



CITY OF STATESBORO
WORK SESSION MINUTES
NOVEMBER 17, 2020

Mayor & Council Work Session

50 East Main Street

3:30 PM

A Work Session of the Statesboro City Council was held on November 17, 2020 at 3:30 p.m. in City Hall Council Chambers, 50 East Main Street. Present was Mayor Jonathan McCollar; Council Members: Phil Boyum, Paulette Chavers, Venus Mack and Shari Barr. 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. Absent was Councilmember John Riggs.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar called the meeting to order.

Parks Plan Review

Ronald Huffman with Wood presented a progress report on the renovations to Grady Street Park and Luetta Moore Park. The plan concepts for Luetta Moore Park include the removal of the softball field, the addition of a splash pad, a three lane teaching pool, restroom and bathhouse, volleyball court, multi-age playground, two family pavilions with grills, a detention pond and expanded parking. The pool is a therapeutic pool with a depth of four feet. It is heated and will have a handicap entry lift. There is an option for a pool enclosure/dome, which would have a ten-foot clearance around the pool and would be an additional \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00.

Grady Street Park renovations include a covered basketball pavilion with secured entry, a multi-age playground, two family picnic pavilions with grills, an outdoor half-court basketball, walking trail, renovated bathroom with the addition of a drinking fountain, and expanded parking. The basketball pavilion will have a close time and there will be cameras put in place

In order to save time, the bidding recommendation is that the 30% drawings be issued for an RFQ to create a pool of 2-3 qualified contractors to work with Wood in developing the final plans and specifications. When the drawings are 90% complete each pre-qualified contractor will be given two weeks to submit a cost bid. The goal is to have these renovations completed for use and enjoyment by the 4th of July.

Councilmember Shari Barr asked about the expanded parking stating we need to stay as green as possible.

We will get pricing for both pavement and permeable surfacing.

Urban Redevelopment Agency

Doug Gephart with Davenport & Company stated the park renovations will cost approximately \$4 million based on the City's goals for these two parks. For financing options and approach Davenport recommends the City create an Urban Redevelopment Agency (URA). This can be done by local resolution. It requires the City to designate the areas where improvements are being made as "Redevelopment Areas" and developing a Redevelopment Plan. The way financing works through the URA is the City contracts with the agency and pledges its full faith and credit towards the repayment of the bonds. By doing so it will put us in a position to

secure the lowest possible interest rate. For the method of sale, Davenport recommends financing the park improvements project through the direct bank loan. The Direct Bank Loan process begins with Davenport distributing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit competitive interest rates from local, regional and national lenders. Sending out an RFP does not cost anything and does not obligate the City to move forward. Bank loans often allow for the ability to prepay loans at any time in whole or in part and sometimes with out penalty. The cash flow for this project includes the County contributing \$1,000,000.00 over the next five years and the City contributing \$1,100,000.00 from the current SPLOST over the next five years. The remaining funds would come from the 2025 SPLOST. Mr. Gephart reviewed the key assumptions, the preliminary series 2021 debt service and the preliminary timetable. Today you have been presented with the plan of finance and informally give consent to proceed down this path. In the balance of 2020 and January 2021 the City needs to create the Urban Redevelopment Agency (URA). In early January, Davenport will distribute the RFP. The bids would come back late January early February. At the February Council Meeting we would come back for formal approval of the bond. Through the balance of February it would go through the validation process and close on the bond in March.

City Manager Charles Penny stated this financing is based upon SPOLOT being reauthorized. If the 2025 SPLOST is not reauthorized the City would be responsible to repay that debt.

Food Truck Ordinance

City Attorney Cain Smith stated this is a new article of Chapter 18 covering local food services. It is to allow for the licensing and operation of both food trucks and pushcarts. The purpose of this article is to protect public health, safety, and to establish uniform regulations for the operation of mobile food service units. In addition, it will enhance street level economic opportunities within the city. This ordinance requires city licensure on an annual basis and the units must be approved by the Health Department. There are a list of standards for the operation of these units regarding location requirements, noise and litter consideration, signage, public safety and fire safety. In addition, each location would require approval not just the unit. They would need to show permission or lease to operate where they are and would not be allowed to operate in the public right of way. This article was drafted from the City of Savannah ordinance and is consistent with what we've seen in other jurisdictions.

After some discussion direction was given to remove section 18-316 and add wording to say proximity requirements are waived if it's your own brick and mortar. Direction was given to bring this article forward for first reading at the December 1, 2020 Council Meeting.

Urban Redevelopment Plan (URP) and Redevelopment Area Strategy (RAS)

Director of Planning and Development Kathy Field stated these two documents are required for submission in April 2021 for the proposed CDBG application the City intends to submit. There will be a significant amount of public participation. Community involvement is required to finalize these documents. The GICH committee has expressed interest in taking the lead to elicit this community input. The Urban Redevelopment Plan (URP) plan creates a framework for the redevelopment of those areas in the City that are found to be deteriorating due to blighting influences. This plan also establishes the boundaries of the redevelopment area and delineates the area's housing conditions and demographics.

