



SAVANNAH CITY GOVERNMENT
SUMMARY/FINAL MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2021 – 6:30 p.m.

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the regular meeting of the City Council was held via Zoom video communications at 6:31 p.m. Following the roll call, Mayor Johnson recognized Alderswoman Gibson-Carter to introduce Pastor Valarie Grimes of Radiant Church who delivered 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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Acting City Manager Michael Brown

City Attorney Bates Lovett

Clerk of Council Mark Massey

INVOCATION

[1. Details Regarding the Presenter for the Invocation are Forthcoming](#)

Following an introduction by Alderswoman Gibson-Carter, the Invocation was presented by Pastor Valarie Grimes, Pastor of Radiant Church.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

[2. Adoption of the Regular Meeting Agenda for January 28, 2021](#)

Mayor Johnson announced the petitioner has requested to continue Item #30 to the March 11, 2021 Meeting. Item #35 will be replaced with the contract for Developmental Associates in the amount of \$23,500.00 to conduct the City Manager search.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to adopt/approve the agenda with the following amendments:

1. Continue #30 to March 11, 2021, regarding the Special Use Permit for a Shelter; and

2. Replace #35 with, authorizing the City Manager to execute a contract with Developmental Associates in the amount of \$23,500.00 to conduct the City Manager search.

Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- [3. Approval of Minutes for the Work Session & City Manager's Briefing held on January 14, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.](#)

[Agenda Plus WS DRAFT MINUTES january-14-2021-city-council-workshop_agenda_packet.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #3 and #4, Alderwoman Miller Blakely seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- [4. Approval of Minutes for the Regular Meeting held on January 14, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.](#)

[Agenda Plus RM DRAFT MINUTES January 14, 2021 City Council Meeting.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #3 and #4, Alderwoman Miller Blakely seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA - (This section shall include all routine items for which it is anticipated there will be no debate or requests for public input. Any Alderman can remove consent items for discussion or separate consideration.)

- [5. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for an Online Training and Professional Development System for City Staff with Cornerstone in the Amount of \\$92,500 \(Event No. 7226\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Training and Professional Development System.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Training and Professional Development System.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #5 through #8, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- [6. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Mail Courier Services with R. Jackson and Brothers Enterprise for up to \\$85,000 \(Event No. 7054\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Mail Courier Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Mail Courier Services.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #3 and #4, Alderwoman Miller Blakely seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- [7. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Construction Cost Estimating Services with Costing Services Group for up to \\$75,000 \(Event No. 6858\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Cost Estimating Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Cost Estimating Services.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #3 and #4, Alderwoman Miller Blakely seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- [8. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Ammunition for the Savannah Police Department with Precision Delta for up to \\$60,000 \(Event No. 6946\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Ammunition Renewal.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Ammunition Renewal.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #3 and #4, Alderwoman Miller Blakely seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- [9. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for the City's Employee Assistance Program with Deer Oaks EAP Services, LLC for up to \\$45,600 \(Event No. 5046\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Employee Assistance Program.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Employee Assistance Program.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked if the City staff is tracking data and statistics on the use of the employee assistance program. She previously request the number/rate in which employee complaints were handled and/or reconciled. Acting City Manager Brown answered in 2020 there were 314 cases, approximately a 12% utilization rate, which was close to prior years reporting. City staff is confident the process is working effectively.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter encouraged staff to take advantage of the services provided by the City's Employee Assistance Program given she continuously receives complaints from employees concerning the disharmony within various departments with supervision/management procedures/methods.

For the record, Mayor Johnson indicated the City Charter clearly delineates the relationship between the Council and the City Manager. All employees, except for those stipulated in the Charter, report to the City Manager.

Acting City Manager Brown encouraged any employees with grievances to contact his office to address their concerns. Mayor Johnson suggested doing a renewed commitment to educate the employees of the grievance process. Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked if the process could be used

if any employee felt overlooked for a promotion. Mr. Brown responded such an employee should use the grievance process in this instance.

