

MARCH 24, 2020
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
GOVT. CTR. – RM. 100

PRESENT: Mayor Bo Dorough
Mayor Pro Tem Jon Howard
City Commissioners: Matt Fuller, BJ Fletcher, Chad Warbington, Bob Langstaff, Jr.,
and Demetrius Young
City Manager: Sharon Subadan
City Attorney: C. Nathan Davis

Mayor Dorough called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. and recognized the Technology and Communications and, the Public Information staff for their hard work in having the Commission meeting setup remotely (virtual). He stated that there may be issues that have to be worked through since this is the first time this technology is being used. [Commissioners Fuller, Warbington, Langstaff and Young were not present, but used the dial in capability].

SPEAKER APPEARANCE

1. Jacqueline Jenkins, Director of Epidemiology – was not present

60 DAY MORATORIUM ON DEMOLITION IN HISTORIC DISTRICT

Mr. Davis discussed information as noted (copy on file) regarding a request to consider approval of a 60-day moratorium on demolition in the historic district. He advised that there are properties (to be demolished or rehabbed) subject to final Order of the Municipal Court which should be excluded from the moratorium. He confirmed that any final orders from Municipal Court are exempt. Paul Forgey, Planning Director, commented on working with the public and other departments to reduce demolitions, adding that the moratorium will assist staff with this.

Commissioner Warbington commented on the list the Commission received and asked if the properties will move forward and that the moratorium pertains to anything new. Mr. Forgey agreed that items in court will move forward. Commissioner Warbington asked if those not in court (but on which the process has begun) will be included. Mr. Forgey explained that the moratorium is on demolitions and will allow current court-ordered cases to move forward. Commissioner Warbington asked if the policy will be changed moving forward; Mr. Forgey stated that this will be addressed and explained the process to include city departments meeting to determine how to make the process more efficient, reduce the number of demolitions and make the public aware so that it is not as controversial when it happens, etc. and fewer of them.

Commissioner Young stated that with the public being encouraged to stay home and quarantined, those who are a part of [support] historic preservation may not have the opportunity to weigh in on some of the demolitions in the historic district, which is their reason for supporting the moratorium. Commissioner Fuller stated that he lives in the historic district and supports historic preservation. He commented on the 90-day moratorium that was in place last year, asking to see action plans of what will come from this moratorium. Mr. Forgey stated that the requested information will be presented to the Commission.

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Following a brief discussion, Mayor Dorough stated that the following two items are removed from the agenda at this time. Commissioner Langstaff moved to approve the removal of the following two items from the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Fletcher; the motion unanimously carried.

OUTSOURCING FUNCTIONS OF THE CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

MUNICIPAL COURT REVIEW OF SERVICES

PUBLIC SAFETY MATTERS

ALCOHOL LICENSE APPLICATIONS

Marshall Walter Norman, Director of License & Business Support, discussed the following application (copy on file).

1. ACG BBQ LLC, d/b/a Sonny's BBQ; 1900 N. Slappey Blvd.; V. Lewis/Agent; Liquor, Beer & Wine Consumption; WARD 2

He stated that this location has been closed for renovations since 2018 and was previously Sonny's Grill Pit Barbeque and reopened March 4, 2020. There have been four calls for police service within the past six months (two were fire alarms, one was a traffic stop, and one was seat belt check) and APD has no current open investigations, which has not been a drain on police resources.

Commissioner Warbington asked if information was received regarding previous citations (over 20 years ago). Marshal Norman explained that in 2002, ADDU oversaw all under-age alcohol sales/operations, which is all the information he has at this time, adding that it did register inside of GCIC.

Mayor Dorough stated that he thought that a local person had to apply as the licensee. Marshal Norman explained that a local has to be in charge of receiving a summons; the corporation controls the license. The local agent is an employee/manager/supervisor of the establishment, but is not the licensee

2. Lucky Break Grill & Billiard LLC, d/b/a Lucky Break Grill & Billiard; 2207 E. Oglethorpe Blvd.; S. Goodwin/Agent; Liquor, Beer & Wine Consumption; WARD 1

There were no questions/comments on this item.

ASSESSMENT OF ALBANY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mayor Dorough stated that he is recommending that a comprehensive study of the Albany Police Dept. is conducted by a consultant. APD Chief Persley briefly discussed having an outside consulting agency for APD.

