderwoman Gibson-Carter discussed the process and responsibilities of an applicant opening/starting a business in the City and obtaining an alcohol license; which are two entirely different applications. Mr. Brown indicated the responsibility of retaining the State and City business license, the health department approval, and the alcohol license is the total responsibility and risk of the applicant. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter suggested the City incorporate more compassion in the process. An applicant starting/operating a new business with the intent of generating income from a specific product is a huge endeavor; the City should make sure they are balancing the quality of life for the residents but also being good business partners with the business sector of the community. For clarification, Mayor Johnson indicated the City's website has a prepared packet with step-by-step instructions for applying for a business or alcohol license prior to purchasing a business.

Alderwoman Lanier expressed concern for Council making a decision before the applicant has an opportunity to meet with the area residents to hear their concerns, allow for compromises, and reach an agreement.

Alderman Leggett moved to continue/postpone Item #18 until the next meeting to allow for all parties to meet, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[19. Approval of a Class C \(Liquor, Beer, Wine\)\(By the Drink\) Alcohol License with Sunday Sales to Emanuel B. Gray for Savannah Landmark Liquor at 5 West Derenne Avenue \(Aldermanic District 5\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - Savannah Landmark Liquor.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - Savannah Landmark Liquor.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Alcohol Reports - Savannah Landmark Liquor.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Measurement Report - Savannah Landmark Liquor.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson opened the alcohol license hearings for Items #16, #17 and #19.

No Speakers:

- a. Alderman Purtee moved to close the alcohol license hearings for Items #16, #17 and #19, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- b. Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #19, Alderwoman Miller Blakely seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ZONING HEARINGS

[20. Petition for a Special Use Permit at 4429 Skidaway Road \(PIN 20116 02012\) to Establish a Restaurant with Alcohol Sales/Bar-Tavern for Caprisha Treadwell \(Agent\) on Behalf of Prakash Patel \(Owner\). Aldermanic District 3. File No. 20-006247.](#)

[Exhibit 1: MPC Recommendation Packet - Special Use Permit at 4429 Skidaway Road](#)

Mayor Johnson opened the zoning hearing for Item #20.

Speakers:

- Marcus Lotson, MPC Representative, gave a brief description of the establishment. MPC recommended denial based on the special use criteria which did not meet the intent to provide neighborhood services that are harmonious with residential uses.
- Ms. Caprisha Treadwell, Applicant - Supported and outlined the business plan for the establishment.
- Dr. Amir Jamal Touré - Supported.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan asked Mr. Lotson when MPC denied the applicant was there an approval with conditions offered to the applicant. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan stated area residents have called to oppose the establishment due to noise, loud music, car doors slamming and the parking lot littered with discarded beer bottles. She stated, contrary to Ms. Treadwell's statement, there are no other business owners who are willing to share the parking lot and Savannah State is not in agreement with the establishment; the President of Savannah State is opposed. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan informed Ms. Treadwell the City has rules in place for applicants before they spend. She recommended the applicant open the establishment as a restaurant without alcohol; when you mix alcohol with young adults, the results can be hazardous.

Mayor Johnson reported he has received numerous text messages that a crowd of young people are in the parking lot of the proposed establishment and asked Ms. Treadwell if she was party to the assembly. Ms. Treadwell answered, she knows nothing of the gathering and it has no connection to her establishment. Mayor Johnson asked Ms. Treadwell if she communicated with the residents of Fernwood neighborhood and anyone from Savannah State. Ms. Treadwell stated she has spoken to residents of Fernwood and HOA representatives who are in support of the business and she has spoken to the Chief of Police, Dean of Student Affairs and Vice President of Savannah State who have agreed to work with her on the business plan for the establishment.

Acting City Manager Brown cited historical data for the site. He indicated the building has been vacant since 2018; he asked the police and revenue departments to pull reports for the location that shows chronic problems with violence and events in the parking lot. Mr. Brown detailed the special use permit request as technically a bar; he recommends denial as a bar.

