



City of Greensboro

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

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council Work Session

Tuesday, January 27, 2015

3:00 PM

Plaza Level Conference Room

1. Call To Order

This City Council work session of the City of Greensboro was called to order at 3:06 p.m. 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 Abuzaiter, Sharon Hightower, Nancy Hoffmann, Yvonne J. Johnson, and Tony Wilkins.

Absent: Councilmembers Mike Barber, Jamal Fox, and Zack Matheny.

Also present were City Manager Jim Westmoreland, City Attorney Tom Carruthers and Deputy City Clerk Angela R. Lord.

Mayor Vaughan stated Councilmember Hoffmann would be late.

2. Presentations

ID 15-0112 Faith Action ID - Reverend David Fraccaro

City Manager Jim Westmoreland introduced the item; and recognized Councilmember Abuzaiter to speak to the item.

Councilmember Abuzaiter referenced a previous presentation for FaithAction; stated she was a new member to the Board for FaithAction; and recognized Reverend David Fraccaro.

Reverend Fraccaro spoke to interactions with the City; made a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP); provided a history of the FaithAction International House; spoke to the number of people served; to the Stranger to Neighbor program; stated that dialogue led to trust and understanding; reviewed the FaithAction ID initiative; stated 10 orientations had been held; and provided demographics, hours of operations, and outlined the process.

Marina Castillo outlined requirements for the program; referenced a handout provided to Council; spoke to attendance requirements; and the cost, method of payment, and renewal for an ID.

Reverend Fraccaro outlined the disclosure information.

Discussion took place regarding the Sheriff Department's participation; and a county wide program.

Reverend Fraccaro spoke to the design of the ID card; referenced cooperation from the immigrant community in reporting crimes; officers becoming role models; spoke to an increased interest in joining law enforcement; and to providing a sense of dignity and loyalty to the City.

Dulce Ortiz spoke to her experience with FaithAction; to self-worth; and stated the program provided a safer and more secure community.

Reverend Fraccaro referenced programs in the City of Burlington and of Mecklenburg County; spoke to the benefits of FaithAction ID's; the Goals of 2015; to associated costs; generated income; and outlined the request to the City. Reverend Fraccaro continued by speaking to the proposed next steps; spoke to positive feedback; and invited Council to the Regional Community ID Conference on March 27th.

Discussion ensued regarding cost associated with the program; the affect on the community; assistance from the County and Social Services; the focus of a County-wide program; and covering expenses.

Reverend Fraccaro provided information on funds invested by other Cities; spoke to the relationship with Social Services; to outreach; design work; meetings with the Police Department; provided a breakdown of cost involved; stated there were not funds for 2015; added that the program would be beneficial to the City; spoke to a partnership with Greensboro; and referenced partnerships that would oversee the program.

Discussion took place regarding the benefit to the Police Department; the requirement of a Driver's License; assistance for people applying for the ID; a bi-lingual staff; approaching the County; and previous support to FaithAction.

Councilmember Hoffmann entered the meeting at 3:35 p.m.

Discussion continued regarding the funding for FY 2015; FaithAction's relationship with the City and the County; County-wide benefits; and placing the item on the FY 15-16 wish list.

ID 15-0113 Update Fine/Fees Collection - Mary Vigue/Tom Carruthers

City Manager Westmoreland spoke to positive and negative areas of collections for the City; to weak points; and civil penalties and fines.

Councilmember Wilkins expressed hopes of improvement.

Finance Director Rick Lusk clarified the schedule outlined collections from the strongest to weakness; made a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP); reviewed billing and collections; property tax; and contractual billing.

Discussion took place regarding hope for improvement; the system to be used for parking fines; problems with the State software; Raleigh's process in collections; outsourcing to a Collection Company; garnishment; fees being attached to property taxes; and fire code violations.

City Attorney Carruthers continued the PPP; outlined Governmental Regulatory Billings; spoke to fire code violations; provided figures for violations; spoke to the Legal Department filing suits since August; to litigation percentages; consent judgments; Fire Department fines; referenced nightclubs with large fines; spoke to challenges with Economic Development; reviewed options of the nightclubs in meeting fire code regulations; spoke to the 2010 Consent Judgment policy; outlined collection remedies; and spoke to recommendations by the Fire Department and the City Manager's Office.

Councilmember Wilkins inquired as to how long it would be before legal remedies were pursued.

City Attorney Carruthers responded the legal department currently had the resources; spoke to pending cases; to True Visions Entertainment fines; and to repeat offenders.

Mr. Lusk spoke to regulator fines; to achieving compliance; collection of a portion of fines owed; to working with the Fire Department to improve safety; and to lessening the tax burden.

Councilmember Abuzaiter voiced concerns regarding public safety violations; questioned why clubs were allowed to open back up with large fines owed to the City; and referenced the process for restaurants being fined and shut down.

City Attorney Carruthers spoke to liquor licenses; the limited authority of the City; referenced Chapter 19; and to releasing proposals.

