



City of Greensboro

Melvin Municipal Building
300 W. Washington Street
Greensboro, NC 27401

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council Work Session

Thursday, July 10, 2014

12:00 PM

Plaza Level Conference Room

1. Call To Order

This City Council work session of the City of Greensboro was called to order at 12:30 PM on the above date in the Plaza Level Conference Room of the Melvin Municipal Office Building with the following members present: Mayor Nancy Vaughan, Councilmembers Marikay Abuzuaiter, Jamal Fox, Sharon Hightower, Nancy Hoffmann, Yvonne J. Johnson, Zack Matheny, and Tony Wilkins.

Absent: Councilmember Mike Barber.

Also present were City Manager Jim Westmoreland, Interim City Attorney Tom Carruthers and City Clerk, Betsey Richardson..

Mayor Vaughan opened the meeting; and recognized City Manager Jim Westmoreland.

2. Presentations

ID 14-0466 City Council Accelerator Presentation

City Manager Westmoreland reminded Council that this item had been on the June 17th agenda; that Council wanted to hear more about the program; provided the history of the item; recognized Deborah Hooper with the Chamber of Commerce for a presentation; and suggested the item be on the July 15th agenda for Council consideration.

Deborah Hooper made a PowerPoint Presentation which outlined who they were; what they did; spoke to the monthly Slam event; discussed the Triad Start Up Lab; stated they anticipated two programs a year; explained the difference between Sessions A and B; and reviewed the focus and goals of the acceleration program. Ms. Hooper provided the makeup and emphasis of the program; reviewed the figures for the accelerator participants; the proposed accelerator program budget; and added that the Partnership was requesting \$100,000 to assist with the deficit of the same amount to take the program forward.

Discussion ensued regarding current funding; impact on area small businesses; number of participants in the current program; total expense for the sessions equating to approximately \$16,000 per week; participation and impact of the Slam events; if the Partnership had approached a bank for funding; whether or not the Partnership could tighten up and make the budget more lean; and current City funding to the Partnership.

Ms. Hooper responded that the Partnership had secured \$50,000 from the Bryan Foundation but would still need to raise \$50,000; that they had support from the Cemela Foundation as well as other foundations; verified that Session A had twelve participants; that they had not gone to banks for funding for this program; that their goal was to launch twenty businesses as a result of the program; explained that the current budget was lean; and voiced the need to not shortchange the entrepreneurs to ensure they had what they needed.

Mr. Pat Danahey of the Partnership explained that the City did not provide funding for the Chamber of Commerce but did provide \$130,000 to the Partnership on an annual basis, with the option for them to come to the City for funding for special projects.

Council inquired if the program could be funded with funds the City already provided to the Partnership; whether the Partnership approached other entities prior to coming to the City; use of the \$1.2 million that had been provided to the Nussbaum Center; and if the Partnership had approached the County for assistance.

Mr. Danahey explained how funding was utilized from the City; spoke to increased expenses; addressed the operation of the program; voiced that they had volunteers that assisted and mentored activity who received no compensation; that they did not think the County would provide assistance; that they had approached foundations for assistance; and emphasized that the budget was as lean as possible.

Mayor Vaughan informed Council that participants in the program were present.

Councilmember Fox stated he was in favor of the accelerator; referenced projects that had been on the books for years; other initiatives and investment that were ongoing; and voiced that he did not think he could support the ask.

Councilmember Wilkins voiced concern with providing \$1.2 million to the Nussbaum Center; voiced concern the Partnership coming to the City first; with taxpayers' funding the program; and stated he could not support the funding.

Councilmember Matheny referenced the 9-0 vote by Council last fall; spoke to an incorrectness going on now; stated that the former Council gave an indication that the City would provide this; emphasized that Council needed to focus on what was in front of them; and voiced concern that enough information had not been provided to Council on the item.

Discussion took place about prior discussions on the item.

Councilmember Hightower voiced concerns that there was no mention of \$50,000 pledged to assist them when she had met with the Partnership on Monday; that she was not against entrepreneurship or small businesses but that some felt overlooked and neglected; and that she did not feel small businesses received consideration.