Mayor Johnson asked Ms. Treadwell if she obtained a document from Savannah State University in support of the establishment. Ms. Treadwell answered she did not have a document of support from the University. Mayor Johnson indicated in his communications with Savannah State University, the President was not aware of the establishment.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan reported the assembled crowd in the parking lot was being disbursed as it was not an authorized City event. She would welcome a restaurant at the site but not a bar as presented in the special use permit request. Her focus is on the 3rd District and the residents (neighborhood associations) have indicated to her they do not want any additional alcohol establishments in the community. Ms. Treadwell indicated she had emails sent to Council Members (today) in support of the establishment; additionally, she has communicated with the area businesses who would like to see a business at that location (instead of the empty building). Ms. Treadwell is asking Council to give her establishment an opportunity to prove they would be a benefit to the community.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked Ms. Treadwell why she did not speak to the President of Savannah State University and did she meet with the Chief of Police of Savannah or of the University. Ms. Treadwell answered, she would go to the University for a meeting and wait but the meetings would never happen due to University emergencies for the President; but she did meet with the Chief of Police for the University.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked Ms. Treadwell for the alternative MPC recommended. Ms. Treadwell indicated she was not aware of an alternative. Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked Mr. Lotson for the MPC alternative. Mr. Lotson answered, prior to the MPC hearing, he communicated with Ms. Treadwell she would be permitted to establish a restaurant at the location, and perhaps if she did that for a period of time, the Council might look favorably on her transferring that use to another use if the establishment was a benefit to the community.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter emphasized the importance of the City communicating the restrictions to applicants prior to submission to MPC and coming before Council. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter spoke to the applicants sincere desire to open a business and how the City should find a way to work with and support new business applicants throughout the City using the alcohol overlay.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter requested written or documented contact with Savannah State University, area police, and a plan for the establishment designating if this is a restaurant or bar from the applicant. She suggested coming up with a workable plan before denying the request.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz understands Council's concerns about the establishment location due to the prior reports of unrest. She suggested the applicant find a way to start as a restaurant and return to Council with the special use permit.

Alderman Purtee shared, as a police officer, approximately half of the college students reporting rape or violence alcohol was involved. He does not like the idea of alcohol being readily available to college student just across the street from the campus. Alderman Purtee likes the plan of a restaurant and activities but without the alcohol.

Alderwoman Lanier spoke to the current zoning allowing for a restaurant with some spirits; based on the applicants petition, what she is asking for is allowed. This seems to be a request for a bar/lounge which is a different activity. When asking for a change in zoning to a special use permit, the residents voices should be included and documented. Alderwoman Lanier does not support changing the use.

a. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to close the zoning hearing for Item #20, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter moved to continue/postpone Item #20 to the next meeting in order for the applicant to meet with the neighborhood associations, Savannah State University President and Campus Chief of Police, Alderwoman Miller Blakely seconded. No vote taken.

c. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to deny approval of Item #20, Alderman Leggett and Alderman Palumbo seconded. The motion to deny passed, 6-2-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter and Alderwoman Miller Blakely voted against the denial, and Alderwoman Lanier did not vote/away from the screen.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz asked Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan in her motion to deny would she allow for the applicant to open as a restaurant. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan answered, she would support/welcome a restaurant for young adults but will not support a restaurant/bar.

Mayor Johnson asked Mr. Lotson if the applicant opened a restaurant would that be permitted by MPC; would she need to come before Council again if she so decided and if the petition is denied today when could she resubmit her application. Mr. Lotson answered, MPC would allow the applicant to open a restaurant, she would not need to come before Council again before opening, and she would need to wait a year before reapplying for the special use permit.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter reminded Council they are entertaining approval of the red-cup zone which allows residents and tourist to drink in open cups from River Street to Forsyth Park and beyond. She suggested, with this minority applicant requesting to open a business in Savannah, the City show equity when comparing her business plan with all the safety features, to current problematic alcohol establishments.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter has launched the safe bars and alcohol campaign. Beyond the Bell has reached out to over fifty businesses asking them to sign-on to the program so they are engaging in exceptional service which is consistent with service to prevent sexual violence, underage drinking and DUI. She is asking all local businesses to sign onto the Beyond the Bell Program and asked the Marketing and Communications Director Nick Zoller to post a link on the City's website so residents can access the information.

