



SAVANNAH CITY GOVERNMENT
SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 22, 2020 – 2:00 p.m.

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the regular meeting of the City Council was held via Zoom video communications at 2:00 p.m. Following the roll call, Mayor Johnson recognized Aldерwoman Linda Wilder-Bryan to offer the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

PRESENT: Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding

Aldерwoman Keshа 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

INVOCATION

[1. Details Regarding Invocation Presenter will be Forthcoming](#)

The Invocation was presented by Aldерwoman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

[2. Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda for December 22, 2020](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to adopt/approve the agenda as presented, Aldерwoman Lanier and Aldерwoman Miller Blakely seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[3. Approval of Minutes for the Work Session & City Manager's Briefing held on December 10, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.](#)

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

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #3 and #4, Aldерwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #3 and #4, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

[5. Appearance and Presentation by Leaders from Hunter Army Airfield in Support of National Wreaths Across America Day](#)

Lt. Colonel Stephan Bolton and Command Sgt. Major Tremayne Robbins presented the Mayor and Council with a wreath from the Wreaths for Warriors Walk to the City of Savannah's for support to the communities. The Wreath will be on display at City Hall.

Mayor Johnson and Council thanked the Hunter Army Airfield Leaders and Soldiers for their service and wished all a happy holiday season.

PURCHASING ITEMS

[6. Authorize the City Manager to Execute Contract Modification No. 4 with AECOM/Hunt to Approve the Guaranteed Maximum Price for the Arena Parking Deck in the Amount of \\$13,296,250 \(Event No. 6096\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Agreement - Arena Parking Garage \(Modified\).pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Agreement - Arena Parking Garage \(Original\).pdf](#)

Acting City Manager Brown discussed the importance of having a parking deck for the Arena and the costs associated with the deck. He recommends approval of the project.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked Chief Operating Officer Bret Bell the status of the local DBE participation and asked for the list of the DBE contractors. Mr. Bell stated the DBE goal for the Arena and the parking deck is 25%, which is greater than the City's overall DBE goal of 20%. This equates to 22 local DBE contractors and 32 local overall sub-contractors participating in the construction of the Arena parking garage. Mayor Johnson requested Mr. Bell and Mr. Brown to send the list of contractors to Council Members and make the list public.

Acting City Manager Brown has established a project to work with small DBE contractors on upcoming City projects. The project will be headed by Assistant City Manager Health Lloyd and Mr. Bell.

Alderwoman Lanier is pleased to see the City Manager's office establish programs to work with local DBE contractors to educate, work out payment methods and help with training on local projects.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked Mr. Bell if the City utilized union workers for the Arena parking garage project. Mr. Bell and the construction manager AECOM/Hunt have met with local Union officials and there are a few union workers on the Arena parking garage project but he expects an increase in union workers on the Arena project this Summer when specific skill sets are required.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely informed Council there was only one (1) union worker on the project and she would like some type of guarantee going forward, there will be local union workers and local DBE contractors on the project. She would like the staff to support Savannah First on projects. She requested the names of staff and individuals from AECOM/Hunt that are meeting with union representatives and local DBE contractors to ensure their participation on the Arena project. Mr. Bell shared the names of individuals and projected time table for skilled workers.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely requested Mr. Bell provide the specific number of skilled workers currently working at the site from the City of Savannah. Mr. Bell gave statistics from Chatham County. Mayor Johnson requested Mr. Bell provide the exact number of workers on site from Savannah (corporate limits). Mr. Bell will send the information to Council.

Mayor Johnson requested Mr. Brown to provide a dashboard for Council to view Savannah First and show the different disciplines working on the project.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz, Alderwoman Miller Blakely, Alderwoman Lanier, and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan stressed the importance of using local DBE contractors, local union workers and local skilled workers on any and all City capital projects.

Alderwoman Lanier moved to approve Item #6, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed, 8-1-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter voted no.

[7. Authorize the City Manager to Execute Contract Modification No. 2 with Jones Lang LaSalle Inc. for Arena Parking Deck Program Management Services in the Amount of \\$123,212.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Agreement - Arena Parking Garage Program Management \(Modified\).pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Agreement - Arena Parking Garage Program Management \(Original\).pdf](#)

After meetings with staff, Alderwoman Lanier corrected the record. May 1, 2019 City Council approved Modification No. 1, and Item #7 is Modification No. 2.

Alderwoman Lanier moved to approve Item #7, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed, 8-1-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter voted no.