Director of Planning and Development Kathy Field continued with the Redevelopment Area Strategy (RAS) stating this plan delineates a specific target area within the URP. This plan calls for initiatives relating to housing rehabilitation, infrastructure improvements, code compliance, acquisition of dilapidated housing, and a relocation plan for displaced families.

The next step is moving these plans into the community for input and come back sometime in January 2021 for approval.

Comprehensive Housing Study

Director of Planning and Development Kathy Field stated this study consists of three sections, Rental Residential Market, Single-Family Residential Market and Affordable Housing Plan. The rental residential market include the analysis of the supply and demand for the rental market, a rental housing needs assessment and a recommended alignment of current plans and zoning code to comply with housing needs. The single-family residential market study includes an evaluation of the supply and demand of single-family residential units in the City and surrounding county. It will provide conclusions regarding price points and market demands for the single-family sector including demand by household age. The affordable housing plan is a requirement for both the HUD funded, Community Home and Investment Program (CHIP) and Community Development Block Grant programs (CDBG). Currently the City does not have an affordable housing program. The funding for this study will be paid from funds remaining in the CHIP Grant Revolving Loan Fund, which has approximately \$65,000.00 available. An agreement was reached between the Coastal Regional Commission (CRC) and Bleakly Advisory Group with CRC being responsible for the affordable housing plan and Bleakly Advisory Group responsible for the Rental Residential Market and the Single-Family Residential Market studies. The cost for services of both groups comes to \$60,720.00 (CRC \$15,000.00 and Bleakly Advisory Group \$45,720.00).

Subdivision Incentive Ordinance

Director of Planning and Development Kathy Field presented Chapter 62 Residential Subdivision Incentive Program Ordinance as it currently stands. This ordinance has not been revised since its adoption in 2001. The values of incentives do not reflect present values, the language is vague in terms of defining the type of development that the City wants to encourage under this program and it is very subjective. The proposed revision includes two parts. Part 1 would be for subdivision developments in the R-15, R-20 and PUD zoning districts. This section will include a list of specific criteria with an accompanying scorecard that provides guidance regarding the type of subdivision development being promoted. This is a competitive program and the scorecard system will provide transparency on how the applications are judged. The proposed incentives in this article include, the City paying the developer \$10,000.00 per lot and the City will install all natural gas infrastructure. The return on investment to the City in an R-20 subdivision of 60 lots with an estimated home value of \$275,000.00 would take six years. In an R-15 subdivision of 60 lots with an estimated home value of \$175,000.00 would take nine years.

Part 2 is for new subdivision developments in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) defined neighborhoods only. The intent is to encourage new development within these areas and encourage neighborhood revitalization. The list of specific criteria utilizes a weighted score to make applications to this category more competitive than Article 1. The proposed incentives in this article include, the City paying the developer \$10,000.00 per lot in addition the City will install all natural gas infrastructure, waive all application, permit, sewer tap and construction inspection fees.

Councilmember Shari Barr asked if these incentives would apply to a developer building to rent rather than owner occupied homes.

Planning Director Kathy Field stated this refers to owner occupied developments. The goal is to grow the tax base.

Councilmember Phil Boyum asked if we are going to require the homes to be fitted for gas. There is no sense in running the infrastructure if no one is going to hook up to them. In addition, where is the money coming from, from a budget standpoint?

City Manager Charles Penny stated these funds are budgeted from our enterprise funds and SPLOST.

Direction was given to bring this forward for first reading at the December 1, 2020 Council Meeting.

Open Container Discussion

City Attorney Cain Smith started the discussion stating he would need guidance, and reiterated that the open container does require a paper or plastic cup, glass is specifically forbidden under our open container exemption zone in 6-17(d)(1). The open container zone is in operation starting from when drinks are allowed to be sold at an on premise consumption establishment, up to that time they must clear patrons from the premises as set out in 6-7(o). The current hours for the downtown exemption zone is from 7:00 am to 1:45 am every day of the week except Sunday when the time is 11:00 am to 12:45 am.

Councilmember Phil Boyum stated he recommends ending open container in the downtown exemption zone at 11:00 pm.

Councilmember Venus Mack asked Chief Broadhead what have been the main concerns. Have you been getting many calls on the weekend in the downtown area?

Police Chief Mike Broadhead stated the issue is crowd related. The place that's a draw for a crowd is too small for the number of persons wanting to get in there. So people are lined up on the street for an extended period of time. While these individuals are waiting, they go to their own cars to get alcohol that are in bottles and bring it back to the line. We are trying to spend some time down there and trying to work with the owner to maintain that. That has been the number one issue is the crowd is too big for the space.

Councilmember Shari Barr stated she is not ready to roll back the time just yet. I want to deal with the problems that seem to be concentrating on West Main.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar stated we need to observe the situation to get a better understanding of what is happening in the downtown area. Have staff observe the area and report back to Mayor and Council in January in regards to this topic.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:29 pm.