



JUNE 8, 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 12:02 p.m. Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order and 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. Pension Plan Update](#)

[Exhibit 1: Pension Plan Update.pptx](#)

PRESENTED after the Capital Construction Update.

PRESENTED by City Manager Melder and Finance Director David Maxwell.

Due to time constraints, comments and questions from Council Members will be continued to the June 22, 2023, Workshop.

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

[2. Capital Projects Update](#)

[Exhibit 1: Capital Projects Update.pptx](#)

PRESENTED by City Manager Melder, Capital Projects Management Senior Director Cristy Lawrence, and Stormwater Management Director Zach Hoffman.

Ms. Lawrence introduced the members of the capital projects management team: Senior Capital Project Manager Douglas Patton, Capital Project Manager Dan Reel, Capital Project Manager Byron Stiles, Construction Inspector James 'Jim' Wood, Contract Coordinator Amber Williams, Senior Administrative Assistant Jenneida White, and Capital Projects Liaison Phillip Kalogitonas.

Following the presentation, Council Members offered comments, discussion and questions:

- Alderman Palumbo expressed concern for capital funding of stormwater infrastructure. City Manager Melder explained most of stormwater financing is from SPLOST funding. Alderman Palumbo and City Manager Melder discussed sustainable funding sources and green infrastructure.
- Alderwoman Miller Blakely expressed interest in the remaining SPLOST projects and the location of Atlantic Park. She indicated there is no handicap parking at the Enmarket Arena; discussed hotel/motel tax for funding of pedestrian wayfinding signage; and the Victory Drive landscaping and irrigation project funding. City Manager Melder indicated staff is currently doing an analysis of hotel/motel tax versus SPLOST funds to determine funding sources for projects.
- Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan asked how contamination is addressed during construction, Ms. Lawrence indicated professional consultants are contracted for unexpected environmental issues. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan recommended having a designated staff person to handle environmental issues, City Manager Melder indicated that option can be considered. Alderwoman Wilder-Bryan requested updates on the DeLesseps Avenue widening and the Semken & LaRoche Avenue bridge replacements. She asked if signage at project sites or communication can be sent to residents with project completion dates. Ms. Lawrence indicated the department (Mr. Kalogitonas, Liaison) will be working with the community to supply updated information. Mayor Johnson indicated SPLOST projects have signage which identifies name, cost, timeline, etc.
- Alderwoman Lanier indicated Ogeecheeton Park has a problem with holding water and the gate has fallen off. She stated the Enmarket Arena parking garage needs handicap parking. Highlands Park Phase I, residents are requesting another meeting for additional information on the park and to ask questions. Regarding the Hudson Hill Community Center, a tree was moved and it died. There is a smaller sapling in its place and the Lanier family was not notified if this was a replacement. The residents are very pleased with the Center.
- Mayor Pro-Tem Dr. Shabazz asked for clarification of the Springfield Canal Drainage projects. Mr. Hoffman outlined Phase I, Phase II, and Phase III of the Springfield Canal drainage projects. She asked for clarification of the drainage box rehabilitations. Mr. Hoffman provided an explanation relating to the pump stations.
- Alderwoman Gibson-Carter expressed concern for owned City property as well as needed additional office space. She recommended policy initiatives on how the City acquires real estate. Through the budget process, Alderwoman Gibson-Carter recommended rolling back the millage rate to save citizens on their property taxes. She suggested the City forgo some capital projects in an effort to curtail wasteful spending. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter discussed the Canals as it relates to funding and allocating resources incrementally. In regard to post construction and quality assurance, Alderwoman Gibson-Carter is of the opinion that the work is of a lower quality, given the amount of money the City paid for the projects. After attending ribbon cuttings at projects, there were leaks and other items needing attention. City Manager Melder indicated capital projects all have a scope, and the City staff does have quality assurance and they are always working to make improvements. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter expressed her concerns for contracts with modifications, as it relates to additional funds for completion of a project.
- Mayor Johnson indicated he is adding a facts check feature for unsubstantiated and baseless claims. This Council and the previous administration lowered the millage rate for taxpayers. The millage rate is the lowest since 1987. Alderwoman Gibson-Carter stated, it's not the lowest it can be. Mayor Johnson indicated the City Manager cannot institute any policies that duly elected officials have established pertaining to any real owned assets.

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

[3. City Manager's Update](#)

NOT PRESENTED.

Mayor Johnson adjourned the Workshop at 1:33 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=RonRcZU7xSgcr1WC>

Mark Massey, Clerk of Council

Date Minutes Approved: _____

Signature: _____