Due to the lack of a permanent City Manager over the past few years, Alderwoman Gibson-Carter feels employees lacked the leadership necessary to perform their individual duties to the citizens in a efficient and professional manner. She suggested a review of top management in the departments during the City Manager search to assist employees with concerns.

Mayor Johnson asked Mr. Brown to provide Council with the number of grievances that have reached his office through the grievance process, without divulging too much personal information about the employee.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #9, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[10. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Software Maintenance with GovernmentJobs.com in the Amount of \\$44,182.42 \(Event No. 8191\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - NeoGov Maintenance.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - NeoGov Maintenance .pdf](#)

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter moved to approve Item #10, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[11. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Change Order for Police Replacement Vehicles \(Seven Pickup Trucks and Two Cargo Vans\) with Wade Ford in the Amount of \\$14,408.90 \(Event No. 7788\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Replacement Vehicles Change Order.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Replacement Vehicles Change Order .pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson provided an editorial comment for Items #11 & #12 stating there has been significant discussions concerning the City's movement toward the commitment of clean energy totally by 2035. With the purchase of seven pickup trucks, two cargo vans, and one marked police replacement vehicle, the City does not have the infrastructure in place to support the purchase of electrical vehicles. A nine member Sustainability Taskforce is currently working with the Sustainability Department to implement the infrastructure necessary for electric vehicles. This will include charging stations and the sites for the charging stations. Acting City Manager Brown supported Mayor Johnson's editorial.

Written comment(s):

- . Ardis Wood – Opposed
- . Kevin Ionno - Opposed

Alderwoman Lanier asked Mr. Brown the replacement cycle for vehicle. Mr. Brown answered, six to seven years, depending on the type of vehicle.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked Acting City Manager Brown, what happens to the old vehicles when they are replaced. Are they available for citizens to purchase so the City will realize revenue from the sales. Mr. Brown answered, whenever possible, the vehicles are sold at auction. For the heavier vehicles, the City's use is the full cycle of the vehicle such as fire trucks and the vendor will sometimes take the vehicle back. Mr. Brown will prepare a vehicle fleet report for Council showing replacement schedules.

Alderman Palumbo thanked staff and residents who have supported the City's commitment to clean energy. He feels it is the most fiscally responsible move for the City and he see electric vehicles as the future nationwide.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter expressed her disappointment in the City's lack of discussions and commitment to move forward in a timely manner to put the infrastructure in place for the electric vehicles since the Council signed a pledge to work toward an aggressive goal for clean energy. She suggested moving the timeline if the City was not serious about its commitment.

Mayor Johnson informed Alderwoman Gibson-Carter, there were several discussions relating to clean energy and an additional staff person was added to the Sustainability Department to assist with the City's commitment for clean energy.

Alderman Purtee shared with Council and the public there is a national required certification process for vehicles in order to be utilized as public safety vehicles. Electric vehicles must qualify to be used as public vehicles. The entire process must be well prepared before usage.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan thanked Mr. Ionno for the written information which included a plan for moving forward. She asked Mr. Ionno to forward the information again for all Council Members.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz thanked Mayor Johnson for his editorial and all Council Members comments in relations to Items #11 and #12. In working with the MPC Board, there is working being

done out to the year 2060 and conversations such as today will help with the planning but it also lets the residents know the Council has acknowledged their concerns.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked why there was an additional charge of \$14,408.90 for the seven pickup trucks and two cargo vans. Mayor Johnson answered because the price of the vehicles have increased from the 2020 sales price.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter reiterated her understanding of the timely process of changing over to electric vehicles. She would like to see the City move more aggressively toward the pledge of clean energy since there are only four more year (2025) to accomplish that goal. Mayor Johnson stated the entire Council is committed to clean energy and there are fourteen years (2035) to accomplish the goal.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #11 and #12, Alderman Leggett and Alderman Palumbo seconded. The motion passed, 8-1-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter voted no.

[12. Authorize the City Manager to Procure One Marked Police Replacement Vehicle \(SUV\) from Wade Ford in the Amount of \\$38,658 \(Event No. 8250\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Replacement Vehicle.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Replacement Vehicle.pdf](#)

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Written comment(s):

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Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #11 and #12, Alderman Leggett and Alderman Palumbo seconded. The motion passed, 8-1-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter voted no.