[8. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Life Insurance Services with The Standard Life Insurance Company for an Estimated \\$600,000. \(Event No. 8220\)](#)

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

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

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

[9. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Stop Loss Insurance Services with International Assurance of Tennessee, Inc. for the Estimated Amount of \\$790,107. \(Event No. 8221\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Stop Loss Insurance Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Stop Loss Insurance Services.pdf](#)

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

[10. Authorize the City Manager to Enter into an Agreement for Emergency Repair Services for the Civic Center's HVAC System with Trane U.S. Inc. in an Amount not to Exceed \\$167,025.33](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Civic Center Trane Settlement.pdf](#)

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

ALCOHOL LICENSE HEARINGS

[11. Approval of a Class E \(Beer, Wine\)\(By the Package\) Alcohol License to Chirag Patel of Savannah Mart at 2810 Skidaway Road \(Aldermanic District 3\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - El Cheapo Station.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - El Cheapo Station.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Alcohol Reports - El Cheapo Station.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Measurement Report - El Cheapo Station.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson asked the Clerk of Council to coordinate with Acting City Manager Brown to assign the first work session meeting of 2021 (January 14, 2021) for Board reappointment and appointments.

Acting City Manager Brown suggested the City work with alcohol petitioners to improve the negative environmental circumstances surrounding the establishment rather than delay approval of the alcohol license. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan responded to Mr. Brown that the 3rd District has over 17 liquor/convenience stores within a one mile radius. With the alcohol overlay ordinance, she is addressing the voice of the residents who would like to see a decrease in liquor/convenience stores to prevent the negative impact on the neighborhoods. Namely, root causes such as increased crime and violence.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to defer/continue Items #11 and #12 at the request of the petitioner to the January 28, 2021 Meeting, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[12. Approval of a Class E \(Beer, Wine\)\(By the Package\) Alcohol License for Bijal Patel of El Cheapo at 902 Pennsylvania Avenue \(Aldermanic District 3\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - El Cheapo Station.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - El Cheapo Station.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Alcohol Reports - El Cheapo Station.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Measurement Report - El Cheapo Station.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to defer/continue Items #11 and #12 at the request of the petitioner to the January 28, 2021 Meeting, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ORDINANCES - FIRST AND SECOND READING

[13. Approval of the De-annexation of 6.75 Acres on Dean Forest Road Near Bob Harmon Road \(Petitioner: Norfolk Southern\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: De-annexation Petition - Norfolk Southern.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: De-annexation Agreement - Savannah and Garden City.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: De-annexation Ordinance - Norfolk Southern.pdf](#)

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 #13, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS

[14. Approval of a Resolution Ratifying the Mayor's December 10, 2020 Extension of Emergency Mask or Face Covering Order](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution - Emergency Order Extension.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #14, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[15. Approval of a Resolution to Provide Temporary Emergency Dwellings for Persons Displaced from Permanent Housing at 65 Dundee Street during COVID-19](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution for Temporary Emergency Dwellings at 65 Dundee Street](#)

[Exhibit 2: Map of 65 Dundee Street](#)

[Exhibit 3: City Council Minutes from May 14, 2020 \(Item #48\)](#)

Acting City Manager Brown discussed the homeless problems throughout the City and the steps necessary to temporarily solve the problem.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan described the project in detail including type of residents, facility features, security and fire protection. She stressed the project is temporary housing for the homeless.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked Mr. Brown if any local residents were contacted and engaged in the decision for the project. Mr. Brown responded Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and staff went door-to-door. She asked who will be doing the assessments on site. Mr. Brown indicated there will be an intake process. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked if the Homeless Authority, Salvation Army and/or Inner City Night Shelter was/is involved and at what capacity. Mr. Brown stated the City's homeless population needs to be addressed now and he is satisfied with the intake process, services, and the overall temporary emergency dwellings project.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked if the Chief of Police has provided a plan of protection for the site and the fire plan. Mr. Brown responded, the site currently has the Tiny Houses and a modest extension of current security will be added with on site safety and management. The site has electricity, bathroom facilities and tent pads.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter stated for the record, Council did not approve an RFP for the project and the City is not following the prescribed process. She recommends the City let professionals manage the project who are trained to work with the homeless population. Mr. Brown assured Council the City has professionals who can manage the project and this is a temporary solution as the City works toward permanent solutions for the City's homeless. Acting City Manager Brown recommended approval of the project.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan outlined the emergency dwelling which is a fourteen foot container supervised by a skilled professional, a fire plan, a security plan, cameras and the site is surrounded by a fence to protect the citizens and the residents of the dwellings. This is a temporary solution the City needs now for the homeless families in the City.

