



JANUARY 13, 2022, 2:00 p.m. - CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

CITY GOVERNMENT

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

OF THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

The regular meeting of the City Council was held at 2:05 p.m. Mayor Johnson introduced The Reverend Michael White, Rector of the Christ Church Episcopal (Savannah), to offer the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

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

Chief of Staff Daphanie Williams

City Attorney Bates Lovett

Clerk of Council Mark Massey

Deputy Clerk of Council Margaret Fox

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

[1. Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda for January 13, 2022.](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to adopt/approve the agenda, seconded by Alderswoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously.

Alderswoman Miller Blakely asked for clarification of Item #33 in the December 21, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes. Mayor Johnson indicated it was not on the Agenda, but Alderman Purtee asked for reconsideration of Council offices that will be handled at the Council visioning session. The visioning session was postponed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[2. Approval of the Minutes for the Special Called Meeting re: Board Appointments and Reappointments Held on December 17, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Minutes - December 17, 2021 Special Meeting re Boards, Commissions, and Authorities](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #2, #3 and #4, seconded by Alderwoman Lanier, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously.

[3. Approval of the Minutes for the Work Session and City Manager's Briefing Held on Tuesday, December 21, 2021 at 12:30 p.m.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Minutes - December 21, 2021 City Council Workshop](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #2, #3 and #4, seconded by Alderwoman Lanier, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously.

[4. Approval of the Minutes for the Regular Meeting Held on Tuesday, December 21, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.](#)

[Agenda Plus_RM DRAFT MINUTES December 21, 2021 City Council Regular Meeting.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #2, #3 and #4, seconded by Alderwoman Lanier, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously.

PRESENTATIONS

[5. Presentation and Formal Unveiling of the Official Portrait of the 66th Mayor of the City of Savannah from 2016-2019, Mayor Eddie DeLoach.](#)

PRESENTED. Mayor Johnson provided an introduction of the City's 66th Mayor and the many accomplishments during his administration that are continuing to completion during the current administration. The formal unveiling of the official portrait of former Mayor Eddie DeLoach was followed by an acceptance speech by Mayor DeLoach with his mother, Marion, and wife Cynthia by his side. Council Members expressed congratulations and well wishes to Mayor DeLoach and family.

[6. Appearance and Recognition of Memorial Health University Medical Center's Donation of \\$30,000 to the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund. These contributions will provide the down payment necessary to help modest wage Memorial Health employees purchase their first home in the City of Savannah. None of the funds will be used for administrative purposes.](#)

PRESENTED. Anita Smith Dixon presented a check to City Council on behalf of Memorial Health University Medical Center. This is the fourth year for contributions from Memorial Health University Medical Center totaling approximately \$120,000.00.

[7. Appearance and Recognition of the Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund Donation of \\$2,500 to the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund. This donation was granted to the Community Housing Services Agency \(CHSA\) as a result of a competitive grant award. None of the funds will be used for administrative purposes.](#)

PRESENTED. Anita Smith Dixon introduced Dave Zoufal, Weerhaeuser Planning & Inventory Manager who presented a check to City Council for senior citizens home repairs. Anita Smith Dixon announced the 2021 contributions to the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund totaled \$222,600.00.

[8. Appearance by the Benedictine Cadets Football Team Along with Coach Danny Britt to Recognize the Team for Winning the 2021 Class 4A Division State Football Championship Game.](#)

PRESENTED. In attendance for the recognition was Father Frank Zlemkiewicz and Coach Danny Britt along with team captains who expressed appreciation for the recognition.

[9. An Appearance by and Proclamation to the Savannah Interagency Diversity Council Announcing "Traffick Jam 2022."](#)

PRESENTED. Read and presented by Mayor Johnson to Chairman Bill Gettis, Bobbie Torres, Member and Barry Paschal, Member and from the US Attorney's office.

Thanks and appreciation was given to Council for the recognition and proclamation by Mr. Gettis, Ms. Torres and Mr. Paschal. An invitation was extended to Council and the public to attend the Traffick Jam 2022 on January 28th and 29th at Savannah State University, free lunch will be served.

