



SAVANNAH CITY GOVERNMENT
SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 24, 2020 – 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 requested Alderman Purtee to introduce Associate Minister Reverend Claire Marich from the Asbury Memorial Church in Savannah, who provided the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

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

Clerk of Council Mark Massey

Following the prayer, Mayor Johnson took a point of personal privilege to recognize the life and legacy of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and local Savannahian John Finney, and his family, on their passing.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

[1. Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda for September 24, 2020](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to adopt/approve the agenda, as amended to ADD Item #22, an IGA with the Chatham County Board of Registrar to enhance the local voter experience by adding new voting box locations, Alderwoman Lanier 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 September 10, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Minutes - September 10, 2020 City Council Workshop.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #2 and #3, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The

motion passed unanimously.

[3. Approval of Minutes for the Regular Meeting held on September 10, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Minutes - September 10, 2020 City Council Regular Meeting.pdf](#)

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

PRESENTATIONS

[4. Presentation on the Addition of Emergency Medical Response Services for the Savannah Fire Department](#)

POSTPONED to a later date, per Mayor Johnson.

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.)

[5. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Structure Securing Services with Beers Housing, Inc. for up to \\$100,000 \(Event No. 6913\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Structure Securing Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Structure Securing Services.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked the City Manager if this expense is paid for by the City with the expectation of passing the expense onto the homeowner. The City does expect reimbursement for the expense. Since the money comes from the City's General Fund, she asked if there was a projection of how much the City spends in this service in attempts to get reimbursement for this expense. The City Manager will get the information to Council tomorrow.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter had concerns with Beers Housing, Inc. being the same company for Item #13. City Manager Monahan explained Item #13 is for clearing lots due to code compliance. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter suggested Item #13 could offer an opportunity for local residents to board up homes or clearing lots.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely had concerns with the local SBE's not receiving an RFP. The City Manager said there were no local responses to the RFP. Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked to see copies of the RFP's that were sent out to local SBE's.

a. Alderwoman Miller Blakely moved to deny the contract, Item #5, Alderwoman Gibson-Carter seconded. The motion failed 2-7-0. Mayor Johnson, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz, Alderwoman Lanier, Alderman Leggett, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan, Alderman Palumbo, and Alderman Purtee voted no.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz addressed Alderwoman Miller Blakely and assured her the new administration will do a better job of having more local businesses involved in the work being done in Savannah.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter agreed with Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and asked the City staff for more of an effort to notify local businesses of any RFP's for contractual work.

The City Manager and Mayor Johnson shared the RFP process for Council Members and indicated the RFP goes out to all businesses registered with the City with the correct commodity code.

Alderwoman Lanier agreed there must be some kind of barrier where the local businesses are not having an opportunity to bid on the City RFP's. Staff needs to do a better job of making sure local businesses have an opportunity to bid.

b. Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #5, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed 7-2-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter and Alderwoman Miller Blakely voted no.

[6. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for Commercial Refuse containers with Lewis Steel Works for up to \\$66,000 \(Event No.7993\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Commercial Refuse Containers.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Commercial Refuse Containers.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #6, #8, #9 and #10 per the City Manager's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[7. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Lease Agreement for License Plate Readers with Flock Group, Inc. in the Amount of \\$33,000 \(Event No. 8074\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - License Plate Readers.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - License Plate Readers.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Lanier thanked Taffanye Young and her staff for working on this project to bring it to a successful conclusion.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz agreed with Alderwoman Lanier. Also on the ZOOM call was Mr. Kevin Milton, Code Compliance, and Mr. Gene Prevatt of the Sanitation Department. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan thanked Assistant City Manager Heath Lloyd for the help with dead end streets, including

Gene Prevatt, and Attorney Bates. She suggested a visual demonstration of the cameras for Council sometime in the near future.

Mayor Johnson identified the project as twelve (12) leased cameras in a piggyback contract off of Chatham County to catch illegal dumpers throughout the City.

