



---

**APRIL 28, 2022, 4:00 p.m. - WORKSHOP and CITY MANAGER'S BRIEFING**

**CITY GOVERNMENT**

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS**

**OF THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN**

**SAVANNAH, GEORGIA**

The work session and City Manager's briefing was held at 4:00 p.m. Mayor Johnson recognized Alderman Purtee to offer a prayer.

**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, Vice-Chairman

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

Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

**ALSO, PRESENT:**

City Manager Joseph A. Melder

Chief of Staff Daphanie Williams

City Attorney Bates Lovett

Clerk of Council Mark Massey

Deputy Clerk of Council Margaret Fox

Workshop Agenda Items

[1. Traffic Calming, T-SPLIST, and Vision Zero.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Traffic Calming, TSPLOST, and Vision Zero.pdf](#)

**ADD-ON**

HEARD before Item #1.

[2. Historic Preservation Commission discussion.](#)

(PRESENTED by Mayor Johnson)

Three (3) nominations were made to fill two vacancies, as follows:

- . Jeffrey M. Notrica - nominated by Mayor Johnson.
- . Brian J. Arcudi - nominated by Alderman Purtee.
- . Renee S. Rubens - nominated by Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz.

The Mayor and Aldermen will consider the three nominations during the Regular Meeting (agenda item #25).

Mayor Johnson welcomed all in attendance and introduced City Manager Melder.

City Manager Melder introduced Assistant City Manager Heath Lloyd and his team for the PowerPoint presentation. In addition to Assistant City Manager Lloyd the team consisted of Mobility Services Director Steve Henry, Mobility Services Manager Michele Strickland, and Traffic Engineering representative Robert "Beau" Dickensheets.

City Manager Melder summarized the entire presentation which was followed by discussion and questions from Council:

- . Mayor Johnson asked, how much is required for the traffic calming request portion of the presentation (\$784,000). He also discussed the following:
  - o Crosswalks - a safety issue in the city
  - o The most dangerous intersections for residents & pedestrians
  - o Highlands & Benton Boulevards - the most serious issue
  - o Sidewalks can be contracted out to a project manager
- . Alderman Leggett asked about the traffic calming committee's meeting schedule. He suggested meeting more often and providing Council with more frequent updates. Alderman Leggett expressed the dangers the pedestrians face and encouraged staff and the traffic calming committee to be more proactive with solutions.
- . Alderwoman Lanier is disappointed and have no confidence in traffic calming information updates for the 1st District. She has asked for information from two prior and the current City Manager with no success; and now she is hearing it's because there was no particular application completed. Alderwoman Lanier suggest the traffic calming committee meet more often and add additional members. She asked for the State data on fatale accidents (cars and pedestrians). Alderwoman Lanier stated there is no equitable treatment on the return of investment associated with TSPLOST. City Manager Melder is committed to working with Alderwoman Lanier on her concerns.
- . Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked which residents qualify to submit request for traffic calming and what is the timeframe for the total process (any resident can request; and 6-12 months). She asked the cost of each device (approximately \$10,000.00). She also asked City Manager Melder the location of sidewalk repairs; installation of new sidewalks, and location of bike lanes. City Manager Melder discussed locations in need of sidewalks and the process of adding new and repairing old sidewalks, and how the City would fund the projects. Bike lanes are also an issue the city will need to evaluate. Alderwoman Miller Blakely stated she is concerns because she sees so much inequity throughout the city. Mayor Johnson added, some neighborhoods in the city do not have sidewalks by design.
- . Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz thanked all presenters. She discussed the need of traffic calming devices throughout the city; and she requested frequent updates from the traffic calming committee. Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz expressed concern for flooding in District 5 due to the Springfield Basin; TSPLOST funds could be used to alleviate the problem associated with the Springfield Basin drainage problems. She has met with Commissioner Milton and the community to discuss the projects needed to eliminate the flooding in the neighborhoods. Sidewalks are also an issue in the 5th District. There must be a coordinated distribution equally across all Districts. She received a report on Project Derenne which she will distribute shortly.
- . Alderman Purtee discussed the need for sidewalks and the seriousness of safety due to a lack thereof, sidewalks are a necessity. He requested City Manager Melder to respond the request for sidewalks and if the current process does not work, then change the process. City Manager Melder is actively looking for new ays to address the issues discussed in today's workshop.
- . Alderman Palumbo thanked Team Savannah for the presentation. He asked Assistant City Manager Lloyd: are the traffic calming request prioritized by need? (its based on timing of resident signatures); is it based on the highest speeds and most dangerous intersections? (its based on timing of resident signatures); are districts given any preferential treatment when it comes to traffic calming measures? (no); does every Member of Council get an appointee on the traffic calming committee (yes); and is there any singular advantage that prioritizes one district over another? (no). Mr. Lloyd added, the traffic calming committee makes all the decisions on which request move forward as outlined in the 2016 policy, staff only collects the data for implementation. Alderman Palumbo thanked Mr. Lloyd and added for six month volunteers

