



CITY OF STATESBORO
WORK SESSION MINUTES
APRIL 21, 2020

Mayor & Council Work Session

50 E. Main St. Council Chambers

4:00 PM

A Work Session of the Statesboro City Council was held on April 21, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall 50 East Main Street. Present was Mayor Jonathan McCollar; Council Members: Phil Boyum, Paulette Chavers, Venus Mack and Shari Barr. Council Member John Riggs joined the meeting via Zoom Meetings. Also present was City Clerk Leah Harden, City Attorney Cain Smith, City Manager Charles Penny, Assistant City Manager Jason Boyles and Public Information Officer Layne Phillips.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jonathan McCollar.

City Manager Charles Penny introduced Kathleen Field our new Director of Planning and Development.

1. Creek on the Blue Mile Presentation – Freese & Nichols

Joining the meeting via zoom George Kelly with Freese and Nichols and project manager for the Creek on the Blue Mile presented the results to Phase I of the project. Phase I consisted of the flood and feasibility study with key features of 100-year floodplain and floodway mitigation, maintaining continual flow for the linear park with the focal point of Lonice Barrett Regional Community Recreation Park which includes a dock, walking trails, picnic areas and other features. Another key feature is a backup surface water supply. The flood feasibility evaluation contains upper Little Lotts Creek basin that drains into the reservoir and lower Little Lotts Creek that drains into Little Lotts Creek itself. The evaluation leads to the primary goal of the project, which is floodplain mitigation. We had to look at the existing floodplain and floodway to determine what would be the best for this area. Taking into consideration balancing storage/outflow, storm water stream flow and downstream inflow and to mitigate flooding while maintaining continual flow for the linear park. Mr. Kelly's recommendation is to move forward with Phase II, which is the site feasibility that studies the environment including wetland & streams fish and wildlife cultural resources. It also includes geotechnical explorations, geological study, safe yield analysis and water quality testing of surface and groundwater.

Councilmember Boyum inquired about the area Max Lockwood as it looks like there is a floodplain north of that area. Are we going to have to account for that flow and what we were going to do to control/restrict the volume? Chuck Perry also with the project stated that the area is outside the study area, the water that is coming through that area is being taken into account in the model flowing into the newly constructed channel that will be part of the park area. Mr. Perry believes the flood area north of Max Lockwood would be reduced. Councilmember Boyum asked has it been calculated to know how much water needs to be in the reservoir to make sure water is in the creek at all times. George said that they haven't answered that question because flooding was the criteria for this project. Boyum also wanted to confirm that the plan was for the water to be 2ft deep. George said he believes that is the normal flow in the pedestrian walkway area.

City Manager Charles Penny stated this completes the first stage of work and we are at a milestone on whether we go or no go. Mr. Penny stated it is my recommendation to authorize the engineers to move forward to the second phase of the project.

2. Alcohol License – City and State Laws

City Attorney Cain Smith presented comparisons of the City of Statesboro Alcohol Ordinance vs. State Law. Cain reviewed the following areas **Catering**, city and state laws are not distinguishable, **Insurance**, state does not require insurance for licensees the City does, **Proximity** package sales are governed by state law on premises sales proximity requirements are governed by local governments. **Open Container**, State prohibits open container inside vehicles there is no state law otherwise. City regulates and prohibits open containers. **Underage Admission** we are more restrictive than the state. **Distilled Spirits** package sales prohibited in the city of Statesboro. **Employees** are same as state law although requirements for server TIPS trainings come solely from the City. **Pricing** restrictions are set solely by the City. **Taxes** are as high as allowed under state law. **Non Profit Special Events** are the same as state law. **Special Events** applies to for profit cash bars, admission payment or donation solicitation at a non-licensed premises. City license caterers are the only ones who can apply and requires 45 days in advance application. The state allows any party to apply and requires 10 days in advance. **Violations** City conducts violation hearings and penalizes licensees. State conducts parallel but separate proceedings for same incident. **Licensing** the state sets out basic license requirements. The city regulates licensure in accordance with the powers granted by the state. Currently the city prohibits alcohol licensing to any city, state or federal employee or official whose duties include the regulation of policing of alcoholic beverages or licenses or any tax collecting activity. There are two options regarding this ordinance, one we could leave Chapter 6 in its current state or two-give direction to staff regarding what parts should be reviewed and updated.

Councilmember Paulette Chavers asked, so as of right now, being an elected official, I cannot hold an alcohol license. City Attorney Cain smith answered, that is correct.

Councilmember Venus Mack expressed her interest in lifting the ban. There was discussion about open container in the downtown area. Mayor McCollar stated he would like to see a blanket exemption for a specific area of the city center.

Mayor McCollar stated Special Events should align with the state to allow anyone to get a Temporary Special Event permit and matching the number of days to the state. In addition, we need to change the licensing to follow state law. Direction was given to place on the next council agenda a consideration to direct City Attorney to draft changes to the City of Statesboro alcohol ordinance regarding these three areas.

3. Apartment Development Discussion

City Manager Mr. Charles Penny reviewed with Mayor and Council the housing units within the City comparing owner occupied vs. tenant occupied. He stated based on 2018 numbers there are 12,349 units in Statesboro. Of that number 24.5% (3025) units are owner occupied while the other 62.9% (7767) units are tenant occupied which compared to the state of Georgia at 37%. When we look at our City, we have Georgia Southern University, East Georgia State College and Ogeechee Technical College, which bring in a student population that drives the number of tenant occupied units. As far as multi-family units under development right now, we do not have any projects underway. We currently have about 4000 apartment units across our community. The question is what things can we do to change and encourage home ownership in our community? At this time within the City of Statesboro, we have potential for 3065 more apartment units to be developed. Mr. Penny recommends a housing study to be done by Bleakly. This would be a sixteen-week process. In addition, we need to look at some incentives to help increase single-family construction within the City limits. City staff will report to City Council in June 2020.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar addressed the recent ruling released by Governor Brian Kemp allowing business to re-open. Some will be able to open on Friday and more to be opening on Monday. He stated businesses have a responsibility to keep themselves and their customers safe. Even though you have the option of opening up

on Friday or Monday use discernable judgement and open up when it is safe to do so. Mayor McCollar invited everyone for the 6:15 pm Facebook live where he will address these actions by the Governor. Councilmember Shari Barr stated what is allowed and can be done does not have to be done. Continue to use your own best judgment continue to keep yourself, your family and employees as safe as you can. Councilmember Venus Mack reminded everyone to do what you can to protect yourselves and families. Continue to practice social distancing and wash your hands. Councilmember Phil Boyum stated well over 95 percent of the people I see out there shopping are doing what they can to be safe and businesses are doing everything they can to protect their employees. This community has come together and done everything they can to make some money but at the same time to be as safe as possible

The meeting was adjourned at 5:53 pm

Jonathan McCollar, Mayor

Leah Harden, City Clerk