ZONING HEARINGS

[10. Petition of Joseph Ross, AREP V Investments, LLC on Behalf of Savannah Hospitality, LLC for a Zoning Map Amendment to Rezone 5820 White Bluff Road \(PIN 20131 04002\) from B-C \(Community Business\) to RMF-2-30 \(Multifamily Residential\), Aldermanic District 4 \(File No. 21-006264-ZA\). The proposed project consists of converting 102 suites of the Homewood Suites Hotel into 102 apartments.](#)

[Exhibit 1: MPC Recommendation Packet for 5820 White Bluff Road](#)

[Exhibit 2: Maps for 5820 White Bluff Road](#)

[Exhibit 3: Plat for 5820 White Bluff Road](#)

[Exhibit 4: Draft Ordinance for 5820 White Bluff Road](#)

Mayor Johnson declared the zoning hearing for #10 open.

Speaker(s) present:

- Marcus Lotson, MPC Representative - MPC recommended approval. Mr. Lotson stated there is no evidence to show there would be a negative impact on the property values in the immediate surrounding area.
- Mr. Joseph Ross, petitioner
- Mr. Eli Chester, developer

Written comment(s):

- Marie Backus McGaughey – OPPOSED (via letter)

Mayor Johnson asked Mr. Ross if any portion of the project will be affordable housing. Mr. Ross stated these are efficiency, one and two bedroom apartments that are below market level rents. The units range approximately 455 to 700 square feet.

Alderman Miller Blakely asked for the rent amounts (\$900.00 to \$1,300.00 per month); Alderman Wilder-Bryan asked if the project would be duplicated in other areas of the City (only if there are similar hotels like Homewood Suites); and Alderman Palumbo thanked the petitioner for the creative adaptive reuse of the Homewood Suites.

Alderman Gibson-Carter stated the project does not satisfy the affordable housing issue. She recommended Council have the opportunity to discuss policy related to projects for inclusion of community benefits. City Manager Melder indicated this issue is scheduled for discussion during a Council Workshop Meeting in February.

Mr. Chester indicated the units should be available for rents approximately in the June-July 2022 time frame with amenities of laundry facilities, bicycle holding space, and facilities similar to apartment complexes.

Alderman Palumbo moved to close the hearing for Item #10, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz. The motion passed unanimously.

ORDINANCES - FIRST AND SECOND READING - (CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)

[11. Petition of Joseph Ross, AREP V Investments, LLC on Behalf of Savannah Hospitality, LLC for a Zoning Map Amendment to Rezone 5820 White Bluff Road \(PIN 20131 04002\) from B-C \(Community Business\) to RMF-2-30 \(Multifamily Residential\), Aldermanic District 4 \(File No. 21-006264-ZA\). The proposed project consists of converting 102 suites of the Homewood Suites Hotel into 102 apartments.](#)

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After the first reading was considered the second reading and a request that an ordinance be placed and passed upon its adoption, Alderman Palumbo moved to approve Item #11, seconded by Alderman Wilder-Bryan and Alderman Purtee. The motion passed, 8-1-0. Alderman Gibson-Carter voted no.

PURCHASING ITEMS - (CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)

[12. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for the Purchase of Four Fire Pumpers and One Aerial Ladder Truck with Sutphen Corporation in the Amount of \\$4,500,000. Savannah Fire Department will use the fire apparatus as replacements for equipment that has reached their end-of-service life.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Fire Apparatus](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Fire Apparatus](#)

Alderman Wilder-Bryan asked City Manager Melder if the \$4.5 million was moved from the capital funding to the replacement vehicle line item, and what happens to the \$4.5 million in the capital funding. City Manager Melder indicated there was an error in the fiscal statement that was corrected today.

Alderman Leggett asked if the current equipment will be sold or re-purposed. Fire Chief Minard indicated the old equipment will be retired, placed up for sale or sold as parts.

