



CITY OF STATESBORO
WORK SESSION MINUTES
NOVEMBER 21, 2023

Mayor & Council Work Session

50 East Main Street

3:00 PM

A Work Session of the Statesboro City Council was held on November 21, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 50 East Main Street. Present was Mayor Pro Tem Shari Barr; Council Members: Phil Boyum, Paulette Chavers, Venus Mack, and John Riggs. 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, and Assistant to City Manager Olympia Gaines. Absent was Mayor Jonathan McCollar

1. Quarterly Financial Representations:

A. Year End 2023

Finance Director Cindy West presented the fourth quarter financial report of Fiscal Year 2023. She reviewed revenues and expenditures in the General Fund, Statesboro Fire Service Fund, Water & Sewer, Stormwater, Natural Gas, Solid Waste Collection, and Solid Waste Disposal. Ms. West also reviewed the SPLOST and TSPLOST distributions for Fiscal Year 2022 and 2023 stating there was an uptick in these collections. Additionally Hotel/Motel revenues have increased in FY 2023 compared to the previous FY 2022.

B. First Quarter of FY 2024

Finance Director Cindy West presented the first quarter report of Fiscal Year 2024 stated revenues are up due to interest however there is an increase in expenditures due to personnel. Ms. West reviewed the revenues and expenditures for each of the General Fund, Statesboro Fire Service Fund, Water & Sewer, Stormwater, Natural Gas, Solid Waste Collection, Solid Waste Disposal. SPLOST, TSPLOST, and Hotel Motel revenues are trending higher this quarter than in the previous year.

2. Creek on the Blue Mile Update

A. Master Plan – Memorial Park

James McNash with Freese & Nicholes gave an update on the Creek on the Blue Mile – Flood control project. He stated the activities taken place since the last update in April include, advance design activity for promenade, completed master planning process for memorial park, completed 30% conceptual reservoir design, private partner coordination meetings, and secured grant funding from GDOT and OPB.

Dan Fischer presented a map of the proposed Memorial Park Master Plan which is located on the corner of Fair Road and South Zetterower Avenue. Some of the main features in the proposed plan include a two level parking deck, amphitheater with a stage and interactive fountain, veteran's monument and plaza, pickleball courts, park pavilion with restrooms, and dedicated space for food trucks. Additionally, the storm drainage structure will be "daylighted" into a mini creek that will extend from Fair Road to South Zetterower Avenue curving behind the stage of the amphitheater.

At 3:42 pm Councilmember Phil Boyum joined the meeting.

James McNash came back to review the upcoming activities for the project which include, continuation of design activities, working through the process with the Georgia Department of Transportation, and continuing permitting efforts with the US Army Corps of Engineers. So far grant funding which has been secured, include GDOT Bridge \$6,480,000 ,no match, GDOT transportation alternatives program up to \$2,120,000, requiring 25% match and GA OPB up to \$1,650,000, requiring a 25% match, for a total of \$10,250,000. The estimated construction costs come in at \$28,607,107 minus the total in grants is \$18,358,107.

B. South Main Street Traffic Circle

Keely Fennell with the Blue Mile Committee presented the South Main Street traffic circle project. Wanting to keep with the aesthetics of the Blue Mile Streetscape the Blue Mile Committee would like to put in a dry bed ground level fountain in the middle of the traffic circle. They will need to get approval from the Georgia Department of Transportation to move forward and ask that the Mayor sign a letter of support so they can begin the conversation. The fountain would be funded by private individuals.

3. Statesboro Comprehensive Plan – Coastal Regional Commission

Megan Jones with CRC stated it is required to update the comprehensive plan every five years. Megan presented an overview of the comprehensive plan. It is a tool for promoting strong and healthy communities centered on a vision and a set of goals that express a desired future that is achievable within a timeframe. Initial project timeline includes 3 work sessions; session 1 public comment, data review and update, city vision and city goals, session 2 public comment, needs & opportunities and strengths, weaknesses, opportunity, threats analysis, and session 3, public comment, character areas, and community work program. After the work sessions we move to the final steps which include; CRC drafts each plan, stakeholder and city will review each section, CRC addresses comments from the reviews, final comprehensive plan packet is submitted to DCA, 40 day public review period, any additional public comments and comments from the DCA are incorporated, and then the city council adopts the updated plan.