Alderman Palumbo stated this project began in early March when Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan took the initiative to spearhead the project. The residents of the temporary emergency dwellings are citizens of Savannah and need assistance with housing. At the present time, the Homeless Authority does not have the funds to assist with housing. The City is in a position to assist and have the opportunity to assist with temporary housing for this population. He supported the project and thanked Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan for spearheading the project.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked how many families are involved. Acting City Manager Brown replied there are 50 individuals and 50 three-season water-proof tents. She asked when the individuals will move into the tents. Mr. Brown responded, mid January 2021. Alderwoman Miller Blakely received phone calls, emails, and text messages from constituents today very unhappy about the project and indicated they were not notified of the project. She asked if the residents of the emergency dwellings have a criminal background or mental health issues.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan shared with Council her months of working on the project and all the due diligence completed.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan called for the question.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter acknowledged she is not putting perfection over the needs of individuals. The City needed to follow the RFP process and include citizen engagement. Since March, the project should have been included as a work session item and then as an agenda item before coming before Council for a vote.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely stated this project needed a work session to discuss all the details of the project and inform all Council Members of the details of the facility. She is an At-Large Alderwoman and has concerns for all homeless individuals throughout the City. Other Council Members' input into the project could have enhanced the project.

Mayor Johnson thanked Gunn Meyerhoff Shay Architects for providing in-kind services to design a community room, a variety of partners including Georgia Power, Collins Engineers, Terracon, and CHA Civil Engineering for surveys and technical designs.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to approve Item #15, Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed, 7-2-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter and Alderwoman Miller Blakely voted no.

REAL ESTATE ITEMS

[16. Approval to Purchase Sidewalk Easement at 1301 E 55th St \(PIN 20097 20001\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Sidewalk Easement - 1301 E 55th Street.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Map - 1301 E 55th Street.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson informed Council Item #16 is to rectify the record concerning an issue that was done incorrectly.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to approve Item #16, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and Alderman Leggett seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[17. Approval of a License and Access Agreement with Georgia Environmental Protection Division](#)

[Exhibit 1: Map - GA EPD License and Access.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Agreement - GA EPD License and Access.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Lanier moved to approve Item #17, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS

[18. Approval of a Major Subdivision, Rockingham Farms and David Rahn Dairy Tract](#)

[Exhibit 1: Plat - Rockingham Farms and David Rahn Tract](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #18 and #19 per the Acting City Manager's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed, 7-2-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter and Alderwoman Miller Blakely voted no.

[19. Approval of a Major Subdivision, The Palms Phase 2](#)

[Exhibit 1: Plat - The Palms Phase 2](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #18 and #19 per the Acting City Manager's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed, 7-2-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter and Alderwoman Miller Blakely voted no.

CLOSING:

Alderwoman Lanier announced she will host on the City's facebook page, youtube channel and ATR Media, a forum on Creative Place Making in Greater West Savannah on Wednesday, December 30, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. She welcomed the public to join her.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz invited the public to join her for the 5th District Virtual Town Hall Meeting on Tuesday, December 29, 2020 at 6:30 p.m., streaming live from all the City's platforms. She thanked Mayor Johnson for signing the Proclamation on behalf of City Council. The Proclamation was presented on Sunday, December 21, 2020 to Sister Patricia Gunn and Sister Rosalyn Rouse for the Jubilee Freedom Day Celebration. Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz announced, starting on December 26, 2020 through January 1, 2021, Kwanza Celebration will take place in the City. She gave some background information on the 37 years of celebrating Kwanza in the City of Savannah and acknowledged passing of the Kwanza Celebration torch to Alderwoman Gibson-Carter. She invited the public to join in the seven days of celebrations.

In working with Assistant City Manager Heath Lloyd and the Friends of Forsyth Park, Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked the public, especially African Americans, to take the survey at <http://friendsofforsyth.org>. There are plans for events in Forsyth Park starting the second week of January 2021. She wished Alderman Purtee a speedy recovery and asked the public to mask-up for protection during this pandemic because COVID is real.

Acting City Manager Brown gave a recap of the adopted Budget on December 18, 2020 and advised the public there will be web postings for informational purposes.

Mayor Johnson thanked the Acting City Manager, the City Attorney and the Clerk of Council for their service to the City. He thanked all the employees in the midst of a difficult year. The Mayor and Aldermen/Alderwomen wished Alderman Purtee well.

Mayor Johnson ended with: *Let There Be Peace On Earth and Let it Begin With Me.*

Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 3:57 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=hbz9ph3OSQX8>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Initials: _____