Alderwoman Lanier moved to approve Item #7, Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[8. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Revenue Generating Contract Renewal for Towing Services with Everready Recovery and Towing. \(Event No.7317\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Towing Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Towing Services.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #6, #8, #9 and #10 per the City Manager's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[9. Authorize the City Manager to Procure a Diesel Generator for Lift Station No.166 from Cummins Inc, in the Amount of \\$78,001.29.\(Event No. 8072\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Emergency Generator.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Emergency Generator.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #6, #8, #9 and #10 per the City Manager's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[10. Authorize the City Manager to Procure a Portable Power Lift from Mohawk Lifts in the Amount of \\$48,950.\(Event No. 8070\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Portable Power Lift.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Portable Power Lift.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #6, #8, #9 and #10 per the City Manager's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

PURCHASING ITEMS

[11. Authorize the City Manager to Execute the Renewal of a Contract for Medicare Advantage Plan Benefits with Humana, Inc. for up to \\$1,600,000.\(Event No. 4553\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Medicare Advantage Plan.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Medicare Advantage Plan.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #11, #12, and #14 per the City Manager's recommendation, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[12. Authorize the City Manager to Execute Contract Modification No.1 for Electrical Repair Services with Aiken Harper Electrical for up to \\$350,000.\(Event No. 7366\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Electrical Repair Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Electrical Repair Services.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #11, #12, and #14 per the City Manager's recommendation, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[13. Authorize the City Manager to Execute Contract Modification No.2 for up to \\$50,000 and the Annual Renewal for \\$250,000 for Lot Clearing Services with Beers Housing, Inc. \(Event No.7071\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Lot Clearing Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Lot Clearing Services.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked Mr. Milton where Beers Housing, Inc. resides. He believes, Marietta, GA, but he will get the correct information to Alderwoman Miller Blakely.

Mayor Johnson suggested as the City expands their work product, the inclusion of local businesses should be a priority for Council. If there are any gaps in the process, the City should advocate for those businesses to apply for opportunities. This way we keep the money here locally.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely will definitely take up the mantle to make sure the local DBE's are notified and notified timely.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz suggested the public take advantage of the tools at the Entrepreneurial Center that contains a wealth of information and suggestions for small businesses.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked for clarity from the City Manager why the modification is only seven (7) months after the contract award and the original amount of the contract. The original contract was an "up to" approximate amount with modification #1 completing the first year, modification #2 is for the annual renewal period. The increase was due in part to the increase of properties needing lot clearing.

Alderman Palumbo stated we need to find a long-term solution given these contracts will be repeated each year. The City should think of some creative solutions to alleviate some of the problems in the

long run to keep the work here with local businesses.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #13, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed, 7-2-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter and Alderwoman Miller Blakely voted no.

[14. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Construction Contract for the Springfield Pump Station Gantry Crane Rail Extension Project with Southern Civil, LLC in the Amount of \\$114,540 \(Event No.7971\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Construction Contract Springfield Pump Station.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Construction Contract Springfield Pump Station.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #11, #12, and #14 per the City Manager's recommendation, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ZONING HEARINGS

[15. Amend Sections 8.7.4 Accessory Dwelling Units and 11.5 Nonconforming Lots of the Zoning Code, Petition of Bridget Lidy on behalf of the Mayor and Aldermen \(File No. 20-003831-ZA\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: MPC Recommendation](#)

[Exhibit 2: Draft Ordinance Revisions](#)

Mayor Johnson opened the zoning hearing.

Bridget Lidy, Director of Planning and Urban Design introduced Marcus Lotson from MPC to present Item #15 with full recommendation from MPC.

Marcus Lotson gave the definition of accessory dwelling units and described the added architectural language to describe the units and owner occupancy. MPC added language for any sub division with nonconforming lots to go through the City of Savannah subdivision regulations.

The Clerk of Council reported there were no public comments.

Alderman Leggett asked for the locations and if neighborhood associations were notified of the ordinance changes. This is city wide, primarily in midtown and downtown. Some outreach was done to neighborhood associations with positive feedback. Alderman Leggett asked Attorney Lovett if the new language in the ordinance affected any of issues dealing with Jones Street. This does not affect the issues with Jones Street.

