



FEBRUARY 7, 2023, 12:00 p.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 12:03 p.m. Mayor Johnson recognized Alderman Purtee to offer a prayer.

PRESENT:

Mayor Van R. Johnson, II, Presiding
 Alderwoman Kesha Gibson-Carter, At-Large, Post 1
 Alderwoman Alicia Miller Blakely, At-Large, Post 2
 Alderwoman Bernetta B. Lanier, District 1
 Alderman Detric Leggett, District 2
 Alderwoman Linda Wilder-Bryan, District 3
 Alderman Nick Palumbo, District 4, Vice-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. Discussion on Boards, Commissions, and Authorities](#)

[Exhibit 1: Updated Appointments to Boards, Commissions and Authorities 2023.pdf](#)

Mayor and Council made the following nominations for appointments and/or reappointments to Boards, Commissions, and Authorities. Council will vote on the nominations at the 2:00 p.m. Regular Council Meeting:

1. Cultural Affairs Commission – **Emilee J. Cantrell Kornegay & Renee S. Rubens**
2. Historic District Board of Review – **Susan R. Myers, Stan Houle, & Gregory R. Sanders**
3. Historic Preservation Commission – **Jeffrey M. Notrica & Pamela A. Miller**

4. Metropolitan Planning Commission – **Karen M. Jarrett, Darnell L. Johnson, Julie M. Wade, & Yolandra Shipp**
5. Civil Service Board – **Ryan Martin & Taketha S. Kelley Hill**
6. Park and Tree Commission – **Jeffrey M. Notrica & Erika Archibald**
7. Savannah Airport Commission – **Randy Houston & Sabrina E. Kent**
8. Savannah Economic Development Authority – **Darnell L. Johnson & Charles P. Roberson**
9. Savannah Zoning Board of Appeals – **Michael T. Condon, Darnell L. Johnson, Sabrina Nagel & Armand J. Turner**

[2. Purchasing Policies and Procedures](#)

[Exhibit 1: The Purchasing Process Presentation.pdf](#)

City Manager Melder stated he indicated late last year, Council requested a presentation on the City's purchasing practices along with local and disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) goals.

PRESENTED by City Manager Melder, Purchasing Director Johnnie Coker, and Economic Development Business Opportunity Manager MaRonde Lumpkin-Lotson.

Following the presentations there were comments and questions from Council Members:

- City Manager Melder announced MaRonde Lumpkin-Lotson is appointed as the Liaison for local, small, and black businesses.
- Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan asked the logic of not having a broker. Ms. Lumpkin-Lotson replied a broker is just a middle man that is unnecessary. Without the broker the cost is contained.
- Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked if Ms. Lumpkin-Lotson's old position will be filled or will the new appointment be added. City Manager Melder replied, the new appointment is an added responsibility, and she will receive support from his office. She asked if the position was advertised (no).
- Alderwoman Miller Blakely requested a hard copy of the Local Small Business Enterprise Program application (Ms. Lumpkin-Lotson will send her a copy). She asked if the portal has started (yes). Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked when the Reverse Trade Shows will begin? Mr. Coker replied, during the Mayor's Small Business Meetings in May.
- Alderwoman Miller Blakely expressed concern for the DBE program and her research which showed Johnson Laux is not a DBE (decertified in 2019) and has not been certified with the State of Georgia since 2013. How will the City ensure DBE certifications. Ms. Lumpkin-Lotson replied, Johnson Laux is certified by the State of Florida Office of Supplier as a WBE. When a business is certified by a State or Federal entity, the City will accept that certification. Alderwoman Miller Blakely does not want legacy contractors receiving DBE contracts when there are qualified DBE contractors in the City. Savannah First should be a priority. Alderwoman Miller Blakely requested a copy of all City of Savannah DBE participants (City Manager Melder will follow-up with the information).
- Since Johnson Laux is certified in the State of Florida, Alderwoman Gibson-Carter inquired if there are any other local or State of Georgia contractors available to perform the work the City awarded to Johnson Laux. City Manager Melder explained construction contracts are governed by Federal and State Procurement Laws. The City used a State contract (local preference cannot be used) for construction work when awarding the projects to Johnson Laux. Using a State contractor allows the City to use local and DBE certified businesses.
- Alderwoman Gibson-Carter stated she appreciated City Manager Melder's explanation; however, she continues to have concerns for the purchasing department's practices. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter stated she was hoping upon City Manager Melder's arrival, and the new leadership in the purchasing department, that practices would change with fairness, more scrutiny, equity and integrity in the processes. She can only go by what she sees happening meeting after meeting, there are no changes. Her hope is that the City will do better. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter recommended revisiting purchasing policies and procedures.
- Mayor Johnson clarified the process, Johnson Laux, regardless of where they received their certification, is a Savannah business. The City has a prescribed and legal process. He does not want anyones integrity (even) challenged. The City's purchasing department is appreciated for the work they do and the manner the work is completed.

Mayor Johnson thanked the purchasing department for their work to the citizens of Savannah.

