

Meeting Begins at 11:00am

August 29, 2019 City Council Workshop

**SAVANNAH CITY GOVERNMENT
SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES
COUNCIL WORK SESSION & CITY MANAGER'S BRIEFING
August 29, 2019 – 11:00 a.m.**

The work session of the City Council was held at 11:00 a.m. in the 2nd Floor Media Room of City Hall.

PRESENT: Mayor Eddie W. DeLoach, Presiding
Mayor Pro-Tem Carolyn H. Bell
Alderman Brian Foster, Vice-Chairman of Council
Alderman Van R. Johnson, II, District 1
Alderman Bill Durrence, District 2
Alderman John Hall, District 3
Alderwoman Dr. Estella E. Shabazz, District 5
Alderman Tony Thomas, District 6

ABSENT: Alderman Julian Miller, Chairman of Council

OTHERS PRESENT:
Interim City Manager Patrick C. Monahan
Assistant to the City Manager Bret Bell
City Attorney Bates Lovett
Deputy City Attorney Jen Herman
Assistant City Attorney William Shearouse
Clerk of Council Mark Massey

Mayor DeLoach called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. and recognized Heath Lloyd, Chief Infrastructure & Development Officer who introduced David Donnelly, Emergency Management Director.

Date: Aug 29 2019 (11:00am)

Workshop Agenda Items

[1. Dorian Update](#)

Emergency Management Director David Donnelly gave a brief update on Hurricane Dorian, stating it was forecasted at a Category 1 with 85 MPH winds but expected to strengthen into a Category 3 before making landfall. He informed the Mayor and Alderman that rough surf and coastal flooding were expected. The City has been working with Chatham Emergency Management Agency, actively monitoring, and prepping facilities as it is a Category 3.

Alderman Foster asked what the possibility of it turning and going north is and if it was a low percentage. Mr. Donnelly indicated that it was not out of the realm of possibility but dependent on the timing of the turn and how strong the Bermuda High would be when it comes off the coast and hits Dorian.

Heath Lloyd informed everyone that the next policy group meeting would be at 5:15PM to revisit and make any adjustments if need be.

[2. Savannah Harbor Presentation](#)

Mr. E. Ray Michaels, Jr., Senior Vice President of Acquisitions and Finance of Batson Cook Development Company gave a presentation on the Savannah Harbor project.

Mr. Michaels stated that the project began over seven years ago with John Cay and himself to create great public spaces. The two significant pieces put forward on the project are a Marina and a grand river park. A video was played to show the development.

Heath Lloyd informed the Mayor and Alderman that City Manager Pat Monahan was on his way to the meeting.

After the video concluded, Mr. Michaels stated that they plan on breaking ground late first quarter of next year for the first phase, the marina. He informed the members that the project consists of John Cay, himself, a development company, Woodfield, and the marina group is Safe Harbor. Other things planned are condos, boutique hotel, and a medical complex.

Alderman Durrence inquired about the possibility of having a research complex and asked if that was still a possibility. Mr. Michaels informed him that there is and it will be medical related. He stated that he will have more information about that later on.

Mr. Michaels provided information about the location of the harbor in relation to the new hotel that is going up next to the Westin. He informed the members that the new hotel on slip 3, next to that is the trade center that is going to be expanded, and following the Westin is slip 1, which has been enlarged. He stated that the harbor is on the other side of the trade center.

Mr. Michaels informed the members that they are anticipating a hotel as part of their overall. He stated that in order to do the expansion they needed a minimum of 700 rooms, they would prefer 1,000+.

Alderman Durrence inquired about the room count for the boutique hotel. Mr. Michaels informed him it will have 160 units.

Mayor DeLoach asked Mr. Michaels to give an estimated build out cost/price. Mr. Michaels stated it is close to 400 million.

Mr. Michaels concluded by stating that honoring the river and the parks in Savannah is one of their main goals.

[3. Arena Update](#)

Heath Lloyed informed the Mayor and Alderman that there is a change of schedule and there will be a presentation for an update on the arena. Bret Bell gave the presentation.