Council discussed directing small businesses to the proper people; owners not feeling like they could approach the Chamber; inquired about doing loans in order to receive monies back; there being too many outstanding issues; the need for the Economic Development Committee to meet to prepare the framework for a small business loan pool; and requested City Manager Westmoreland research if funding could be taken from the Economic Development Bond Funds for the program.

Mayor Vaughan reminded Council that this matter had been discussed last November; referenced that the material Council had received clearly said they would ask for \$100,000 for three years which was adopted by a 9-0 vote of Council; and reiterated that Raleigh, Durham and Charlotte all had accelerators.

Councilmember Hoffmann voiced that one of the City's best investments was in its own citizens; spoke to their entrepreneurial spirit; and added that businesses would start, grow and stay in the area.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson spoke to one of her concerns being that the majority of Council campaigned for small businesses and how they wanted to help grow existing small businesses; voiced the need to do both; emphasized that this was one way the City could accomplish this; stated that she supported the possibility of using Economic Development Bond Funds; and spoke to the need to be much more proactive in the assisting small businesses.

Councilmember Hightower voiced agreement with the need to support the City's small businesses; voiced that the Council needed to define what they, as the City, considered small businesses; referenced different definitions of a small business; stated the City needed to let owners know the City was open and accepting of them; and suggested Council vet this issue more.

Discussion took place regarding the trip Council made to Durham last fall; confirmation that these would be start up ventures; importance in college students remaining in the area; questioned what would guarantee keeping a business in the area once they went through the program; business owners having a sense of community; the need for Council to talk about an economic development strategy for the City to see where this program would fit; the Partnership's connection with area universities and colleges; constant comparison of Greensboro to Raleigh and Charlotte; uniqueness of Greensboro; and the need to promote Greensboro's assets.

Councilmember Wilkins left the meeting at 1:15 and returned at 1:19 p.m.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter thanked the Partnership for their time; referenced the resolution that was adopted; the City being faced with deficit challenges as a result of Legislative decisions; inquired why there had not been a collaboration with the Nussbaum Center; voiced the need for continued support of small businesses; requested a Small Business Summit be scheduled; and spoke to the number of small businesses that had closed within the past month.

Discussion took place regarding language in the resolution that had been adopted by Council; the difference between the Nussbaum Center and the accelerator program; the good return on the investment in the Nussbaum Center; space donated for the accelerator program; number of Councilmembers in favor of the request; the need for additional information; Council's passion around economic development; possible Council retreat to discuss an economic development strategy; and this being a healthy discussion.

City Manager Westmoreland interjected that he was looking at getting Council involved in the process for economic development; specific goals, priorities, definement of results and what Council wanted to see happen which would assist them in investment decisions; and clarified that he would look at the timeframe for discussion and focus on economic development rather than a work session.

Councilmember Wilkins recommended the Partnership raise the requested \$100,000; and come back in a year with a proposal for Council.

It was the consensus of Council to reschedule the July 22nd work session to July 29th at 9:00 a.m. due to several councilmember conflicts.

Mayor Vaughan stated that the Complaint Review Committee Enhancement Committee meeting scheduled for July 29th would be rescheduled.

2b. Cascade Saloon Update

City Manager Westmoreland recognized Assistant City Manager David Parrish to provide an update on the Cascade Saloon.

Assistant City Manager Parrish provided a summary of the history of the item; provided figures for previous and recent bids for the demolition and/or stabilization of the structure; outlined the process for the City to take over ownership of the structure; confirmed that the City currently owned the property; spoke to fielding some options for alternative opportunities; stated that the City had a request for the property to be conveyed to Preservation Greensboro, Inc. (PGI) who would partner with a private entity to stabilize and renovate the structure; informed Council that PGI had requested \$175,000 in assistance from the City to fill in the gap; stated the recent bid for stabilization obtained by the City was approximately \$810,000; and that this was one of the oldest structures in the area.

Council discussed that it would save the City money compared with the cost of demolition; that this was the only business that housed black owners during the Jim Crow years; that stabilization would put the property back on the tax roll; spoke to concerns of surrounding businesses with the condition of the structure; that the City was not a good landlord; what would happen should PGI not be successful in what it promised regarding improvements; and the impact as a result of the railroad right-of-way.

Marsh Prause of PGI outlined what would be included in the rehabilitation agreement with the contractor; spoke to an easement to protect the property long term; confirmed that PGI wanted to ensure the building was protected and the historical character preserved; and stated that the contractors believed the structure could be stabilized from the interior which would not affect property access.