Alderwoman Lanier has concerns with one story buildings on the Westside as it relates to accessory dwellings (garage apartments) to create density. She is unclear as to duplexes and restrictive zonings that restrict the property owners. Alderwoman Lanier suggested more work needs to be done before any decisions are made.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked Mr. Lotson if the buildings will be available for renting. The main resident on the property must be owner occupied, in order to have an accessory dwelling unit on the property.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz suggested tabling Item #15 until meetings with the neighborhood associations can be accomplished and all the unanswered questions addressed. Alderman Leggett agreed with Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz to table Item #15 for neighborhood associations participation.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked Mr. Lotson if affordable housing is one of the goals. He responded, this particular amendment does not address affordable housing.

Alderman Leggett suggested tabling Item #15 to afford the opportunity to meet with neighborhood associations and Ms. Lidy to come up with designs and options the entire Council can agree with and produce language for vacation rental spaces. He asked for the true definition of accessory dwellings for the community. As currently written in the zoning ordinance, an accessory dwelling is defined as a structure used as an individual residential unit located on the same lot as the principle dwelling.

Alderwoman Lanier recommended a postponement of Item #15 to allow for more discussions and to bring more people to the table for discussion. When it comes to the height, she would like to see an (a) and a (b), and if the accessory dwelling sits towards the rear of the lot, maybe the height could be higher. More discussion is needed in regards to architecture.

Mayor Johnson has concerns with architectural and ownership loopholes. He asked Mr. Lotson how much time is needed, so that the damage is not irreversible. Mayor Johnson asked Alderman Leggett if thirty (30) days would be adequate time to accomplish the meetings.

Alderwoman Lanier moved to continue/hold Item #15 zoning hearing for thirty (30) days to the October 22, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting, Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ORDINANCES - FIRST AND SECOND READING

[16. Amend Sections 8.7.4 Accessory Dwelling Units and 11.5 Nonconforming Lots of the Zoning Code, Petition of Bridget Lidy on behalf of the Mayor and Aldermen \(File No.](#)

[20-003831-ZA\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: MPC Recommendation](#)

[Exhibit 2: Draft Ordinance Revisions](#)

Alderman Lanier moved to continue/postpone Item #16 for thirty (30) days to the October 22, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting, Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS

[17. Approval of a Resolution accepting a \\$20,000 donation from Community Housing Services Agency, Inc. for the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund](#)

[Exhibit 1: CHSA Truist SAHF Donation Resolution.pdf](#)

Martin Fretty announced he was pleased the contributions have grown the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund. The private sector's contribution this year will top \$100,000 and the City's contribution to the fund this year is \$150,000. The contribution's today are very important, \$27,000 is earmarked for home improvements.

Mayor Johnson thanked all who serve on the Savannah Affordable Housing Taskforce for their work. At the request of Mayor Johnson, City Manager Monahan reported the statistics on housing fund deposits: since 2012 - \$2,176,538.00; most recently \$1,250,000.00 for the revolving construction fund; and \$500,000.00 most recently for the eighty-five final units at Savannah Gardens.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #17, #18 and #19, Alderman Gibson-Carter seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[18. Approval of a Resolution accepting a \\$2,500 donation from Community Housing Services Agency, Inc. for the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund](#)

[Exhibit 1: CHSA UCB SAHF Donation Resolution.pdf](#)

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Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #17, #18 and #19, Alderman Gibson-Carter seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[19. Approval of a Resolution accepting a \\$7,000 donation from Community Housing Services Agency, Inc. for the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund](#)

[Exhibit 1: CHSA WF SAHF Donation Resolution.pdf](#)

Martin Fretty announced he was pleased the contributions have grown the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund. The private sector's contribution this year will top \$100,000 and the City's contribution to the fund this year is \$150,000. The contribution's today are very important, \$27,000 is earmarked for home improvements.