Discussion took place regarding having an ordinance on a future City Council meeting agenda; physical harm to patrons; seeking court orders; noise and overcrowding; the Fire Departments ability to empty a club for counts but not to close the clubs; and club owners pocketing cover charges of patrons that are not allowed to return to the club.

Assistant City Manager Wesley Reid stated the Fire Department would empty a club to count people; spoke to the patrons unhappiness with paying entry fees and not being able to return to the club; and to the challenges.

Deputy Police Chief Wayne Scott spoke to people being upset; to the police exercising authority; to public nuisance; and to tracking patrons.

Councilmember Wilkins spoke to selective enforcement; the legal agenda; inquired about Code Enforcement officers' salaries; spoke to enforcement officers writing fines; and the taxpayers getting taxed double.

Neighborhood Development Director Barbara Harris responded that the estimated salary of the Code Enforcement officer was \$56,000 per year; and stated the City employed 11 full time officers.

City Attorney Carruthers spoke to the cost of doing business; the 2010 memo regarding fire safety; expressed appreciation of Council support; spoke to zoning, housing code and code enforcement violations; outlined collection remedies on delinquent accounts; spoke to Council directives in 2013; to single family and multi-family housing; to a repair or demolish format; the Housing Commission; and enforcement of daily fines.

Mayor Vaughan referenced Post RUCO meetings; and previous discussions of collecting fines.

City Attorney Carruthers spoke to the Total Housing Civil Penalties and Fees issued 2-28-14 through 1-20-15; to the need of Code reform; six entities being responsible for the majority of collection debt; modifications to and the purpose of Chapter 11; outlined possible solutions; spoke to tax liens against properties and foreclosing on a property; spoke to marginally profitable properties; referenced properties going into bankruptcy; spoke to incentives to property owners; and stated solutions would be brought to Council.

City Attorney Carruthers continued by providing a timeline for solutions; outlined the next steps; and spoke to a compliance goal.

Mayor Vaughan requested City Attorney Carruthers to research House Bill 3 regarding Minimum Housing Standards; and for an update regarding overcrowding issues.

City Attorney Carruthers confirmed House Bill 3 would not affect abatement; that he would return with Chapter 11 suggestions; priority goals; and that he would pursue incentives for property owners to make repairs.

Senior Manager of Financial Services, Marlene Druga continued the PPP; and outlined collection information on parking fines.

Councilmember Hightower left the meeting at 4:18 p.m. and returned at 4:23 p.m.

Councilmember Wilkins inquired about the collection percentages; to the expiration of the current contract; spoke to time limits for past due parking fines; requested cost for boots for cars; and requested a budget item to be included if the policy passed.

Ms. Druga stated the collection percentage was about 27%; the contract would expire in 2016; referenced limited collection remedies; spoke to towing and booting; outlined proposed legislation; write-off policies; proposed policy changes; referenced other cities debt collections and policies; spoke to the North Carolina Revenue Department SetOff (DSO) program; and to collections through DSO since 2004.

ID 15-0114 Assessment of Fair Housing Update - Barbara Harris

Ms. Harris made a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP); spoke to Affirmative Fair Housing (AFH); partnering with other jurisdictions; and recognized Bill McNeil to present the item.

Mr. McNeil provided an overview of the presentation; spoke to the analysis of impediments; City requirements of AFH; to an annual action plan; a regional partnership; outlined findings for Greensboro; provided demographics; stated the data reflected the student population; spoke to protected classes; referenced opportunity and access areas; spoke to the lack of affordable housing in higher opportunity areas; challenges; policy-related

impediments; stated Greensboro could take action to address fair housing issues; and outlined the recommended priorities for fair housing.

Mr. McNeil continued the PPP by outlining goals and strategies; spoke to the Human Relations Commission; the immigrant population; the next steps; stated the item would be on the City Council meeting agenda on February 17th; spoke to the Consolidated Plan for 2015 – 2019; to providing a report on progress in September 2015 to CAPER ; and opened the floor for questions.

Councilmember Hightower spoke to the need for deeper discussion; to available funding; to the lack of emergency housing; and referenced developers that could build affordable housing.

Mayor Vaughan referenced the closing of Heritage House; and stated the closure showed the City the lack of housing in Greensboro.

City Manager Westmoreland spoke to good information in the report; stated thought and discussion would be required by the Council; highlighted the transit system; and stated the item fit in with the Mayor’s Poverty Agenda.

Councilmember Hoffmann spoke to developing a partnership with the private sector.

(Copies of the PowerPoint Presentations are filed in Exhibit Drawer X, Exhibit No. 3 which is hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes).

3. Adjournment

Moved by Councilmember Abuzuaiter, seconded by Councilmember Wilkins, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by voice vote.

THE WORK SESSION ADJOURNED AT 4:49 P.M.

ANGELA R. LORD
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

NANCY VAUGHAN
MAYOR