Mr. Bell stated that we are about two weeks away from the invitation-only groundbreaking event for September 13th at 11:30AM on the construction site. He stated that there will be a larger community celebration with food, music, games, arts, a place for people to give input, and information on job opportunities at 11:00AM on September 14th. Mr. Bell stated that their plan is to put 2,000 parking spaces out there and informed Mayor and Aldermen of the important items on the Council meeting agenda that pertain to the arena. He stated that the arena will be the most complicated facility that the City has ever constructed and it is standard to bring in a commissioning agent to make sure all of the systems are working together. Mr. Bell informed the Mayor and Alderman that the permitting and titling process is going well.

Bridget Lidy, Director of Urban Planning and Urban Design was introduced to give a brief update of the Canal District Master Plan.

Mayor Pro-Tem Bell inquired about the local workforce construction job event and how the word is going out to the local community. Manny Dominguez, Director of Business Opportunity informed her about the event on September 10th and that the goal is to target job seekers who may need some training. He stated that there are jobs that will be available over the next 6-12 months and they have already contacted and secured a variety of different training providers.

Mayor Pro-Tem Bell asked how the word is getting out to the community. Mr. Dominguez informed her that people from his team would go door to door to make sure that the community that surrounds the arena is aware of it, as well as put out a press release.

Mayor Pro-Tem Bell requested everything be done to include the local community and to prepare them.

Nick Zoller commented about how his team is working to make sure everyone is aware.

Mayor Pro-Tem Bell asked Mayor DeLoach for a script to be provided to the Council members so that they can help spread the word.

Bridget Lidy gave a presentation on the update on the Canal District Master Plan in regards to the arena and the surrounding neighborhoods. She provided feedback from the listening workshop and stated that one of the biggest concerns received was issues regarding drainage. She informed the Mayor and Aldermen that a team of experts were meeting to discuss drainage at the end of September.

Alderman Johnson inquired about traffic and requested that staff duplicate what is being done for drainage for traffic too.

Ms. Lidy stated they are contacting communities first to make sure all issues are addressed and her team added a survey on their website for the community to participate.

Alderman Foster brought up drainage and referenced a letter to the editor from that morning that stated the arena is being built on a flood site. He was informed that the arena is at 12 feet which is where it needs to be. Jeff Sherman of Perkins & Will was introduced as the principal architect. He stated the arena is in the best location in the area in terms of flooding and proceeded to give the regular update on the design process. Ernest Joyner, Principal, Operations Director of Perkins & Will joined Jeff at the podium. Mr. Sherman explained food and beverage and the facilities where it will be served. The maximum capacity is 9,500. The exterior of the arena was discussed, specifically the lantern-like towers that highlight Savannah's history.

Alderman Thomas asked if this was the only design they had. Mr. Sherman informed him that it was.

Alderman Johnson inquired about the concession space and asked if it was just in terms of the technical functionality of space. The speakers informed him that they are still in the process of partnering.

Alderman Thomas inquired about change orders, specifically with not knowing who the occupants are. The speakers stated the vendors will have to work within constraints, which will cut down on that.

Mayor DeLoach expressed concern about the towers and how they do not reflect the old train station. Alderman Thomas agreed.

Mayor DeLoach commented on using local vendors first for concessions. Alderman Thomas agreed about reaching out to local vendors and giving them first options. Alderman Johnson added that it needs to be in the contract.

Mayor DeLoach brought up the towers again. Alderman Johnson asked to pull the photo back up. Alderman Thomas referenced the original photo of Union Station. The speakers referred to the style of the building and how they incorporated towers that match. Heath Lloyd commented about timing. Alderman Thomas commented that they should have received more options to look at. The Mayor and Alderman discussed different ideas and provided feedback.

The architects announced they will bring back another design option with a dome to compare the two styles. The photos will be emailed to Heath Lloyd within a week and he will distribute them to the Mayor and Alderman to look over.