Councilmember Fox stated he was comfortable with the City giving PGI the building but not comfortable with giving them \$175,000.

Discussion took place regarding the amount of the current bid for demolition; the City being the current property owner; issue with the City's role as a landlord and a bank; surrounding businesses wanting action to be taken on

the building; the need for the City to resolve the issue; the need to make the best decision; possible liability to the City as a result of owning the property; and comparison of the Greensboro Inn being demolished for \$30,000.

Assistant City Manager Parrish confirmed the City was the current owner; reiterated what PGI's request was; voiced that he wanted to bring this before Council as the issue needed to be resolved; that this solution was cheaper than the cost to demolish the structure; would put the property back on the tax records; stated that this would be a solution for the surrounding property owners that would abate the nuisance; and spoke to the difference in demolition costs of this structure compared to the Greensboro Inn.

Mr. Prause interjected that since the structure was in a national historic district, there were requirements that the facade be salvaged during the process which would result in increased cost for the demolition.

Council discussed if they wanted to move forward with this offer; if the contractor would confirm in writing that the restoration would be done from the interior; putting stipulations in the agreement; the estimated tax value upon completion of the renovation; length of time it would take for the stabilization; if PGI knew who the end user of the renovated building would be; and the number of trains that went through the area daily.

Mr. Prause explained that PGI did an analysis based on the Jones building which housed Nattie Greene's; that the contractor anticipated it would take approximately six months for the stabilization; and spoke to stipulations that would be included in the contract.

Councilmember Fox requested that the City Manager reach out to surrounding property owners during the process regarding redevelopment in the Lewis Street area.

Interim City Attorney Carruthers clarified that it was not in the City's interest to put further constraints on the renovation of the building; stated that once the City transferred the ownership to PGI, there will be no liability or risk to the City; that he would not counsel that the City put restrictions on how it was renovated due to the railroad tracks; spoke to access to neighboring properties; and addressed the rights of the railroad.

City Manager Westmoreland was requested to research the impact to surrounding property owners as a result of the renovation of the Cascade Saloon; to reach out to area residents regarding redevelopment in the Lewis Street area; get confirmation in writing that the stabilization could be done from the interior; inform Council of the length of time it would take for the stabilization; and to have the City prepare signage leading people to the surrounding businesses.

City Manager Westmoreland voiced that based on the work the City had done on this property to date this was probably the best proposal the City had seen to save the structure; become a tax producing entity; spoke to working with the railroad; confirmed that working with PGI might be the best hope to salvage the building; stated that staff would go through Council's questions and address them in an IFYI; and confirmed that the building was a City liability at this time.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson left the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

ID 14-0469**PIRT Policy Update**

City Manager Westmoreland recognized Communications Manager Donnie Turlington and Public Records Administrator Sarah Healy to provide an update on the Public Records Policy.

Mr. Turlington and Ms. Healy provided the history of public records requests; spoke to measurements that had been put in place; availability of the public records on the City's website; emphasized that staff was not required to create a record or perform research, analyze data, or answer specific questions for requesters; made a PowerPoint Presentation which outlined the public records process; City response to public records requests in accordance with the law; definition of a public record in accordance with NCGS 132-1(a); what was considered protected records; responsibility of said records; public records protocol; and the next steps in implementing the policy.

Mayor Vaughan confirmed the policy would be on the City's website; and referenced Councilmember Barber's request with regard to exceptions.

Discussion ensued around body camera language in the policy; and what personnel information could be released.

Mr. Turlington suggested that the line regarding body cameras would be removed from the proposed policy.

Interim City Attorney Carruthers spoke to the proposed language and the law; voiced concern that staff did not want to raise the expectation of what would be released; addressed the issues with criminal investigation and personnel records; requirements of what could be released under the law; and verified that a person could open their personnel records.

Police Chief Miller interjected that it could be possible that some of the body camera footage would not be used in a criminal or personnel investigation; stated his preference would be to release what could be released; and explained who would have access to the video in the investigative process.

City Manager Westmoreland confirmed that what was defined in the proposed policy was sufficient to the current law.