In an effort to keep harmony in the communities and show equity among businesses, Alderwoman Gibson-Carter suggested the Council have a work session to discuss how to address the petitioners coming before Council requesting alcohol license and special use permits rather than handle each request on an Ala Carte basis.

Mayor Johnson asked Alderwoman Gibson-Carter to make her request to the City Manager's office and not to Mr. Zoller. He further stated the law requires the City to handle each request on a case-by-case basis.

[21. Petition of Bridget Lidy \(Agent\) on behalf of The Mayor and Aldermen to Amend Article 3.0 Application and Review Procedures \(Sec. 3.21 Variances, 3.23 Appeals, 3.24 Relief for Nonconforming Uses and Structures\) and Article 8.0 Use Standards \(8.4.24 Animal Services, Indoor, 8.4.3 Office, Medical, and 8.8.3 Permitted Temporary Uses\), File No. 21-000448-ZA.](#)

[Exhibit 1: MPC Recommendation Packet](#)

[Exhibit 2: Draft Ordinance](#)

Mayor Johnson opened the zoning hearing for Item #21.

Speakers:

- Marcus Lotson, MPC Representative, gave a brief description of the application and review procedures (Article 3.0), and use standards (Article 8.0)
- Mayor Johnson indicated he received one written comment in favor of Item #21.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to close the zoning hearing for Item #21, Alderman Leggett seconded. The motion passed 8-0-0. Alderwoman Lanier did not vote/away from the screen.

ORDINANCES - FIRST AND SECOND READING

[22. Petition of Bridget Lidy \(Agent\) on behalf of The Mayor and Aldermen to Amend Article 3.0 Application and Review Procedures \(Sec. 3.21 Variances, 3.23 Appeals, 3.24 Relief for Nonconforming Uses and Structures\) and Article 8.0 Use Standards \(8.4.24 Animal Services, Indoor, 8.4.3 Office, Medical, and 8.8.3 Permitted Temporary Uses\).](#)

[File No. 21-000448-ZA.](#)

[Exhibit 1: MPC Recommendation Packet](#)

[Exhibit 2: Draft Ordinance](#)

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked City Attorney Lovett about the references to animals in this agenda Item and if it is related to the proposed ordinance with Chatham County. Attorney Lovett answered, this is mainly a zoning classification to allow for certain animal structures and residences, and will not affect the animal ordinance.

After the first reading was considered the second and a request that an ordinance be placed and passed upon its adoption, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #22, Alderman Palumbo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

REAL ESTATE ITEMS

[23. Approval to Purchase Easements to Facilitate Phase III of the Waters Avenue Streetscape Project](#)

[Exhibit 1: Map - Waters Avenue.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Plat - Waters Avenue.pdf](#)

Alderman Leggett moved to approve Item #23, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY ITEMS

[24. Settlement #1](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to authorize the City Attorney to settle a worker's compensation matter in the amount of \$30,000.00, involving a former Savannah employee, D-Andra Ladson, who injured her right shoulder. Alderman Palumbo seconded Item #24. The motion passed unanimously.

[25. Settlement #2](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to authorize the City Attorney to settle a property damage/sewer backup matter in an amount not to exceed \$75,000.00, involving Anna Mae Anderson, 1331 Grace Drive. Alderman Palumbo seconded Item #25. The motion passed unanimously.

[26. Settlement #3](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to authorize the City Attorney to settle a swimming incident claim in the amount of \$1,000,000.00, involving the son of Ammiesha Mitchell who attended summer camp at the Tompkins Regional Center. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderwoman Miller Blakely seconded Item #26. The motion passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Johnson asked everyone to continue to wash your hands.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely announced there will be job fair on April 6, 2021 from 10am to 2pm at the W.W. Law Center. A company named Hire Dynamics is hiring for general labor positions.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan extended Kudos to the Hospice of Savannah in recognition and honor of Social Work Day.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter reminded everyone about the 2021 Great Savannah Community Cleanup Day. She encouraged everyone to visit the website for more details. This even is being held on Saturday, March 27, 2021, 8am to 5pm.

Mayor Johnson announced a mass vaccination site has opened in partnership with Gulfstream and the County located at Gulfstream Aerospace near the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:34 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=9BHdkgap2Oh5>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Initials: _____