Alderman Wilder-Bryan moved to approve Item #12, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

[13. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Grounds Maintenance of Hutchinson Island Medians, ROW \(Right of Way\) and Greenspaces with Venson Lawn and Landscape \(LOCAL, SBE, DBE\) for up to \\$29,620. The contract will be utilized to maintain the turf grass and shrubbery on various City medians, rights of ways, and greenspaces on Hutchinson Island.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Grounds Maintenance of Hutchinson Island Medians, ROW and Greenspaces](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Grounds Maintenance of Hutchinson Island Medians, ROW and Greenspaces](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #13 through #23, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

[14. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for Repair Services for a Bulldozer with Caterpillar in c/o Yancey Brothers in the Amount of \\$30,513. Replacement of the bulldozer's undercarriage is needed to maintain the equipment and typically takes place once the machine surpasses 2,000 runtime hours. The unit is the primary waste handling machine at the Dean Forest Landfill.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Repair Services for 850K Bulldozer](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Repair Services for 850K Bulldozer](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #13 through #23, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

[15. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for Groundwater Compliance Consulting Services with Advanced Environmental Management, Inc. for up to \\$50,000. The service will be used to conduct groundwater and surface water sampling and analysis, as well as consultation for the Dean Forest Road Landfill.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Groundwater Compliance and Consultant Services](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Groundwater Compliance and Consultant Services](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #13 through #23, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

[16. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for SCADA Annual Maintenance for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System with Emerson Process Management \(LOCAL\) in the Amount of \\$88,064. The annual maintenance contract maintains the SCADA network used by the Public Works and Water Resources Department.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Maintenance Agreement](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Maintenance Agreement](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #13 through #23, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

[17. Notification of an Emergency Purchase to Repair the Recreational Docks at Rousakis Plaza with Myrick Marine \(LOCAL\) in the Amount of \\$103,147. The recreational dock was damaged at the junction of two interior water beams from a log wedged in the middle of a float.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Emergency Dock Repairs](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Emergency Dock Repairs](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #13 through #23, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

[18. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Modification Number One and Renewal for Smartsheet Software with Smartsheet, Inc. in the Amount of \\$133,450. The City uses this software as a project management center that allows City Staff to assign tasks, track progress of projects and tasks, manage calendars, share and edit documents.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Modification for Smart Sheets](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Modification for Smart Sheets](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #13 through #23, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

[19. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for Tree Planting Services to Sam-Jay Services, Inc. \(LOCAL\) in the Amount of \\$193,069. The contract will be utilized to procure and install approximately three hundred trees of specific species throughout the year.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Tree Planting Services](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Tree Planting Services](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #13 through #23, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

[20. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for One-Ton Chlorine Cylinders with Allied Universal in the Amount of \\$322,350. The one-ton chlorine cylinders will be used by the Industrial and Domestic Water Department and Water Reclamation Department to disinfect drinking water and wastewater effluent.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Note](#)

[Exhibit 3: Specs](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #13 through #23, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

[21. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Modification for the Enmarket Arena Commercial Washers and Dryers with Stafford Smith in the Amount of \\$6,202. Commercial washers and dryers will be used by arena staff for various events. This modification is necessary due to supply chain shortages.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Commercial Washers and Dryers](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Commercial Washers and Dryers](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #13 through #23, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

[22. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Modification for the Fall Protection System at the Savannah Arena with Evan Fall Protection in the Amount of \\$38,000. As part of the Arena Project, the system allows safe worker access/fall protection for roof and suspension trusses for events and building equipment above the main floor of the arena building.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - Fall Protection Modification](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - Fall Protection Modification](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #13 through #23, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

[23. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract for Membership Dues with GMA \(Georgia Municipal Association\) in the Amount of \\$40,427. GMA is an advocate for cities and offers a wide range of services, training programs, and resources aimed at strengthening cities and enhancing the quality of life of the citizens.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Funding Verification - GMA Membership Dues](#)

[Exhibit 2: Purchasing Notes - GMA Membership Dues](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #13 through #23, seconded by Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS - (CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)

[24. Appearance and Recognition of Memorial Health University Medical Center's Donation of \\$30,000 to the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund. These contributions will provide the down payment necessary to help modest wage Memorial Health employees purchase their first home in the City of Savannah. None of the funds will be used for administrative purposes.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution - 2021 Memorial Health Donation](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #24 and #25, seconded by Alderwoman Miller Blakely and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously.