PURCHASING ITEMS

[13. Authorize the City Manager to Execute Two Contract Renewals for the Purchasing of Gasoline and Diesel Fuel for City Vehicles and Equipment with Sommers Oil Company and Barrett Oil Distributors for up to \\$6,689,648 \(Event No. 6608\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Fuel Renewal.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Fuel Renewal.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Miller Blakely expressed concern for the purchase price and asked if the price was negotiated for some kind of discount. Acting City Manager Brown answered, the bid is based on national pricing and the City received the lowest bulk rate. Mayor Johnson suggested adding charge stations at the Arena for a start on infrastructure for clean energy.

Written comment(s):

- . Ardis Wood - Opposed

Alderwoman Miller Blakely moved to approve Item #13, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed, 8-1-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter voted no.

[14. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Medical Care Coordination Services for the City's Healthcare Program with Quantum Health for up to \\$470,000 \(Event No. 8223\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Medical Care Coordination Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Medical Care Coordination Services.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #14 through Item #21, and Items #24 and #25 per Acting City Manager Brown's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[15. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Medical Claims Administration Services for the City's Health Plan with HealthScope in the Amount of \\$742,000 \(Event No. 8225\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Self Funded TPA Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Self Funded TPA Services .pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #14 through Item #21, and Items #24 and #25 per Acting City Manager Brown's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[16. Authorize the City Manager to Execute Two Contract Renewals for Construction Testing Services with Whitaker Laboratory \(Primary\) and Terracon Consultants, Inc. \(Secondary\) for up to \\$463,506 \(Event No. 6831\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Construction Testing Services.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification: Construction Testing Services.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #14 through Item #21, and Items #24 and #25 per Acting City Manager Brown's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[17. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Leased Multifunction Copier Equipment with Automated Business Resources, Inc. for up to \\$288,055 \(Event No. 5399\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Multi-Function Copiers.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Multi-Function Copiers.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #14 through Item #21, and Items #24 and #25 per Acting City Manager Brown's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[18. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Purchase of Water Purification Chemicals with Mississippi Lime for up to \\$256,157 \(Event No. 6413\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Water Purification Chemicals.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Water Purification Chemicals.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #14 through Item #21, and Items #24 and #25 per Acting City Manager Brown's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[19. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Long-Term Disability Insurance Services with the Standard Insurance Company in the Amount of \\$ 226,146 \(Event No. 8224\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Long Term Disability.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Long Term Disability.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #14 through Item #21, and Items #24 and #25 per Acting City Manager Brown's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[20. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract Renewal for Street Sweeper Equipment Brooms with Keystone Plastics, Inc. for up to \\$172,410. \(Event No. 3990\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Street Sweeper Brooms.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Street Sweeper Brooms.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #14 through Item #21, and Items #24 and #25 per Acting City Manager Brown's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[21. Authorize the City Manager to Procure 68 Public Safety Laptops from Panasonic in the Amount of \\$217,600 \(Event No. 8189\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Public Safety Laptops.pdf :](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Public Safety Laptops.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #14 through Item #21, and Items #24 and #25 per Acting City Manager Brown's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[22. Authorize the City Manager to Procure 61 Replacement Vehicles from Wade Ford in the Amount of \\$1,753,070.\(Event No. 8210\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Replacement Vehicles.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Replacement Vehicles.pdf](#)

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter expressed the City staff should have considered electric vehicles prior to the purchase of 61 vehicles for departments other than police. This would be in line with the Council's pledge of clean energy by 2035. Due to the up-front cost for infrastructure, Mayor Johnson indicated it will take the City some time to get to purchasing the electric vehicles.

In an effort to contain cost and move closer to the clean energy pledge, Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked Acting City Manager Brown if some portion of the 61 vehicles, possibly 2/3rds, could be purchased as electric vehicles. Mr. Brown will conduct a complete fleet status update to move toward a more green fleet, but in the meantime, the services must be performed on a daily basis with the current vehicles.