walked the neighborhoods to make a safer environment in his district and then stated he is glad to see Vision Zero.

- Alderwoman Gibson-Carter requested City Manager Melder: 1.) to ask staff to guide the traffic calming committee in revising the rules for how residents request traffic calming measures, homeowners should not have precedence over renters; 2.) regarding how decisions were made in the past, staff must acknowledge there is disparity among the Districts as to where the sidewalks are repaired/installed and where traffic calming devices are placed in order to change the future; 3.) if you're part of the majority on Council, place your request on the agenda, the majority get the votes; 4.) there is disparity, she suggest staff watch how they take advantage of the offerings, namely, the 4th District sidewalk repairs, Abercorn Street near Ardsley Park, how were those sidewalks prioritized. It would seem Vision Zero would be more likely to install sidewalks to prevent fatalities before repairing a sidewalk where a person only trips. City Manager Melder indicated the City does not have jurisdiction over all the sidewalks in the city, he will follow-up with the Alderwoman on any sidewalk installations and what jurisdiction has control over that area. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter stated the jurisdiction is the city, Habersham Street area is having sidewalks installed, streets like Augusta Avenue and Waters Avenue have no sidewalks, but there is a lot of traffic. There is an enormous amount of disparity. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked Chief Operating Officer Bell how he got sidewalks in his area. Mayor Johnson called 'out of order', Council Members do not call out staff, it is inappropriate.
- City Manager Melder addressed Alderwoman Gibson-Carters concerns and stated Team Savannah recognizes this Council has a priority on equity. Changes are being made to policies and programs to make sure the Council's values on equity are established.
- Mayor Johnson added, there is a way to achieve equity regardless of TSPLOST. He would like staff to look at all available options to jump-start projects to achieve equity.
- Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan stated the 3rd District has some traffic calming devices but there are lots of communities without devices. She asked Mr. Henry if the 3 new employees for Vision Zero will be added to his budget (funding not determined yet, Mr. Lloyd will send Council information when decisions are finalized). Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan asked who decides the locations of the hearing impaired and blind child signs in communities (those are old signs and are removed when no longer valid. The signs are no longer in the Federal Manual responded Mr. Henry). She asked City Manager Melder if the staff could create cliff's notes version for the public on how to request traffic calming. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan added, the City can supply mediation and solutions for equity; moving forward we will need to do a better job.

Mayor Johnson apologized to City Manager Melder and staff on behalf of Council for any disparity and thanked Mr. Melder and Team Savannah for all the work they do on behalf of the City.

Mayor Johnson stated Council will reconvene at 6:40 p.m.

The PowerPoint presentation is available and on file in the Clerk of Council's office.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the Workshop at 6:18 p.m.

A video recording of the workshop can be found by copying and inserting the link below in your url:

<https://savannahgovtv.viebit.com/player.php?hash=o6Stv9puUMFQ>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

**Date Minutes Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_