



**APRIL 25, 2024 11:00 a.m. - WORKSHOP and CITY MANAGER'S BRIEFING**

**CITY GOVERNMENT**

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS**

**OF THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN**

**SAVANNAH, GEORGIA**

The work session and City Manager's briefing was held at **11:02 a.m.**, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Media Room of City Hall. **Mayor Johnson** called the meeting to order and recognized **Alderman Purtee** to offer a prayer.

**PRESENT:**

Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding  
 Alderwoman Carolyn H. Bell, At-Large, Post 1  
 Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2  
 Alderwoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2  
 Alderwoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1  
 Alderwoman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3 - Vice Chair  
 Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4 - Chairman  
 Alderwoman 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

**Workshop Agenda Items**

[1. Homelessness Update](#)

[Exhibit 1: Chatham Savannah Authority for the Homeless Update.pptx](#)

[Exhibit 2: Interagency Council on Homelessness Update.pptx](#)

HEARD after Fairgrounds Update.

PRESENTED by City Manager Melder, Interagency Council on Homelessness Executive Director Stephanie Kaple, and Chatham Savannah Authority for the Homeless Executive Director Jennifer Dulong.

Following the presentation, Council Members expressed concerns, discussed, and asked the following questions:

- City Manager Melder announced homelessness has decreased more than 20% in the Savannah area.
- The Southside still has homeless individuals living in encampment areas.
- Applauded/thanked Presenters and the coordination with other local agencies to address homelessness.
- Come As You Are Ministries always assists when asked. Requesting the City to provide more assistance.
- Concern for families living in hotels with children. The various resource (agencies) available and how to connect homeless individuals.
- Grants available for homeless; requested resources in the Truman Park/Magnolia Park area; containers for storage in COVID-Dundee; space for homeless single women; living space for children who foster out (age 18); and assisting those experiencing mental health disorders.
- Concern with street peddlers, panhandling, and children selling water on street corners; advising the public on how to support (donate to agencies).
- Concern with sex trafficking (SPD monitoring all areas of the City including encampments).
- Affordable housing as it relates to homelessness.
- Container housing.
- Landlords increasing rent causes homelessness.

Mayor Johnson stated he is heading back to Washington, DC, any messages: Ms. DuLong stated, 'release the NOFA funds'.

## [2. Fairgrounds Update](#)

[Exhibit 1: Fairgrounds Update.pptx](#)

HEARD before Homelessness Update.

PRESENTED by City Manager Melder. A thorough description and explanation was outlined by City Manager Melder including the Development Agreement.

Following the presentation, Council Members discussed and asked the following questions:

- Any language included for developers to meet benchmarks included in the agreement and will the City receive impact fees? (yes and yes).
- Who will be responsible for hiring employees for the Studio (the developer).
- Have there been any other City projects that provided termination and reversionary rights to the City to ensure performance of the Developer (no).
- This project had community involvement, so the voice of the people was heard.
- Who will staff the facilities during Phase 3 (the developer).
- Are there any covenants in the cost of housing (yes, the Development Agreement explains on Pages 14 & 15).
- What is the timeline of each phase (spelled out in the Development Agreement, pages 3, sec. 4).
- Discussed the original RFP and requirements for housing, and the original price of the property (purchased at \$2.9 million and selling for \$2 million).
- Why is the City giving a loan for \$1.9 million. (this is a grant not a loan; it is for low-income tax credit application at the State level).

Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz commended staff for diligent work on the project over the past years. Mayor Pro Tem Dr. Shabazz thanked Attorney Lovett, City Manager Melder and his staff for the work to bring the project to this stage of development.

## [3. Closed Executive Session: Litigation, Personnel, and Real Estate](#)

No Executive Session was held.

## [4. City Manager's Agenda Review](#)

There was no Agenda Review.

There was no action taken during the Workshop.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the pre-meetings at 12:57 p.m.

The 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=I1VaiagGajJVbcqr>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

**Date Minutes Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