Alderman Palumbo informed Council the importance of investigating the proper site locations, charging stations, and maintenance plan. Once purchased, the electric vehicles will need years of service with a sustainable vendor.

Alderwoman Lanier moved to approve Item #22, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed, 8-1-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter voted no.

[23. Authorize the City Manager to Execute an Annual Contract for Police Uniforms and Accessories with Three Vendors for up to \\$450,000 \(Event No. 7449\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Police Uniforms.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Police Uniforms.pdf](#)

Alderman Purtee advised A-1 Uniforms should be listed as a DBE (minority, female owned). He has concerns with Packaged Uniforms who have left the City 2-3 times and now returned with a satellite office. He encouraged the City to use locally owned businesses such as A-1 Uniforms and Patrick's Uniforms. Acting City Manager Brown explained the bid criteria process looks at local first then accepts the lowest bid.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked what each of the three vendors supplied. Mr. Brown explained each vendor bids to supply different equipment for the police uniforms, i.e. jerseys, head gear, rain gear, safety gear, leather equipment etc. Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked if there could be negotiations with the local vendors. Mr. Brown stated the bids are non negotiable, lowest bid get the contract.

Alderwoman Lanier moved to approve Item #23, Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[24. Authorize the City Manager to Procure 911 Emergency Dispatch and Records Software Licenses for 133 Public Safety Laptops from Centralsquare Technologies, LLC in the Amount of \\$199,507.58 \(Event No. 8280\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Emergency Dispatch Software.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Emergency Dispatch Software.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #14 through Item #21, and Items #24 and #25 per Acting City Manager Brown's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[25. Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Construction Contract for the Rehabilitation of Two Water Treatment Filters at the President Street Water Plant with Southern Civil, LLC for up to \\$800,000 \(Event No. 8067\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Purchasing Summary - Water Treatment Filters Rehabilitation.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Funding Verification - Water Treatment Filters Rehabilitation.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Items #14 through Item #21, and Items #24 and #25 per Acting City Manager Brown's recommendation, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ALCOHOL LICENSE HEARINGS

[26. Application for a Class E \(Beer, Wine\)\(By the Package\) Alcohol License to Chirag Patel of Savannah Mart at 2810 Skidaway Road \(Aldermanic District 3\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - Savannah Mart.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - Savannah Mart.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Alcohol Documents - Savannah Mart.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Measurement Report - Savannah Mart.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 5: Additional Information for Savannah Mart .pdf](#)

Items #28 and #29 were moved up on the Agenda to be heard before Items #26 and #27.

Mayor Johnson opened the alcohol hearing for Items #26.

Speaker(s):

- Chirag Patel, Owner, Savannah Mart - requested approval of alcohol license
- Bridget Lidy, Urban Planning & Design Director - presentation on location of Savannah Mart
- Georgia Gundich, Police Captain - presentation on location of Savannah Mart

Written comment(s):

- Madiha Clarke – Opposed
- Gwendolyn Frazier – Opposed
- Demetrice Robinson-Rooks – Opposed
- Andree Patterson – Opposed
- Leona Humphries – Opposed
- Michel Mazzeo, Psy.D. – Opposed
- Alexa Frame – Opposed
- Anne Allen Westbrook – Opposed
- Yolandra G. Shipp – Opposed
- Lindsey Grovenstein – Opposed
- Lesli Messinger – Opposed
- Brandon Williams – Opposed
- Ruby Huntley – Opposed
- Cynthia Hopson – Opposed
- Donnica Scott – Opposed
- Ned Rinalducci, Ph. D – Opposed

a. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to close the alcohol hearing for Item #26, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan outlined the parameters of the alcohol overlay and the residents desire for more businesses in the community other than alcohol establishments.

Alderwoman Lanier asked Ms. Lidy about the ordinance language concerning density of the requirements of alcohol license has changed recently since the West Side has tried repeatedly to deny and/or control the number of alcohol license approvals. Ms. Lidy responded the ordinance was amended five years ago providing language to allowed Council to consider public safety and welfare issues when granting alcohol licenses. The language included the number of license already granted for a similar establishment in the area. Alderwoman Lanier asked the distance of the radius. Ms. Lidy answered, a mile radius was previously used. Alderwoman Lanier had concern for the equitable standards used for alcohol density radius for the entire City.