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Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #17, #18 and #19, Alderman Gibson-Carter seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

AGREEMENTS

[20. Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chatham Savannah Homeless Authority to Coordinate with Stakeholders and Develop and Implement the Streets to Stability Initiative](#)

[Exhibit 1: Agreement - CSAH Homeless Strategies.pdf](#)

City Manager Monahan requested to continue Item #20 to the October 8, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting.

Alderman Wilder-Bryan thanked Mr. Fretty for his work in the 3rd District on Mercer Housing on Pennsylvania Avenue. This will create more affordable housing. She also thanked Ms. Dixon and Taffanye Young and her staff.

[21. Approval of an Agreement with Farmers and Associates, LLC to Serve 6078 Ogeechee Road with Water and Sewer](#)

[Exhibit 1: Agreement - 6078 Ogeechee Road.pdf](#)

Since the property is currently in unincorporated Chatham County, Alderwoman Lanier asked the City Manager if there is a reason why they are not doing the annexation first. He responded, a church owns the property and wants to sell it to Farmers and Associates, but the water and sewer agreement will be not executed until after the annexation.

Alderwoman Lanier moved to approve Item #21, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and Alderwoman Miller Blakely seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[22. Authorize the City Manager to Sign an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Chatham County Board of Registrars to Enhance the Local Voter Experience](#)

[Exhibit 1: Agreement - Chatham County Board of Registrars.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Map - Voting Box Location.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson summarized Item #22. An IGA with the Chatham County Board of Registrars to place ballot drop boxes at the Savannah Civic Center, the Liberty City Community Center, the Carver Village Community Center, and the WW Law Community Center to allow voters to drop their votes in the ballot drop boxes. He thanked the League of Women Voters for all their efforts in getting the ballot drop box locations. He also encouraged the public to early vote.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter moved to approve Item #22, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

REAL ESTATE ITEMS

[23. Authorize the City Manager to Approve the Underground Easements to Georgia Power Company at 14 Interchange Court](#)

[Exhibit 1: Map - 14 Interchange Court.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: A - 14 Interchange Court.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Attachment - Underground Easement 14 Interchange Court.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to approve Item #23 per the City Manager's recommendation, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[24. Approval of a Lease Agreement for the Use of Grayson Stadium located at 1401 E. Victory Drive](#)

[Exhibit 1: Grayson Stadium Lease.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Grayson Exhibit.pdf](#)

City Manager Monahan reported staff issued an RFP and received only one response from Fam First Entertainment, LLC., owners of the Savannah Bananas. After negotiations, a lease agreement rate from \$20,000.00 to \$25,000.00 was reached. The Savannah Bananas will contribute \$250,000.00 for capital improvements that will be approved by the City over the next five year period.

Jesse Cole, in his yellow suit, from Fam First Entertainment was present for Mayor Johnson to thank him for making baseball fun again. Mayor Johnson gave a brief history of Savannah baseball beginning with the Savannah Sand Gnats. The Savannah Sand Gnats moved to Columbia and left Grayson Stadium. The Savannah Bananas is the top grossing coastal playing teams, bringing home a couple championships. Alderman Palumbo thanked Mr. Cole for his continued commitment to the City of Savannah.

Mr. Cole thanked the City for all their support and told the City to get ready, they are just getting started. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz expressed their thanks and appreciation to Mr. Cole and the Savannah Bananas.

Alderwoman Lanier moved to approve Item #24 per the City Manager's recommendation, Alderwoman Gibson-Carter seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[25. Approval of a Lease with Sprint Spectrum at Kerry Street Tower](#)

[Exhibit 1: Map -1801 Kerry St.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Lease Agreement - Sprint -1801 Kerry Street.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Lanier moved to approve Item #25 per the City Manager's recommendation, Alderwoman Miller Blakely seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

CLOSING:

Alderman Leggett recognized the 105th birthday of the grandmother of Lieutenant Torrance Garvin, a District Two resident.

Mayor Johnson recognized all staff who assisted with the two days of activities while hosting the City Manager finalists.

Hearing no objections, Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 7:53 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=Z9hgLIOvcJFz>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Initials: ____

