
March 1, 2018, Council Work Session

Savannah City Government

SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES

COUNCIL WORK SESSION &

CITY MANAGER'S BRIEFING

March 1, 2018 – 10:00 a.m.

Present: Mayor Eddie DeLoach, Presiding

**Aldermen: Carol Bell, Julian Miller, Brian Foster, Tony Thomas, Bill Durrence, John Hall, Estella Shabazz (arrived at 10:45 a.m.),
Van Johnson, II (arrived at 11:55 a.m.)**

Rob Hernandez, City Manager

Brooks Stillwell, City Attorney

William Shearouse, Assistant City Attorney

Jennifer Herman, Deputy City Attorney

Mayor DeLoach called the meeting to order.

Workshop Agenda Items

[1. Interviews for Boards, Commissions and Authorities](#)

Mayor DeLoach stated he was going to make a recommendation that Alderman Miller be appointed to the Chatham-Savannah Authority for the Homeless as they currently have an opening and by request of Cindy Murphy-Kelley, Executive Director, she would like it filled by a member of Council.

Luciana Spracher, Acting Clerk of Council, reviewed the contents of the notebooks provided to Council.

Interviews

The below applicants were interviewed for appointment to the Historic District Board of Review (HDBR):

- Kevin Dodge
- Nelson Gassman

The below applicants were interviewed for appointment to the Historic District Board of Review (HDBR) and/or the Savannah Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA):

- Nancy Cunningham
- Trapper Griffith
- Walter Harper

Council came to a consensus after a brief discussion on the appointment of Kevin Dodge to the Historic District Board of Review.

The below applicants were interviewed for appointment to the Savannah Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA):

- Michael Garcia
- Ciera Dudley
- Tammy Perkins
- Kendall Walker
- Thomas Henry

Council came to a consensus after a brief discussion to vote on Trapper Griffith being appointed to the Savannah Zoning Board of Appeals.

Council then discussed the applicants for the Housing Authority of Savannah (HAS). A decision was made to hold off on making these appointments until further review of the applicants.

Council came to a consensus after a brief discussion on the appointment of Mary Cohen to the Civil Service Board.

Council discussed holding off on making any appointments to the Ethics Board at this time until they receive feedback from City Attorney Stillwell. They briefly discussed re-advertising the appointment.

Alderman Thomas suggested the City Manager arrange having a representative from the Housing Authority come to a Work Session to update Council on what they're currently doing and plans for the future.

[2. Chatham County Safety Net](#)

City Manager Hernandez briefly reviewed the Work Session Agenda.

Lisa Hayes, Executive Director of Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council, thanked Council for allowing the Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council the opportunity to briefly explain to Council their purpose. She stated they want to determine how they can best serve the constituents of Savannah and what can be done collaboratively to reach them and become an important resource in the community as it relates to healthcare.

She then introduced Eva Elmer, Director of Outreach and Communication, who provided a review of the Chatham County Safety Net and Sarah Dobra, Behavioral Health Manager, who discussed behavioral health work and suicide prevention. Additionally, she introduced partners J. Brandon Gaffney, Chief Executive Officer of J.C. Lewis Primary Health Care Center, and Albert Grandy, Chief Executive Officer of Curtis V. Cooper Primary Health Care.

During the presentation Ms. Hayes reviewed the mission of the Chatham County Safety Net Planning Council (Safety Net), and reviewed the Safety Net's Executive Board and Key Partners.

Ms. Hayes thanked Council for listening and discussed their requests for collaboration. She asked that there be City representation at the Safety Net Full Council meetings which are held quarterly. She stated she will be sending a list of the scheduled meetings to the members of Council. She also discussed opportunities for outreach support for City of Savannah residents to raise awareness, Safety Net health resources and children's health insurance enrollment assistance. She asked that Safety Net be used as a resource for City-funded or City-led initiatives that focus on improving health outcomes. And lastly, she stated there will be free training for City government staff on Safety Net resources and programs to include: Safety Net Primary and Mental Health Providers, Coastal Campaign for Healthy Kids enrollment assistance and Suicide Prevention "Safe Talks".

She then asked Council how can Safety Net help them, what are the concerns of Savannah residents about access to health care and health coverage, and how can they best reach the citizens of Savannah?

Alderman Bell asked Ms. Hayes if Safety Net was going to be actively involved in the Multi Agency Resource Center (MARC) partnership. Ms. Hayes replied they have been in discussions so far.