City Attorney Lovett stated the Council is the finder of fact and the decision makers. The Council determines the objective standards. The mile radius has been used but Council can determine how many is too many within a given radius.

b. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to deny the alcohol license for Item #26, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked Mayor Johnson and Attorney Lovett if there could be some type of notification to the public regarding District 3's Alcohol Density Overlay so petitioners will not expend time and money to apply for an alcohol license only to be denied. Attorney Lovett stated the word will spread after today's denial. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked if the City could assist in getting the

public informed. Mayor Johnson suggested staff looking at the density before accepting the alcohol license application and also providing some type of formal education process for the public.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked for the steps involved in the applicant's process to apply for the transfer of the alcohol license for the Savanna Mart. Attorney Lovett provided the process for Alderwoman Miller Blakely. She asked what happens to the business when the alcohol license is denied. Mayor Johnson answered, the business stays operational but will not be allowed to sell any alcoholic beverages and this may decrease their source of income.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter shared Ned Rinalducci sent Council a guide for measuring alcohol outlay density. She suggested Council spend time reviewing the information as it relates to the entire City and the affect it will have on business owners when denied an alcohol license. She would like to see Council consider a work session on alcohol overlay density as a goal.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz questioned the Council as to what kind of Savannah they want. Do they want a Savannah saturated with beer/wine establishments.

[27. Application for a Class E \(Beer, Wine\)\(By the Package\) Alcohol License for Bijal Patel of El Cheapo at 902 Pennsylvania Avenue \(Aldermanic District 3\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - El Cheapo.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - El Cheapo.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Alcohol Reports - El Cheapo.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Measurement Report - El Cheapo.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 5: Additional Information for El Cheapo.pdf](#)

Items #28 and #29 were moved up on the Agenda to be heard before Items #26 and #27.

Mayor Johnson opened the alcohol hearing for Items #27.

Speaker(s):

- Attorney Josh Yellin (Agent) - gave an historical outline of 902 Pennsylvania Avenue by City staff of alcohol license application approvals. He included density reports, safety reports, neighborhood association approvals, crime statistics for the area, and State and City requirements. He discussed the new versus transferred alcohol license requirements in the alcohol overlay density areas. He asked Council for equal treatment of the request and approval of the license.
- Bridget Lidy, Urban Planning & Design Director - presentation on location of El Cheapo.
- Georgia Gundich, Police Captain - presentation on location of El Cheapo.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan discussed the negative impact multiple alcohol establishments have on the 3rd District. She discussed the impact on youth, the increase in crime and the adverse quality of living that numerous alcohol businesses have on a community. She asked Attorney Yellin which neighborhood association agreed with an additional alcohol license as she has spoken to the residents and they are against having an additional alcohol establishment.

Alderman Leggett stated District 2 has no problem with alcohol establishments. He asked Attorney Yellin not use any of the businesses in District 2 as a reference point. District 2 is includes the downtown corridor and is separate from District 3.

As an At-Large Council Member, Alderwoman Gibson-Carter has concern for the entire City. She feels the City could do a better job of educating the public on the alcohol license process and the alcohol overlay density parameters to avoid unnecessary time and money spent by residents and legal counsel. Unlike the other Districts, Council has approved the alcohol overlay density for the 3rd District. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter suggest taking a slower approach to issuance of alcohol license throughout the City.

Mayor Johnson stated the City should be looking at each individual alcohol license application on each individual merits and not compared to other applications or Districts.

Attorney Yellin stated this was not a new license but a transfer as allowed by the alcohol overlay density ordinance, this was an existing license and existing convenience store so it was not adding another alcohol business in the 3rd District. He cited two separate instances where Council approved the transfer of alcohol license. He is only asking for this petitioner to be treated the same. Mayor Johnson informed Attorney Yellin the language 'transfer' has been removed. He asked Attorney Yellin if the business owner could make improvements without the alcohol license. Attorney Yellin answered, because of decrease revenue, that might not be possible.