In reply to Mayor Dorough, Ms. Subadan explained that this can be handled through an RFQ/RFP or an

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informal process to not include bid solicitations, which is at the discretion of the Board. Mayor Dorough recommended an RFP.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked the cost for the study, with Ms. Subadan stating that a comprehensive scope of work can be compiled and, to get a good quality product, there will be a cost, but will be worth it. Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked if the Commission can have input in the process with Ms. Subadan advising that she can receive Commission comments.

A brief discussion followed with Commissioner Warbington mentioning the City Retreat and the four multipliers that the recommendation will be based on. Mayor Dorough stated that there are things that citizens are not aware of what is already being done, adding that the study will show what successful things are being done and that this is the responsible thing to do. Ms. Subadan stated that recommendations will be made and, information on what is working in other places of comparable size cities will be brought forth. In reply to Commissioner Warbington, Mayor Dorough confirmed that the concerns of the Commission can be included in the RFP as mentioned by Mayor Pro Tem Howard and agreed the Commission should be involved in the process before conducting the study. Ms. Subadan mentioned recommendations forthcoming that will be built into the budget to include increased pay for officers. Commissioner Warbington also asked to get information/summary from the retreat to refresh their memories, i.e., the red speed (regarding school zones) that was discussed and asked how this will be handled. Mayor Dorough stated that this can be moved forward since it is not contingent on the study. Commissioner Warbington recommended that school zones/speed programs be acted on and not wait on the study.

Chief Persley stated that it is good to have outside professionals to come in and see what is being done and what improvements can be made.

RECREATION MATTERS

REHABILITATION OF CARVER PARK

Mayor Dorough discussed the cost and assessment to rehabilitate Carver Park, adding that a group came before the Commission asking to rename the park in honor of Coach Driskell. He stated that his conversation with the Clerk indicated that there is a policy in place. The Clerk gave a brief summary of the policy that was put in place regarding the renaming of City buildings and parks. Mayor Dorough suggested that the policy be looked at and that Commissioners Fletcher and Young work together on this to bring back a recommendation.

Regarding this item, Mayor Dorough stated that he would like to see an expert look at Carver Park to maximize use of the park and make recommendations, including an estimate on renovating the teen center, determine if fitness classes are still being conducted, find out from those using the park what their needs are, etc.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked if \$750,000.00 was allocated in SPLOST VII to the pool and gave a brief history of the area, the park, school, including structures needing to be demolished, etc. He said that in

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today's culture, there is a different concept regarding parks/recreation, which must be taken into consideration.

In reply to Commissioner Warbington regarding other gyms being renovated, Ms. Subadan stated that Bill Miller and Henderson gyms are being prepared for renovations (in April). Commissioner Warbington commented on Thornton Gym, with Ms. Subadan advising that renovations will mirror what was done at Thornton, adding that bids that went out were specific for the gym, with no basketball court, baseball/football fields, etc., included in this bid process. Commissioner Warbington suggested that kids need to be able to get out of the building and physically exercise in order for it to be a viable recreation facility for children in the area. He mentioned other suggestions that may help with renovation and asked the process of speed tables being installed in the area. Mayor Dorough commented on the old Lincoln Heights Elementary School and what was in place when his youngest son attended that school.

Commissioner Young agreed with comments made by Commissioner Fletcher in renaming Carver Park and briefly discussed his history of growing up in the area, adding that programs were then and should be exclusive to the needs of the community, etc. He also commented on the need to work with the community to ensure safety is in place and, discussed working with Commissioner Fletcher regarding the renaming, adding that he hopes renovations of the facility will include a basketball court, baseball field, etc. Mayor Dorough stated that the concerns of Commissioner Young will be looked at and asked for an update to address Commissioner Young's concerns.

Ms. Subadan said she would like to do budget workshops with the Commission to get clarity on parks and recreation, adding that there is a list of things on which she needs Commission direction. She said she has been in contact with DOCO Schools and what they are doing, i.e., after school programs, sports programs, etc. Regarding budget meetings, she suggested having three-four with the full Commission, and explained the process to include having extra time at work sessions to discuss: 1) parks, 2) public safety, blight, Code, 3) sewer, stormwater/utilities, etc., which will be helpful to formulating a plan. Mayor Dorough stated that this is a good idea and plan.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE MATTERS

ELECTRONIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE

Mayor Dorough discussed the Installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and Incorporation of EVs into Albany's fleet inventory. Ken Stock, Asst. City Manager, also discussed information as noted (copy on file) regarding incorporating charging infrastructure. He mentioned the local cost and stated that it is something that can be provided inhouse. He commented on the three options (levels 1-3), the location to house the vehicles and charging stations (fleet location, Public Works, Lily Pond, 401 Pine). Other considerations would include 1) public use (high traffic areas); 2) rate/fee to charge the public, 3) installation cost, which would vary from location to location; and 4) identifying vehicles in City fleet that could be alternatives to those currently in use.