4. Special Event Ordinance and Application Update

Susan Broker, Director of Special Events, Film and Tourism gave an update on special events in the City. She introduced Eddie Grant, Administrator and former police sergeant, to go over the new application. Examples of the old application were presented to show how unclear they were. The new application was presented which gives each event a Special Event Impact Rating (SEIR) to classify the impact, rather than the type. Mr. Grant informed members that people can put in an application up to one year in advance and the City will review it within 30 days.

Ms. Broker informed the Mayor and Aldermen that their goal is not to stop regular events that the City has become accustomed to, but instead just make sure resources are not wasted. She stated there will be a rolling implementation and provided an example of a busy weekend to show how they organize and plan.

Mayor Pro-Tem Bell asked if they are trying to redirect runs that take place downtown. Susan said yes and explained other options.

Mayor Pro-Tem Bell inquired about quality of life issues for people who live downtown and suggested a committee to involve those individuals.

Ms. Broker agreed and noted the excessive amount of complaints associated with parades. She stated there is a plan in place for moving things out of that residential area.

Alderwoman Dr. Shabazz inquired about neighborhood parks and asked if individuals who host a cookout or family event need to go through this process. Ms. Broker informed her that the only reason to get a permit is to have exclusive rights to that particular space. She referenced the FAQ on the website which shows whether or not a permit is needed.

Alderman Durrence asked about birthday parties and casual park use and whether this applies to them. Mayor DeLoach confirmed the rules about permits and casual use and stated that we need to clearly define the legacy events so that it does not become a floating number.

Mayor DeLoach and Ms. Broker discussed the importance of limiting the frequency of events, specially within neighborhoods. Ms. Broker informed the members of the restrictions currently in place for hosting consecutive events and stated that the SEIR would assist with this issue.

Alderman Thomas asked if this process includes neighborhoods hosting legacy events such as fall festivals. Ms. Broker stated they are not concerned with that as it is not an issue.

Mayor DeLoach asked for clarification on how to determine when areas are fully booked. Ms. Broker stated that this is their first step on limited events without saying no.

[5. 2020 One Year Action Plan](#)

Kerri Reid, Director of Human Services gave a presentation on the recommendations for 2020. She explained the importance of HUD funds reaching low-to-moderate income persons. Ms. Reid explained the three types of HUD grants: Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership Grant, and Emergency Solutions Grant. Martin Fretty, Director of Housing & Neighborhood Services presented the housing summary and showed how the funds are used for houses. He explained how over the past 10 years, 4,800 households have been assisted and the current Council has averaged 617 units per year. Mr. Fretty presented the remaining projects for 2019 which include Cumming Street and the final phase of Savannah Gardens. Alderwoman Dr. Shabazz asked how the City is involved with the construction and selling of the new homes. Mr. Fretty informed her that the City owns the land and they transfer the lots to the landbank authority, who then work with the neighborhood associations on financing. Ms. Reid concluded the presentation by showing the anticipated revenue for next year, which is \$4,110,542. She informed the members that they will return on October 10th for the second public hearing.

[6. 2nd Quarter Capital Projects Update](#)

Christy Lawrence, Director of Office of Capital Projects and Management introduced her team members; Christian Shellman, Byron Stiles, Dan Reel, Leif Bloomberg, Douglas Patten, and Carol Moon. Ms. Shellman went over the numbers for Quarter 2 and showed that Water and Sewer have the biggest projects, as they have 322 projects going on currently. Mr. Stiles gave an update on River Street Visitor Center. He showed photos of the brand new floors, paint, and bathrooms. The project took two months and cost \$123,601.50.

Ms. Lawrence provided a snapshot of all of the projects going on in their office currently and what part of the process they are in. She emphasized on the two biggest ones completed so far, PARC and Central Precinct.

Alderman Durrence moved to recess the Work Session to hold a closed Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel and litigation, Alderwoman Dr. Shabazz seconded. Hearing no objections, the motion carried unanimously.

The executive session began at 1:14PM.

Alderman Johnson moved to adjourn the Executive Session, Mayor Pro-Tem Bell seconded. Hearing no objections, the Executive Session was closed.

The video 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=ig7CEOLhEeFO>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: September 12, 2019

Initials: mm