Alderman Palumbo outlined the area for the establishment as it relates to the close proximity to an educational facility and the youth taking advantage of the convenience store to purchase alcohol products.

Written comment(s):

- Madiha Clarke – Opposed

- Gwendolyn Frazier – Opposed
- Demetrice Robinson-Rooks – Opposed
- Andree Patterson – Opposed
- Leona Humphries – Opposed
- Michel Mazzeo, Psy.D. – Opposed
- Alexa Frame – Opposed
- Anne Allen Westbrook – Opposed
- Yolandra G. Shipp – Opposed
- Lindsey Grovenstein – Opposed
- Lesli Messinger – Opposed
- Brandon Williams – Opposed
- Ruby Huntley – Opposed
- Cynthia Hopson – Opposed
- Donnica Scott – Opposed
- Ned Rinalducci, Ph. D – Opposed

a. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to close the alcohol hearing for Item #27, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed 8-0-1, with Alderwoman Miller Blakely not voting.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked, with the alcohol overlay density as it relates to the Districts 1, 3 and 5, if Parkers decided to build an additional convenience store, will they be denied, because this will be a new license. She suggest a review of the alcohol overlay density ordinance so some fairness will be displayed across the City.

For the record, Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan stated the Council could not have it both ways. Earlier the Council expressed concern for improvised and neglected areas. Alderwoman Miller Blakely stated she agrees with Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan on what happens in certain communities but the Council must be fair when approving alcohol license applications so a review of the ordinance should take place.

Mayor Johnson shared there will be a couple rewrites to the alcohol ordinance from staff that will be presented to Council soon.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz indicated if Parkers requested an alcohol license in District 5, the alcohol overlay would prevent the approval. She feels it is incumbent upon City staff to monitor the alcohol applications and locate the alcohol overlay density districts before accepting applications for alcohol license at the beginning of the process.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked if the Parkers less than a mile from Savannah High School came before Council for renewal would they be approved. Mayor Johnson answered yes, there is a difference between a new alcohol application and a renewal. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked Attorney Lovett to clarify. Attorney Lovett was unsure if the Parkers was in the alcohol overlay density district. Ms. Lidy answered when the alcohol overlay density districts were created, it was in neighborhood based communities. Large convenience stores such as Parkers and En Mart are typically located in Districts that are heavily travel corridors that are not in close proximity to neighborhoods of the two cases discussed at this meeting.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter stated the Parkers in question is less than a mile from Savannah High School, is across the street from blocks of houses and next door to a block of houses. How is that different. This put the City in a unique position because of a lack of equity. Mayor Johnson explained that if an existing business comes before Council for a renewal of their alcohol license, it is different than a request for a new alcohol license. However, if they sold the property, it would be considered a new license and if it is located in the alcohol overlay density district, this is when the rules would apply.

b. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to deny the alcohol license for Item #27, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed, 8-0-1 with Alderwoman Miller Blakely not voting.

[28. Application for a Class C \(Liquor, Beer, Wine\)\(By the Drink\) with Sunday Sales for Salathia Singleton of The Avenue Bar & Grill at 1721 Waters Avenue \(Aldermanic District 2\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - The Avenue.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - The Avenue.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Measurement Report - The Avenue.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Alcohol Reports - The Avenue.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 5: Good Neighbor Agreement - The Avenue.pdf](#)

Items #28 and #29 were moved up on the Agenda to be heard before Items #26 and #27.

Mayor Johnson opened the alcohol hearings for Items #28 and #29.

Alderman Leggett reported that the Neighborhood Association Agreement has been signed and he recommends moving forward with approval.