Mayor Dorough said he is interested in looking at options, since this is the wave of the future, adding that it (public use of charging stations) and may not be a revenue source. He asked staff to move forward and bring back recommendations.

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Commissioner Fuller said he is not familiar with parts (for repairs) and asked if this will be the start of stocking parts, etc. Ms. Subadan explained that Ford cars are consistent since Ford is what City fleet has, adding that the parts may not be different, but other type cars are not what we have in Fleet. She stated that research will be conducted, and a recommendation brought back.

Commissioner Warbington asked if kiosks will be used to charge vehicles. Mr. Stock stated that it will be just like a gas station and there will be charges for electrical consumption.

Commissioner Young asked if it will be a revenue generator for utilities; Ms. Subadan stated that they can do projections, however, it most likely will not generate a significant amount of revenue.

Mayor Dorough stated that there will be a substantial savings using electricity instead of gas, etc.

Commissioner Warbington stated that looking at it as a pilot program, could information be brought back on the cost to put two kiosk charging stations in areas where there would be more customers using it and look at the amount of investments. Ms. Subadan stated that staff will review information being discussed to see in what direction the Commission wants to go.

Mayor Dorough said he would like to see several charging stations throughout the city so that City vehicles, citizens and tourists will benefit. He stated that he feels that future Commissions will look back and wonder why this option was not looked at in the past and put into place.

Commissioners Warbington, Young and Fuller supported moving forward and having cost comparison.

Commissioner Langstaff stated that he feels it is too early in the process and he is not sure the demand is there. He asked what other cities comparable to Albany have in place regarding charging stations before investing too much time and money. The consensus was for staff to research and provide additional information. Commissioner Young suggested that the City of Albany be a leader and innovator and, being the one that other cities will look at and follow.

OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Mayor Dorough asked if the Commission voted to have the delegation introduce legislation regarding Dougherty County having an elected Tax Commissioner and surrendering four appointments to ADICA to the County Commission in exchange for the City to have four appointments to the Hospital Authority, and asked the City Clerk to research the minutes. Mr. Davis stated that a resolution was passed and sent to the local delegation regarding an elected Tax Commissioner.

Mayor Pro Tem Howard asked for an update from Mayor Dorough on the coronavirus and asked if the Governor closed all clubs/bars. Mayor Dorough provided comments regarding the Governor's Executive Order and the Executive Order that is in place for the City/County, etc. He advised that Phoebe Putney is approaching capacity, with some who have tested positive and many others being released from the hospitals, with doctors making the decision that the symptoms do not justify admission and instructing people to remain home; however, there are many who are not complying.

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Ms. Subadan stated that currently 30% of employees are working remotely, taking calls from home, answering citizen questions, and, effective tomorrow, there will be two lanes of drive thru (for Utility payments). She advised that the City is encouraging employees to be compliant regarding social distancing and the shelter-in-place Order by the Mayor and County Chairman. She stated that there is also a reduction in transit services, with activities being tailored to be consistent with what the situation calls for.

A brief discussion followed on citizens not taking the pandemic seriously (Mayor Pro Tem Howard) with Mayor Dorough stating that it is frustrating, and many times people do not take things seriously until, they themselves, or loved ones are affected. He commended faith-based communities for being responsible and complying with Orders, and commented on the current number of deaths (11 in Albany/Dougherty County), cases under review, etc. Mayor Pro Tem Howard mentioned having the Snickers Marathon in town during the time of the two funerals that were held, asking if this also had an impact on the spread. Ms. Subadan stated that the cases have been traced to the two funerals and that she cannot say that the marathon made the situation any worse. Commissioner Fletcher also commented on the virus and said that some who passed away had other underlying medical conditions, etc., and mentioned comments that young people thought they could not get the virus. She asked that all exercise common sense and practice social distancing as recommended.

Mayor Dorough mentioned the teleconference conducted by Dr. Delrio, a doctor from Emory University School of Medicine and encouraged the Commissioners to review the webinar which discussed the age groups and how the virus affects each.

Commissioner Warbington thanked Mayor Dorough and Ms. Subadan for the daily email updates.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

SONJA TOLBERT
CITY CLERK