- Alderman Palumbo commented on the remarkable effort put forth by the purchasing department and asked the number of employees (7). He asked what are some of the barriers of becoming a supplier for the City and are there any fees. Mr. Coker replied, there are no barriers, but you must be registered as a supplier and there are no fees. How to apply. Go to <https://savannahga.gov/purchasing> and click on 'become a supplier'. Mr. Coker and Ms. Lumpkin-Lotson explained compliance and enforcement. Alderman Palumbo asked how are suppliers notified and if there are any political considerations during the bid process. It is posted live on the City's purchasing portal which sends emails out to suppliers, an ad is placed in the newspaper, and it's posted with the Georgia Procurement Registry. There are no political consideration, during the bid process.
- Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz expressed thanks for increasing the minority percentages with SBE, Savannah First, and now LSBE participation.
- Alderwoman Lanier discussed her prior experience and position while investigating MBE's and DBE's for Savannah Black Business League. The data collected was shared with then Savannah City Council. She stated the City is moving in the right direction. The program of pairing small DBE's and MBE's with major businesses and the DBE or MBE would become certified at the end of the process was a good idea, but it didn't happen. The minority participation numbers have increased and Alderwoman Lanier is pleased to see the improvement, but there is more work to be done.
- Alderwoman Lanier expressed concern with the cooperative purchasing process which excludes the small local and MBE's. She recommended using the program of pairing small DBE's and MBE's with major businesses and the DBE or MBE would become certified at the end of the process. She is encouraged with the work being done including having a Fair. More can be done to increase the number of local minority businesses that are used for City projects.
- City Manager Melder agreed with Alderwoman Lanier that the City could do more. He recently met with members of the black business community and the Black Chamber on how the City could participate with the businesses to ensure the City is creating a supplier list that shows diversity. In creating transparency, the City has developed a mechanism where you can go on-line and view all the purchasing documents; all P.O.s and all notes for every purchase over \$5,000. The information is available for the public's viewing. Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked for the timeframe of that information. Mr. Coker replied it goes back to November 2022. Alderwoman Miller Blakely asked if the timeframe could be extended to go back to 2020? Mr. Coker will work with the IT department on the data and get back to Alderwoman Miller Blakely and City Manager Melder with the numbers.
- Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan discussed the joint-venture contract of Johnson Laux and Antonio Brown (a black business), awarded the \$5 million President's Street contract and other joint-venture contracts (Gamble Building and Maintenance For Lanes). Johnson Laux is doing their part to include DBE's.
- Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked Ms. Lumpkin-Lotson about the division that checks to assure guidelines are being followed. In December, Ms. Dawn Morgan from Collins Construction sent an email concerning the \$7.8 million award for police headquarters. It was the third project directly awarded to Johnson Laux, but it could have been a project to benefit the local community had it been a fair and open bid process. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter read portions of Ms. Morgan's email where she applauded Alderwoman Miller Blakely for questioning the process and remarked on how often she sees the same names being awarded City contracts. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter asked if the correspondence was sent to the department and what steps were taken to address the contractor's concerns. She expressed her concern with orders under \$5,000 being approved within the departments and asked if the division mentioned by Ms. Lumpkin-Lotson will be overseeing the departments on those contracts.
- City Manager Melder replied, the authority referenced by Ms. Lumpkin-Lotson is the division that ensures DBE goals and local participation as dictated by the contract and the law are followed. City Manager Melder did receive the e-mail read by Alderwoman Gibson-Carter, but did not forward to Ms. Lumpkin-Lotson's division. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter expressed her concern for the City not following through on the established processes. At bare minimum, the City must respond to the concerned citizens and to Council. She is just asking that the City do better.

- City Manager Melder explained the State Contract process versus the local contract process.

The PowerPoint presentation is on file and available for viewing in the Clerk of Council's office.

[3. Impact Fees Recommendations](#)

[Exhibit 1: Impact Fee Presentation.pdf](#)

City Manager Melder thanked everyone involved in the completion of the proposed impact fee ordinance. Council is not voting on the impact fee ordinance today. There will be a first and second reading with two (2) public hearings of the ordinance before it goes before Council for approval.

City Manager Melder PRESENTED the proposed impact fee ordinance by fully detailing the pros and cons if Council decides to adopt the ordinance. The following is the recommendations from the Impact Fee Ordinance Committee and the Consultants of adopting a meaningful impact fee ordinance. The numbers are based on the cost of a single family home (1% of median home sale price over the past 12 months, \$393,085.).

- Three-year implementation:
 - - Year 1: 50% of impact fee of \$1,966
 - - Year 2: 75% of impact fee of \$2,948
 - - Year 3: 100% of impact fee of \$3,931

City Manager Melder recommends that if Council does not adopt or dilutes the recommendations listed above, then Council should not adopt any impact fee ordinance so the City does not over promise and under deliver.

City Manager Melder stated he is available for discussion or for a meeting.

The PowerPoint presentation is on file and available for viewing in the Clerk of Council's office.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the Workshop at 1:37 p.m.

A 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=5t4VFZnljmYI>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Signature: _____