Written comment(s):

- . Andree Patterson – Opposed
- . Donnica Scott – Opposed
- . Ned Rinalducci, Ph. D – Opposed

a. Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to close the alcohol hearings for Items #28 and #29, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Alderman Leggett moved to approve Items #28 and #29, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[29. Application for a Class C \(Liquor, Beer, Wine\)\(By the Drink\) with Sunday Sales to Christopher R. Smith of Zunzi's at 236 Drayton Street. \(Aldermanic District 2\).](#)

[Exhibit 1: Checklist - Zunzi's.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Density Map - Zunzi's.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Alcohol Documents - Zunzi's.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 4: Measurement Report - Zunzi's.pdf](#)

Items #28 and #29 were moved up on the Agenda to be heard before Items #26 and #27.

Mayor Johnson opened the alcohol hearings for Items #28 and #29.

Alderman Leggett reported that the Neighborhood Association Agreement has been signed and he recommends moving forward with approval.

Written comment(s):

- . Andree Patterson – Opposed
- . Donnica Scott – Opposed
- . Ned Rinalducci, Ph. D – Opposed

a. Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to close the alcohol hearings for Items #28 and #29, Alderwoman Lanier seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Alderman Leggett moved to approve Items #28 and #29, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ZONING HEARINGS

[30. Petition for a Special Use Permit to Allow the Shelter, Emergency and Shelter, Transitional Uses at 2305 Augusta Avenue \(PINs 20025 10001 and 20025 11004\). Petition of Phillip McCorkle \(Agent\) on behalf of the Housing Authority of Savannah \(Owner\) within Aldermanic District 1 \(File No. 20-000512-ZA\)](#)

[Exhibit 1: MPC Recommendation - 2305 Augusta Avenue](#)

Item #30 was CONTINUED/POSTPONED, during the adoption of the agenda.

Written comment(s):

- . Attorney Dana Braun - Supported
- . Marilyn Jackson – Opposed
- . Centennial D. Williams – Opposed
- . Ora Wright – Opposed
- . Ivan Cohen – Opposed
- . Debra Samuel Puckett – Opposed
- . David Coney – Opposed
- . Sabrina Wright – Opposed
- . Lucille Jackson – Opposed
- . Beverly Howard, Sandra, Phillip and Kimberly – Opposed
- . Kimberly Howard Owens – Opposed
- . Ervenia Bowers and West Savannah residents - Opposed
- . Mildred Reynolds - Opposed
- . BL Sharpe – Opposed
- . Dr. Margaret Betz & Elder Ned Williams - Opposed

RESOLUTIONS

[31. Approval of a Resolution Authorizing the Preparation and Submittal of an Application to the Georgia Coastal Incentive Grant Program for Design of the Canal District Wetlands Preserve Park for the City of Savannah Georgia](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution - Canal District Wetlands Park.pdf](#)

Acting City Manager Brown gave a brief description of the how the grant monies will be used for the canal district. He recommended approval.

Alderwoman Lanier moved to approve Item #31, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[32. Approval of a Resolution in Support of Repealing Georgia's 'Stand Your Ground' Legislation](#)

[Exhibit 1: Resolution - Stand Your Ground Legislation.pdf](#)

Mayor Johnson explained in detail the Georgia 'Stand Your Ground' Legislation and the request for Council to approve the Resolution.

As a police officer, Alderman Purtee explained his position on the 'Stand Your Ground' law. He has serious concerns with the Legislation but wants the citizens of Savannah to be safe.

Written comment(s):

- . Anne Allen Westbrook – Supported
- . Courtney Spriggs – Supported
- . Jennifer Lindsay – Supported
- . Kathy Hodges – Supported
- . Erin Vargo – Supported
- . David Johnson – Supported
- . Dillon McDaniel – Supported
- . Laurie McNeil – Supported
- . Julvonnia McDowell – Supported

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #32, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed, 8-1-0. Alderman Purtee voted no.

REAL ESTATE ITEMS

[33. Authorize the City Manager to Accept a Quit Claim Deed of a Lift Station Site within a Subdivision in the New Hampstead Area](#)

[Exhibit 1: Quit Claim Deed.pdf](#)

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz moved to approve Item #33, Alderwoman Lanier and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

[34. Award the Sale of Surplus Property Located at 1700 Drayton Street \(PIN 20053 38013\), 104 E.34th Street \(PIN 20053 38007\) and 1705 Abercorn Street \(PIN 20053 38003\) to Pinyan/Procida Development Group – Event 7984](#)

[Exhibit 1: Map - 1700 Drayton Street.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 2: Bid - 1700 Drayton Street.pdf](#)

[Exhibit 3: Evaluation - 1700 Drayton Street.pdf](#)

Acting City Manager Brown and Chief Operating Officer Bret Bell gave a brief presentation of the surplus properties and discussed the benefits to the City on the sale of the properties.

