



**MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION  
MAYOR AND COUNCIL  
CITY OF DULUTH, GA  
MARCH 26, 2018**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Harris, Council members Bomar, Carden, Jones, and Kelkenberg, City Manager, Department Directors, City Attorney

**ABSENT:** Councilmember Whitlock

Mayor Harris called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**I. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**II. PRESENTATIONS/UPDATES**

**1. 2018 CITIZENS BUDGET REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Mayor welcomed the committee and thanked them for their participation. The FY18/19 Committee is comprised of the following individuals: Alana Moss, Manfred Graeder, Eva Kuhn, Richard Meehan, John Howard, Denise Auger, Amy Fuchs, Jim Adkins, Chantal Scantlebury, Stephanie Wright, Anmaar Habib, Greg LaHatte, Susan Porteous, Charlie Dorlich, Dan Rabinovitch and Ashley Mosteller

Co- Chairs Amy Fuchs and Manfred Graeder came forward and presented recommendations from the committee. In February the Citizen Budget Review Advisory Committee (CBRA) met three times to discuss the City's budget. They pointed out the first meeting the committee was presented with a budget overview of revenues, expenses, SPLOST, Property Taxes, Economic Development and City Events. The second meeting the class heard about the Financial status of the city, the five year forecast and the city's reserves and discussed several questions given to them.

**1. If you have an additional \$100.00 how would you divide it between city services?**

- The group felt that the larger dollar amount would be distributed to the Police Department, due to the size and scope of equipment and personnel required or needed.
- The next would be distributed to the Public Works Department, due to type of equipment needed and personnel and the additional amount would be distributed to Economic Development to promote growth in Duluth.

**2. If the city suffered another revenue shortfall, ideas for increasing revenues.**

- Creative re-purposing of existing buildings focused on needs of target audience in that area
- Target market and satisfy needs
- Cultural Infrastructure
- Re-Evaluate Tax breaks to Non-Profits for appropriateness

3. What is the appropriate amount of Capital Reserves for the City to maintain (outside of the four (4) month emergency reserve)?

The committee agreed that no current services should be reduced and felt that the specific dollar amount would be a strategic decision by the Mayor and Council. The Committee did however suggests guidelines be put in place to fund the following:

- Capital Maintenance Projects (HVAC, Roof, etc.)
- Possible redevelopment projects
- Economic Conditions and risks
- Future Technology Development
- Emergency Repairs

Other questions discussed among the committee:

Would the Citizen Budget Review Advisory Committee recommend to the Mayor and Council further investigate modification to the City's current Homestead Exemptions? The committee concluded, raising the Homestead Exemption alone would not play a significant role in attracting more homeowners and recommended to market current advantages to residents by:

Education and Enforcement to HOAs & Residents on City Codes and Enforcement  
Help strengthen weaker / small HOA's through education  
Continued diligence from City Code enforcement  
Consider forming a special committee to gather information between the City and Community to better assess the needs and explore resolutions - filing Covenants, Discussion on Rental Caps  
New Improvements: Home Ownership Development by exploring tax credit for home improvements, continued development in the downtown which create a ripple effect city wide.

The committee concluded that the City's Budgeting and forecasting processes are well thought out, through and implemented. They also feel that it is a good practice to keep the Operating Reserves and a separate Capital Reserve with guidelines and felt that a reduction in current service level could be enhanced in some areas of the City. They also concluded that the current storm water fee appears to be too low to cover the foreseeable expenses.

The Mayor and Council thanked the Committee for their participation and feedback and noted that the first work session on the FY19 budget would be held on April 30<sup>th</sup> in the Community Room beginning at 5:30 p.m.

### III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

#### 1. ANNUAL EMPLOYEE INSURANCE RENEWAL

Finance Committee member Susan Porteous presented the request. Staff met with the City's insurance broker, Matt Bidwell with MSI Benefits Group, to discuss the annual renewal of its health, dental, life and disability insurance. Mr. Bidwell reported that Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) is offering a 7.5% increase premium renewal for health insurance. Mr. Bidwell also provided renewal information on dental, life and disability insurance that is offered to employees. This information was presented to the City's Finance Committee at their March 20th meeting. The Finance Committee is recommending Council approve a change from BCBS to Cigna for health and dental insurance and a change from Greater Georgia Life to Metlife for Life and Disability Insurance. Approval of this item on the April 9<sup>th</sup> agenda would authorize the change to be effective June 1, 2018.

*Staff was authorized to place this item on the next Council consent agenda for authorization.*

## 2. ANNUAL SALARY SURVEY REVIEW

Finance Committee Chair Susan Porteous presented. The annual salary survey classification pay plan study as conducted by Human Resources Manager Ed Johnson was reviewed by both the Executive Pay and Benefits Committee and the Finance Committee. The HR Manager researches and compares salary ranges in the City of Duluth with 15 other local jurisdictions in order to determine the prevailing pay range for each position in the local market area. This annual survey helps ensure that the City can attract and retain qualified and competent employees; avoid overpaying or underpaying employees; and keeps the salary structure technically up-to-date. COLA increases are vital in keeping the pay competitive and reduces the need to re-grade jobs. The study also reviews the classification of various duties performed to determine if they have been placed in the appropriate pay range compared to other cities.