Mr. Turlington provided the history of backlogged requests in the Legal Department; stated that the PIRT Administrator would be coordinating requests with departments; and that the Legal Department would continue to assist in helping understand what may or may not be a public record but would not be reviewing every record going forward.

Councilmember Wilkins left the meeting at 2:00 p.m. and returned at 2:10 p.m.

Councilmember Fox left the meeting at 2:10 p.m. and returned at 2:12 p.m.

Mr. Turnlington outlined the timeline for responding to requests; verified what requests were entered into the PIRT system; stated the City would continue to not charge for requests but would reserve the right to do so; spoke to the online PIRT system implemented last week; outlined the process for appeals at the request of the public; and stated the policy was being followed but needed Council's blessing.

Ms. Healy advised that the process called for the public to email her and not the City Council members; spoke to the protocol of the policy; and advised on the process for training.

Mayor Vaughan voiced that this was a vast improvement; thanked Mr. Turlington and Ms. Healy for the presentation; reiterated that it was important that the policy be posted on the City's website and explain what would and would not be a public records request; and emphasized the need to really define what a public record was.

City Manager Westmoreland stated this was a good first step which would come before Council to adopt on Tuesday; and verified that staff had researched the process utilized in other communities.

ID 14-0468

Neighborhood Oriented Policing

Police Chief Miller provided the background on the Neighborhood Oriented Policing; stated the Deputy Chiefs were present; spoke to the involvement of staff in development of the plan; recognized Dr. Rachel Santos from Florida Atlantic University who was the technical assistance guide who had worked with the department throughout the process; spoke to several components; aligning staff with workload; spoke to what had been learned from their research; and outlined the goals as a result of the plan.

Assistant Chief Anita Holder made PowerPoint Presentation; addressed the four foundational assumptions regarding patrol deployment; spoke to goal with regard to response times; measurement of those goals; philosophy and guiding principals of the plan; patrol deployment; calls for service per hour; and calls for service dispatched per day.

Councilmember Wilkins asked how close the City was to meeting the seven minute response time; and if it was consistent across the City.

Assistant Chief Holder outlined what the goal of the department was; confirmed that the purpose of this was to get the response times even across the City; and that the department would measure the goals.

Assistant Chief Holder explained the GeoBalance Software and Division Boundaries maps; and stated the current problem with response times was in the western area as a result of the large land mass.

Councilmember Matheny requested an overlay of the Division Boundaries and Council Districts for the maps provided in the presentation.

Councilmember Wilkins asked if the Council districts overlapped with the police districts; and asked if the implementation would come before Council. Assistant Chief Holder responded they did not; and confirmed the City Manager and Police Chief would handle implementation.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter left the meeting at 2:27 p.m. and returned at 2:31 p.m.

Police Chief Miller addressed the community input; stated the community feedback had been wonderful; announced the bike ride along program that would take place on Saturday; spoke to training the recruits about getting to know the community; and addressed issues in comparing police departments in other cities.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter spoke to attendance and participation at a neighborhood forum; and voiced this would make a better community.

Assistant Chief Holder outlined the community feedback and concerns; spoke to changes that had been made as a result of the concerns; verified that the department had the staff in place to implement the plan but that might change; and provided an outline of the stratified model that would be used in the plan.

2e. First Friday Parking Initiative

Assistant City Manager Parrish provided an overview of the First Friday Parking; spoke to the revenue loss of a free day; and stated the City would provide free parking at street meters and lots during the day on the first Friday to encourage people to come Downtown.

Council voiced concerns with monitoring use of spaces by employees of Downtown businesses; inquired who had made the request; issues with enforcement; voiced that they had not heard of the request prior to today; and addressed the writing of parking tickets Downtown.

Assistant City Manager Parrish responded that the request had come from comments from focus groups and meetings staff had with store owners and restaurants Downtown through DGI; that this was the City's offer to respond to those requests; that he did not know how it would be enforced; and stated staff would take a step back and monitor the request.

3. Adjournment

Brief discussion took place regarding a closed session on July 15th.

Councilmember Wilkins asked for the High Point Road revitalization contract be added to an upcoming Work Session. City Manager Westmoreland responded he would look into that.

(Copied of the PowerPoint Presentations which are hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes are on file in the City Clerk's office).

The work session adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

ELIZABETH H. RICHARDSON
CITY CLERK

NANCY VAUGHAN
MAYOR

