



# City of Greensboro

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

## Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council Work Session

Tuesday, August 26, 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 12:10 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, Mayor Pro-Tem Yvonne Johnson, Councilmembers Sharon Hightower, Marikay Abuzuaiter, Nancy Hoffmann, Tony Wilkins, Mike Barber, Jamal Fox and Zack Matheny.

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

### 2. Presentations

#### **ID 14-0567**      Battleground Park District Plan Overview

City Manager Jim Westmoreland introduced the item; spoke to efforts to do more in the City parks; have bigger attractions; and to economic development.

Interim Assistant City Manager Chris Wilson spoke to the Battleground Park asset comprised of 400 acres.

Councilmember Zack Matheny entered the meeting at 12:12 p.m.

Interim Assistant City Manager Wilson stated this was the first opportunity of many; spoke to the positive concepts around community assets; catapulting Greensboro into the next year; the number of people drawn to the City parks each year; to all entities working together; to federal, state and city relationships; and recognized Nasha McCray, Manager for Parks and Recreation Planning Department to speak to the item.

Ms. McCray made a PowerPoint Presentation which outlined the overall concept; spoke to a bold new vision; creating a linked destination; State and National awareness; commitment to history, culture, natural resources and quality of life; encouraging visitors to the City to stay longer; parks to offer multiple location visitor passes; and addressed parking and storm water concerns.

Discussion ensued regarding a bond being used that was voted on as part of the 2006 budget; and private investments.

Charles Cranfield, Guilford Courthouse National Military Park Superintendent continued the PowerPoint Presentation; stated this was an unique opportunity; spoke to the leverage of federal funds; to Colonial Center Exhibits; a land acquisition taking place; private funding and a timeline for upgrades; connecting parks and the visitors center; the start of a Tram program; referenced the relationship with the City; and to experiencing Greensboro as never before in education, recreation, and sports.

Councilmember Hightower inquired to the number of partnerships with schools; and the science connection.

Mr. Cranfield spoke to participation including elementary and middle schools; and recognized Glenn Dobrogosz, Executive Director, Greensboro Science Center to address the science connection.

Mr. Dobrogosz spoke to the SkyWild Adventure Park portion of the PowerPoint Presentation; outlined tree top adventures with zip lines; a 3D out of the box game board; inspiring new generations; investment in the project; to the Rainbow River Gorge Conservation Center; endangered species; the matching of public dollars; creating a

daytime and nighttime environment; capitalizing on tourism; and free admission for Guilford County students.

Discussion took place regarding marketing ideas.

Ms. McCray concluded the presentation with overall highlights to improve connectivity, water quality and outdoor spaces; spoke to creating a center for the district; and building partnerships and funding opportunities.

Interim Assistant City Manager Wilson stated that the presented concept was privately funded; and spoke to the need in making this concept a reality.

Discussion ensued regarding a timeline for the project; acquisition of property to address parking challenges; status of design stage; the need for marketing; Lawndale Corridor generating additional opportunities; signage; and other exciting opportunities in Greensboro.

### Greensboro Community Development Fund Overview

City Manager Westmoreland introduced the item; spoke to the small business loan pool; and recognized Jerome Gray, Greensboro Partnership Entrepreneur Connection.

Mr. Gray recognized members of the Board of Directors present; made a PowerPoint Presentation; spoke to the Greensboro Community Development Fund (GCDF) as a certified community financial development institution; to being the newest business unit of the Greensboro Partnership (the Partnership); various types of loan funds; providing purpose driven loans; growing businesses and creating jobs; utilizing volunteers; identifying companies with potential to repay loans; loans for women and minority owned businesses, low-to-moderate loans; to partnering with the U.S. Treasury banks; developing a relationship with the City; and educating the public.

Discussion took place around bonding issues; tax credits; loans made in the various districts; average loan amounts; client pay backs; interest rates; and client complaints.

Mr. Gray continued with speaking to what was needed for growth; spoke to continued public and private resource building; obtaining a commitment letter from City; and the commitment of the Foundation.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter inquired about how businesses would find out about the Entrepreneur Connection; criteria to apply; fees; and asked for explanation of loan process.

Mr. Gray spoke to referrals from banks, Greensboro Economic Development Department, and Non-Profit organizations; outlined marketing; goals in assisting clients with business plans; classes focusing on market research, business planning and metrics of plans; estimate of fees; and the average length of process for customers.