This year, 17 positions were recommended to the Finance Committee for a change in pay grade (i.e., re-grade). These positions, if approved the changes would be effective July 2, 2018 to coincide with the adoption of the FY19 Budget and first pay cycle of FY19 at a total cost of \$25,403. The Finance Committee recommends approval of the Job Titles as presented, effective July 2, 2018.

*Staff was authorized to place to place the re-grade positions as presented in the FY19 Budget for authorization.*

## 3. FISCAL YEAR 2017 AUDIT REPORT

Finance Committee member Susan Porteous presented the City's annual audit report. The audit was presented to the Finance Committee by Joel Black with Mauldin & Jenkins at the committee's meeting held on March 20, 2018. The audit report includes the City as a whole, the Downtown Development Authority, and the Urban Redevelopment Agency. The auditor issued an unqualified or clean opinion on the City's financial statements. The audit report included no findings related to the financial statements. However, the report does include two management comments related to segregation of duties and a property tax allowance for uncollectable taxes. The Finance Committee and staff recommend that Council accept the report as presented on the next Council consent agenda.

*Staff was authorized to place this item on the next Council consent agenda for authorization.*

## 4. SR120 SIDEWALK PROJECT AUTHORIZATION

City Engineer Margie Pozin came forward and explained that the SR 120 sidewalk project is part of the 2014 Joint City/County SPLOST list. The section from Buford Highway to Claiborne Drive is complete in terms of design and right of way acquisition, and is ready for construction. Staff has developed a bid package that is ready to advertise and requests approval to advertise in the Gwinnett Daily Post and on the State Procurement Registry for 30 days starting on 4/13. Bids would be due 5/16.

This project will be funded 81% by Gwinnett County and 19% by the City. If we move forward at this time, it is anticipated that the project would be substantially complete by the end of this calendar year.

Staff requests Council approval for advertising for contractor bids for this project. Once the bids are received and evaluated, staff will request budget amendment based on bids, contingency, and CE&I costs.

*Authorize Staff to advertise for bids.*

## 5. TRAFFIC SIGNAL – SR 120 AT GEORGE ROGERS AVENUE/DULUTH HS

City Engineer Margie Pozin explained that the City has been trying to get approval for a signal at SR 120 and George Rogers / DHS for many years. Several studies have been completed, many meetings have been attended, and

multiple solutions have been discussed. At a recent meeting with the State Traffic Engineer, the City was finally granted permission to move forward with the signal as all other options have been exhausted.

Staff has directed our previous traffic engineers to submit a complete and final traffic study to GDOT for approval. Staff has also engaged the services of an on-call traffic engineer to design the signal to GCDOT and GDOT's specifications. Wolverton & Associates has provided a fee of \$10,329 for signal design services. This includes all necessary coordination with previous traffic engineer, DHS plans for the new driveway, Gwinnett County DOT, Georgia DOT general office and district office, and the City. It is anticipated they will begin design in mid-April (after a budget amendment for this project is approved by Council) and complete design within three months. Staff will then request Council approve construction funds.

This project is on our current approved joint City/County SPLOST list and will be funded 81% by Gwinnett County and 19% by the City.

Staff is requesting a budget amendment at the next voting meeting on 4/9 to move adequate funds into the budget to continue the project. Request will include \$10,329 for designer, 10% design contingency, and funds for the City Engineer's time to manage and deliver the project.

*Staff was authorized to place a budget amendment on the next Council agenda for authorization.*

#### 6. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Planning Director Bill Aiken explained that over the next several months, the Planning staff will be working on a required five (5) year update to Duluth's Comprehensive Plan, Plan 2040. In accordance with Chapter 110-12 of the Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, the City must form a Steering Committee to guide the development of the Plan update. The Steering Committee must contain a member from the elected governing authority. The other members will be made up of the Duluth Planning Commission and Duluth Planning staff.

Staff is seeking a volunteer from Council to join the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will meet at least three (3) times between April 2018 and January 2019 to develop the Plan update.

*Staff asked for a volunteer from Council to join the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. Mayor Harris will make her choice based on interest from Council members Whitlock, Kelkenberg and Carden.*

#### 7. MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING INSPECTION PROGRAM

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Planning Director Bill Aiken shared the research staff has done since the initial presentation was made as part of the Duluth Neighborhood Outreach Work (NOW) initiative for Multi-Family Housing Inspections.

*Council agreed with the summary of the program as presented.*

#### 8. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

{C}

Mr. Aiken gave an update of land use cases and permits for the month of March.

#### 9. RANSOMWARE PROTECTIONS UPDATE

Information Technology Manager Jeff Pruett provided an update on the City's ransomware protection software. The IT department has a multi-layer approach to security.

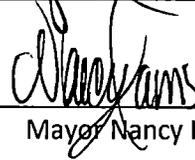
**IV. MATTERS FROM COUNCIL**

None.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

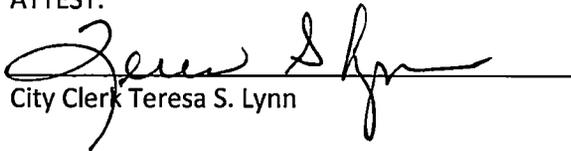
Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

Approved this 9 day of April, 2018.



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Mayor Nancy Harris

ATTEST:



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City Clerk Teresa S. Lynn