Alderman Johnson thanked Ms. Hayes for their presentation and stated he is willing to support in any way he can.

Alderman Shabazz also thanked them for coming today stating we don't hear much about the under insured and uninsured citizens in Savannah. She asked the CEO's of J.C. Lewis and Curtis V. Cooper to introduce themselves and briefly talk about their facilities.

J. Brandon Gaffney, Chief Executive Officer of J.C. Lewis Primary Health Care Center, briefly provided a review of the facilities services and locations and Albert Grandy, Chief Executive Officer of Curtis V. Cooper Primary Health Care, also briefly provided a review of the facilities services and locations.

Alderman Miller expressed his concerns and briefly discussed mental health services in light of the recent events in Florida stating if that happened in Savannah we would not be prepared to handle it. He stated whatever can be done to steer services more towards the mental health aspects Council will support.

Ms. Hayes replied stating they agree and there is a critical need to pay more attention to high risk youth and do more to prevent them from falling through the cracks.

Alderman Johnson agreed with Ms. Hayes stating more needs to be done to protect the youth.

[3. Forsyth Park Parking and Maintenance](#)

Susan Broker, Director of the Office of Special Events, Film and Tourism, appeared to get Council's feedback on a proposal on the installation of parking meters in Forsyth Park. Ms. Broker stated the proposed fee would be in the \$1/hour zone, Monday through Saturday, from 8am to 8pm. It would not be enforced between the hours of 8am-2pm on Saturdays due to the Farmer's Market. She stated the projected implementation date would be April 2, 2018. Staff will place announcements on the City's website and on social media. A press release will be sent out by the Office of Public Communications. Additionally, staff welcomes public comment and plans to host a public meeting which will be scheduled in tandem with Aldermanic District 2 meetings and Victorian Neighborhood Association meeting. Ms. Broker briefly reviewed where the funds would go if the proposal is approved by Council.

Alderman Miller expressed his concerns about the spaces outside the parking lots stating his fear is the traffic will be forced to the free parking spaces on the streets.

City Manager Hernandez stated that change is part of the second phase of the Parking Matters Study.

Alderman Durrence stated businesses have asked for metered spaces in those areas and agreed that the changes would be included in phase two of the study.

Alderman Miller suggested including the angled spaces on Park Avenue when this proposed change is made.

Alderman Foster asked for clarification about meters. Ms. Broker replied that she is referring to the automated parking meters. He also suggested charging for parking during the Farmers Market hours as well.

City Manager Hernandez asked for direction on whether this proposal is agreeable and if staff has permission to move forward.

Alderman Durrence suggested having a District meeting prior to a firm start date. City Manager Hernandez stated if Council approves the changes it would start July 1, in an attempt to give staff an opportunity to communicate with the citizens.

Alderman Thomas asked what would be the purpose of the District meeting? He asked will they have an opportunity to speak or would they have no say and it would just be for informational purposes?

Alderman Miller stated the problem is going to be on the Aldermen as it's not just District 2 residents that go to the park.

Alderman Johnson stated it's bigger than the District, everyone in the City uses the park because it's a City park. He suggested having a meeting at the Civic Center to engage the citizens of Savannah and stakeholders as well.

City Manager Hernandez stated staff can put something on the website as they did with the Whitaker Street parking study and he's sure many people will be against it. However, he wants staff to get the opportunity to sell the case as the purpose is to raise revenue that would be dedicated to park improvements.

Alderman Miller cautioned the City Manager about putting too much emphasis on the website as there aren't very many people that go on the website daily to see what's going on. He stated there has to be an outreach to get people.

Alderman Foster stressed that this is also about turning over the spaces, not just raising revenue.

Alderman Shabazz stressed the benefit of having City-wide informational meetings, and bringing awareness to everyone through a diversity of outreach.

There was a discussion of how the revenue generated would fit into the City's funding structure.

Ms. Broker stated she will modify the public participation plan.

[4. Executive Session: Real Estate, Personnel, Litigation](#)

No Executive Session was held.

[5. City Manager's Briefing / Council Meeting Agenda Items for March 1, 2018](#)

City Manager Rob Hernandez presented the City Manager's Briefing of the agenda items for the Council Meeting of March 1, 2018. The agenda can be found online and will be made a part of the permanent record.

There being no further business, Mayor DeLoach declared this Work Session adjourned.

The video recording of the Work Session can be found by copying and pasting the below links in your url:

<https://savannahgovtv.viebit.com/>

Luciana M. Spracher, Acting Clerk of Council

