



SEPTEMBER 23, 2021, 4:00 p.m. - WORKSHOP and CITY MANAGER'S BRIEFING

CITY GOVERNMENT

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

OF THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the regular meeting of the City Council was held at 4:02 p.m., via Zoom video communications. Mayor Johnson recognized Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz to offer the invocation.

PRESENT: Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding

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

Alderswoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2

Alderswoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1

Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2

Alderswoman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3

Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4, Vice-Chairman

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

Alderman Kurtis Purtee, District 6

ALSO, PRESENT:

City Manager Joseph A. Melder

City Attorney Bates Lovett

Clerk of Council Mark Massey

Workshop Agenda Items

[1. City Manager's 90-Day Action Plan](#)

[Exhibit 1: 90 Day Plan - City Manager Joseph A Melder.pptx](#)

Mayor Johnson welcomed and introduced the new City Manager Jay Melder to Savannah. Mr. Melder thanked Mayor, Council, Clerk of Council and the City Attorney for their support and proceeded to the slide presentation outlining his 90 Day Plan.

Following the presentation, there was a discussion which included questions and answers.

- Hiring a permanent End Gun Violence Director and what happened to the last Director (Alderman Leggett).
- Defining the process and timeline to make appropriations for ARPA funds (Alderman Palumbo).

- Any policy changes and updates to the City's Charter and updating the grievance procedure (Alderman Wilder-Bryan).
- Staff sensitivity training in relation to low wealth citizens requests; poverty as it relates to African American homeownership; community benefit strategic approach; problems with drainage and drainage maintenance (Alderman Lanier).
- Poverty reduction, neighborhood revitalization and equity across the City (Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz).

[2. Presentation of the Savannah Housing Action Plan](#)

Mayor Johnson gave an outline of the Housing Task Force and the importance of having the Task Force to address the housing challenges in Savannah. He introduced Ms. Brynn Grant and Mr. Israel Small, co-chairs of the Savannah Housing Task Force, and Martin Fretty, Housing & Neighborhood Services Director for the presentation on the Housing Savannah Action Plan.

Following the presentation, below are some of, but not all discussion items with input from all participants:

- The Savannah Housing Action Plan dated July 2021, pre-fab housing prices, and implementation of housing initiatives to assist buyers, homeowners and the elderly right now (Alderman Miller Blakely).
- Housing affordability, equity/equity component, disparity, livable wages, policies dealing with equity component, displacement of residents due to affordability and including homeless people in discussions (Alderman Lanier).
- Quality housing that is energy efficient, multi-family affordable housing, and intensive education on estate planning and wills (Mayor Johnson).
- City allocated \$500,000 Task Force funds used (Mayor Johnson identified the \$500,000 as funds for Savannah Affordable Housing Fund), and homeless individuals, families and children needing housing now (Alderman Gibson-Carter).
- As development moves westward housing cost will increase, the City needs policies to protect current homeowners and renters in development areas, and maintaining the character in historic neighborhoods (Alderman Lanier).
- Landlords in rooming houses and compliance issues, City staff may need to pay close attention and interact with the landlords (Alderman Gibson-Carter).
- Can the \$10 million in the Savannah Housing Fund be used now to assist the elderly, renters and homeowners right now (Alderman Miller Blakely).

Mayor Johnson thanked Marty Fretty and the entire Savannah Housing Task Force who worked tirelessly for no payments. He will put the Housing Savannah Action Plan on the agenda in two weeks for Council approval. He is asking for the support of Council Members.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the Workshop at 6:01 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=kNXhZRMRLIB6>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Signature: _____