Mayor Johnson wants to assure that the project will be used for workforce housing.

Alderman Leggett received concerns from the Thomas Square Neighborhood Association asking for a delay on the decision from City Council a couple of weeks. Mr. Brown is not opposed to delaying the decision but he does not want to miss the deadline by Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to receive the tax credits for the project.

Alderman Leggett suggested a conference call between Mr. Brown and the Thomas Square Neighborhood Association to discuss key points of the project.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked for the location of 1705 Abercorn Street. Mr. Brown identified the location on the map for Alderwoman Miller Blakely.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter had concerns for a 30-year agreement for affordable housing (workforce housing) becoming market rate housing during the term of the agreement. She has received concerns from the residents and would like to see Item #34 continued to a later date.

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan asked if the City sells the property what guaranteed does the City have to receive the tax credits from DCA. Mr. Brown confirmed the only way the City sells the properties will be if the purchaser meets all the requirements to receive the tax credits.

Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and Alderwoman Lanier agreed with Alderman Leggett to postpone Item #34 for two weeks. It is key to have the residents weigh in and have input on the decisions made for their neighborhoods.

Before the next meeting, Alderman Palumbo suggested discussions about density and promoting more walkable spaces. The City should develop communities where citizens do not need a car to succeed in Savannah. The average Savannahian pays 26% of income for housing and 23% for transportation, it is one of the highest in the Nation.

Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked Mr. Brown if there will be an interruption in the collection of property taxes. Mr. Brown answered, by State Law, property tax must be paid each year. Currently the City owns the property so no property taxes are collected. Once the properties are sold, the City will begin to collect property tax for the properties. So there is revenue benefits in selling the properties. She discussed the parking for the residents in the area.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked for the value of the properties. Mr. Bell reported the Board of Assessors valued the land last year at \$445,000.00 and the building on the land at \$450,000.00; however, the building burned down. The City paid \$650,000.00 for the entire property in 2003 but the City has not received any property tax revenue since the purchase. The City is selling the property for \$750,000.00. Alderwoman Miller Blakely feels the property could be sold and probably would appraise for more than the \$750,000.00. Mr. Brown stated the workforce house project is the reason for the asking price. Alderwoman Miller Blakely supports postponing Item #34.

Speaker(s):

- Bob Isaacson - supports (did not speak)

Written comment(s):

- Virginia Mobley – Opposed
- Bill Drawers – Raised concerns

Alderman Leggett moved to CONTINUE/POSTPONE Item #34 to the February 11, 2021 Meeting, Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz and Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY ATTORNEY ITEMS

[35. Settlement #1](#)

Delete Item #35. Settlement #1 and replace with the following:

MISCELLANEOUS

[35. Authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with Developmental Associates in the Amount of \\$23,500.00 to conduct the City Manager search.](#)

Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan moved to approve Item #35, Alderman Purtee seconded. The motion passed, 7-2-0. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter and Alderwoman Miller Blakely voted no.

CLOSING:

Alderwoman Lanier advised the citizens interested in Item #30, Petition for a Special Use Permit to allow the Shelter, Emergency and Shelter, Transitional Uses at 2305 Augusta Avenue has been postponed/continued to the March 11, 2021 Meeting.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely along with the Mayor and Aldermen/Alderwomen sent condolences to the family of Actress Cecily Tyson who passed away at 96 years old.

Alderwoman Miller Blakely sent out congratulations to her grandson Daniel "Bubba" Chisholm for being awarded 'Defensive Player of the Year' by the Savannah Quarterback Club.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the meeting at 9:27 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=LhoFxEMc8ls7>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Initials: ____