4. Transit System Update

Civil Engineer with the city Kiara Ahmed, presented a 6 month operational update of the Statesboro Area Transit system. Currently there are 39 stops total, 20 stops for the blue route and 19 for the red route. There are five shelters, one at the transfer for both routes, three are on the Blue Route and one on the Red Route. We launched a google maps feature which lets you search the blue and red routes showing the best way to get to where you need to go and the time it will take. We are currently waiting on GDOT's "Let's Ride" program, which will help us extend services and take electronic payments. Ridership is on the rise, weekly ridership is pretty consistent with Friday being a little bit more popular and the blue route getting the most ridership. Looking at the FY 25 budget, we are trying to expand to an 8 bus system, which would be 2 additional buses per route, 4 buses per route total. This will require a local match of \$436,000 that leaves about \$160,000 for improvements paid from 2023 TSPLOST funds. Program improvements include adding bus shelters at popular or requested stops and hopefully installing them by FY 25. Also looking into adding additional stops with the additional buses or improve route efficiency in the future. We have had bus stop/shelter requests, along with 12 complaints we are working on resolving.

5. Village Builders Program

LaSara Mitchell, Program Coordinator for Statesboro Village Builders stated the goal of Village Builders is to enhance the lives of youth across Bulloch County by providing access to substantial mentoring relationships and strengthening youth resilience. Village Builders initiative was restructured to have five different components; childhood literacy, workforce development, financial literacy, community health acquisition and purposeful relationship. All components are activated and running great, the purposeful relationship component will be launched early 2024. Multiple programs were launched this year including Statesboro youth council, Leading by Reading, Youth Connect Summer Program, and Family Fun Resource Days. We have already activated the application for our mentor recruitment plan, and some have

been sent out to active public spaces, through social media as well as through traditional ways, as well as sent out emails for applicants to apply. The applicants will then go through a screening process and on to mentor & mentee training. We are seeking alternative partnerships for the purpose of providing a safe space for both parties, once 25 applicants have successfully completed the screening process which includes a background investigation, training will begin. Meet a mentor day will be scheduled, which will officially launch the community program, the tentative launch month is February 2024.

6. Burkhalter Transportation Discussion

City Manager Charles Penny stated on the regular agenda there are 3 items related to some purposed developments on Burkhalter. The developer is asking that those items be tabled for a month. However, the conversation about Burkhalter is very timely.

Assistant City Manager Jason Boyles showed an aerial view of Burkhalter Rd. highlighting Cawana Rd intersection as well as the Hwy 67 intersection. The proposed development will add significant traffic to an existing county road. Staff recommends annexing the roadway as well, but will need the county to be a partner as well as working with GDOT and GA Power and look how we are using TSPLOST. Staff will do some research and come back to council after Christmas.

At 4:43pm Councilmember Venus Mack joined the meeting.

7. Animal Control

City Attorney Cain Smith stated the IGA regarding provision of animal control services with the County is outdated. A revised IGA is currently being negotiated in order to streamline prosecution of animal control violations in the Magistrate Court of Bulloch County. In order for the IGA to move forward it would be required to revise the City animal control ordinance to incorporate the provisions of the Bulloch County animal control ordinance. Direction was given to move forward with the revision and present it for the first reading at the Dec 5th meeting.

8. Commercial Development Report

Planning and Development Director Kathy Field reviewed the larger commercial projects undergoing construction at this time. Parrish St Warehouse Phase 2, Parkers Kitchen #1, Tidal Wave carwash, Parkers Kitchen #2, Jim & Nicks, Texas Roadhouse, Parkers Kitchen #3 and Monster Storage. The TAD District has 2 developments coming Huey Magoo's and Chic Fil A. With the new construction alterations, new commercial buildings, TAD district new construction, TAD district construction alterations it comes to a total of 48 permits issued with a construction valuation of \$61,536,585.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 pm.

Jonathan McCollar, Mayor

Leah Harden, City Clerk