[25. Approval of a Resolution Accepting a \\$2,500 Donation from the Community Housing Services Agency, Inc.'s \(CHSA\) via the Weyerhaeuser Giving Fund to the Savannah Affordable Housing Fund. This donation was granted to CHSA as a result of a competitive grant award. None of the funds will be used for administrative purposes.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution - CHSA Weyerhaeuser SAHF Donation](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #24 and #25, seconded by Alderwoman Miller Blakely and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously.

[26. Approval of a Resolution Supporting the Commissioning of the Littoral Combat Ship USS Savannah \(LCS-28\) in Brunswick, GA, on February 5, 2022. This ship is the sixth Navy warship to bear the name Savannah. The Savannah was built by the Austal Shipyards in Mobile, AL, and is slated to be homeported in San Diego, CA once commissioned.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution - Commissioning of USS Savannah](#)

[Exhibit 2: USS Savannah Photos](#)

Heard after Item #9.

Attending: Patricia Yovich, Region President, Tom Nichols, President, O.C. Fowler, Immediate Past President, Gary Johnson, Director & Past President, and Bill Nowakowski, Judge Advocate & Treasurer. Attendees described and discussed the new ship which is the sixth Navy warship to bear the name Savannah. An invitation was extended for Council and the public to attend the ceremony in Brunswick GA on February 5, 2022, when the US Navy will commission the Littoral Combat Ship USS Savannah.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #26, seconded by Alderwoman Miller Blakely and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously.

[27. Approval of a Resolution Ratifying the Mayor's December 22, 2021 Emergency Order Requiring Masks or Facial Coverings Within the City to Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)

[Emergency Order for masks or facial coverings to slow the spread of coronavirus_12-22-2021.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Lanier moved to approve Item #27, seconded by Alderman Leggett and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan. The motion passed unanimously.

REAL ESTATE ITEMS - (CITY MANAGER RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ALL ITEMS IN THIS SECTION UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE)

[28. Approval to Grant an Easement to Simcoe at Canal Towns, LLC to Cross the Savannah-Ogeechee Canal. Simcoe at Canal Towns, LLC \(Simcoe\) is seeking to develop a townhome project in the Savannah Quarters community in the City of Pooler. Their site is bifurcated by the Savannah Ogeechee Canal \(Canal\), a City of Savannah owned historic canal and drainage facility.](#)

[Exhibit 1: Easement - Simcoe at Canal Towns, LLC](#)

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan discussed the Easement as it relates to the City of Pooler cooperating with the City of Savannah.

Alderman Palumbo asked the developer, Mr. Rob Branden, to describe the project and discuss how it relates to housing affordability.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to approve Item #28, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and Alderman Palumbo. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY ITEMS

[29. Settlement #1](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Shabazz moved to approve Item #29, authorizing the City Attorney's Office to resolve the claim of Samuel Jackson for \$55,000.00, seconded by Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan. The motion passed unanimously.

[30. Settlement #2](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Shabazz moved to approve Item #30, authorizing the City Attorney's Office to resolve the claim of Michael Vachon for \$35,000.00, seconded by Alderwoman Lanier and Alderman Leggett. The motion passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Alderwoman Miller Blakely reinforced the \$30,000 contributed by Memorial Health University Medical Center will assist their low to moderate income employees to afford down payments for their first homes.

Alderman Leggett asked the City Manager to give an update on the large number of employees affected by COVID. City Manager Melder reported there are 124 who are out of work due to testing positive with COVID, and 24 employees came back after isolation. There is a 70% vaccination rate of employees.

Alderman Leggett informed the public, due to the large number of employees affected, some City services are decreased at the moment.

Mayor Johnson encouraged everyone to wear masks (face coverings) and/or get vaccinated. He indicated the Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade has been postponed by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Association, possibly to later this year. Mayor Johnson encouraged residents to find ways to contribute to community services and show kindness during the MLK Holiday.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan announced Founders Day for Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter announced the departure of Edith Gregory from the Mayor's office. She served four (4) Mayors and was a dedicated, pleasant and constant employee of the City.

Mayor Johnson stated Ms. Gregory is still employed by the City.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 3:42 p.m.

The audio 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=JqUPc65zjXeJ>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Signature: _____

