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**JULY 28, 2022, 4:30 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 4:32 p.m. Mayor Johnson recognized Alderman Purtee to offer a prayer.

**PRESENT:**

Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding  
Aldерwoman Kesha Gibson-Carter, At-Large, Post 1  
Aldерwoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2  
Aldерwoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1  
Aldерman Detric Leggett, District 2  
Aldерwoman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3  
Aldерman Nick Palumbo, District 4, Vice-Chairman  
Aldерwoman Dr. Estella Edwards Shabazz, District 5, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Aldерman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

**ALSO, PRESENT:**

City Manager Joseph A. Melder (**attended virtually**)  
Assistant City Manager Heath Lloyd  
Chief of Staff Daphanie Williams  
City Attorney Bates Lovett  
Clerk of Council Mark Massey  
Deputy Clerk of Council Margaret Fox

**Workshop Agenda Items**

[1. Stormwater Management in the City of Savannah.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Stormwater Management in the City of Savannah Presentation.pdf](#)

PRESENTED by Assistant City Manager Heath Lloyd, and Stormwater Management Director Zach Hoffman.

Assistant City Manager Lloyd discussed the visioning sessions held in 2020 and 2022 by Council and five of the priority issues that were of importance to Council that will be highlighted during the PowerPoint presentation:

1. a workshop on drainage/stormwater issues;

- 2. a comprehensive drainage plan;
- 3. a plan to address drainage issues at the Arena;
- 4. developing a comprehensive sustainability plan; and
- 5. developing a comprehensive drainage plan for Savannah including stormwater fees (alternative ways to fund infrastructure).

Mr. Lloyd introduced Stormwater Management Director Zack Hoffman and announced the recent appointment of Water Resources Senior Director Ron Feldner who was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

After addressing Mayor and Council, Mr. Hoffman preceeded with the PowerPoint presentation. Following the presentation, there were questions and discussion by Council Members:

- For projects in the 3rd District, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan asked Mr. Hoffman for any tentative dates for completion for the Placentia Canal Project (South Tompkins Culvert by the end of the year; and Semken & LaRoache Culvert approved project, Mr. Hoffman will send Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan timeline information).
- Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz requested additional attention/work on the West Side of Savannah and pump stations needed, especially in the 5th District in and along the Springfield Basin.
- Alderwoman Lanier asked Mr. Hoffman at what point is the division of North vs South Springfield Basin (at DeRenne near Hunter Airfield). Between 2007 and 2008 why was there a drastic jump in funding (he will send her information). She discussed issues of the sea level rising, glaciers, and sustainability as it relates to drainage at the Springfield Basin, as well as the conditions of current older pipes and their ability to handle water removal.
- Assistant City Manager Lloyd shared information about Savannah's participation in the Smart Sea Level Sensor Program, partnering with Georgia Tech and Chatham County to monitor sea levels, and making the necessary improvements to ensure proper drainage.
- Alderwoman Miller Blakely commended Mr. Hoffman and his staff for removal of tree roots and debris from older pipes and asked the reason for the decrease of staff from 67 in 2006 to the current 50 (RIFF citywide in 2018). She recommends an increase in staff.
- Alderwoman Gibson-Carter expressed concern for water bills increasing due to faulty pipes causing flooding and she asked what is being done to correct the issue. Assistant City Manager Lloyd explained stormwater management is a separate issue from residential water billing; however, staff is currently working on addressing water bill complaints.
- Alderman Palumbo commended Mr. Hoffman on the accomplishments in the City and asked for suggestions on funding solutions moving forward (grants, ARPA funds, SPLOST dependent). Mr. Lloyd briefly discussed the model in Charleston, SC where annually a percentage of the millage rate is dedicated to drainage, a stormwater utility could be an option, and other alternatives used by other coastal cities should be examined.

Mayor Johnson pointed out how Savannah is a lowland coastal city with flooding issues. He discussed the years of flooding, the improvements completed and proposed in the city, and the future projects to control flooding.

Alderman Leggett announced residents' can make special payment arrangements for outstanding water bills. Residents can contact the water department (Ms. Williams), along with the City Manager's office for assistance.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the Workshop at 6:00 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=sRLFq52KhCPG>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

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

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