Discussion ensued regarding fees for services; comparison of application and percentages of received loans; City funds being matched by federal funds; collateral; staffing; a sustainability plan; goals for 2014 and 2015; administrative cost; the need for new software; allowances in business growth due to loans; and a denied request of funding from the County.

Mayor Vaughan inquired as to exact request and information needed in the commitment letter from the City.

Mr. Gray spoke to funds that had been raised since 2012; private, government and community foundation funding; allocated budget; and requested the amount of \$300,000 from the City.

A small business owner from Mack and Mack Clothing spoke to the loan process; required documentation; benefits of business coaching, free workshops and connections with other businesses; added that the drawback was having a small loan pool; options for future loans; and encouraged City Council to support the item.

Barbara Harris, Director of Neighborhood Development spoke to the Fiscal Year budget and allocated funds.

Councilmember Matheny requested a list of 2014 CDBG funds allocated in an IFYI.

Restorie Guthrie, spoke to funding she had received from Self Help; and asked for Council's support on this item.

Mayor Vaughan spoke to the amount of requested funds; the need to see the bigger picture; and getting back to Mr. Gray at a later date.

Mayor Vaughan declared a recess at 1:41 p.m. and Council reconvened at 1:54 p.m. with all members in attendance.

**ID 14-0570****Greensboro Partnership Accelerator Program Update**

City Manager Westmoreland introduced the item; and recognized Deborah Hooper, with the Greensboro Partnership (the Partnership) to make a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP).

Ms. Hooper introduced the PPP; spoke to who the Partnership was and what they did; community outreach; the accelerator program; accelerator participants; the Triad Start Up Lab; and deferred to Joel Bennett to provide an update on the accelerator program.

Mr. Bennett provided an update on summer activities; spoke to the selection of participants in the startup lab; the breakdown of sessions A & B; achieving activity with founders; to lean startup methods; minimum viable products; validating assumptions; various types of companies in the startup; identified products and tests in the community; spoke to the diversity of the group; and the number of people visiting their website.

Ms. Hooper spoke to Foundation grants; Small Business Administration (SBA) grants; requested \$100,000 from the City; and requested grant money be matched by City, dollar for dollar.

Discussion ensued regarding requested funding; how the financial matching worked; the Partnership's expenses; the connection with Jerome Gray and the Greensboro Community Development; making up a deficit; the State of the Community Luncheon on Friday, August 27th; and Council's need to support small businesses in the community.

Dennis Sterns of Sterns Financial spoke to jump starting the program; to 35 successful entrepreneurs in referenced ideas; referenced other city accelerator programs; research studies with small businesses creating jobs; the vision of Greensboro; to having two accelerators per year; to minorities being involved; the lack of resources for new entrepreneurs; and referenced a video being shown at the luncheon.

Discussion ensued regarding businesses that had been through the process; keeping businesses in Greensboro; national accelerator programs; ages of participants; college and university students in the program; timing and flexibility; wording of a 2013 adopted resolution; the shift from the Triad Partnership to the Greensboro Partnership; what was done with Capital connects; the number of volunteers, interns and mentors; and staffing compensation.

**Economic Development Planning Process**

Mayor Vaughan left the meeting at 2:49 p.m. and returned at 2:52 p.m.

City Manager Westmoreland spoke to a passion for Economic Development; to a plan for the City; bringing the plan into some type of framework; what that would mean for the Council and the City; vision for Economic Development; a 5 to 7 year plan; to workforce development; and referenced a Council survey in April.

City Manager Westmoreland referenced documentation sent out to Council; marketing prospectives; developing a strategic plan; spoke to the change in Greensboro's economy and a slow recovery; loss of jobs in the 1990s; the perception of Greensboro being in competition with Charlotte and Raleigh; putting together a plan with visions and goals; to handling a bigger picture of Economic Development;

City Manager Westmoreland spoke to County and Partnership connections; to the Partnerships hiring of a new COO; to the envisioning process going forward; to the City team being prepared to give Council draft items for feedback; goals that could be accomplished; administering a process; stated he was looking for direction from the Council; and spoke to having a plan going forward.

Council and Staff discussed focusing on jobs and Economic Development; marketing and branding on the national stage; round table discussions for businesses in previous years; bonding requirements; resurrecting a previous work plan; streamlining resources; showcasing the City's history; a PPP; mapping out agencies; EDBS funding; hurdling Economic Development funding; the City Managers Office leading the Council in the direction it should go; and scheduling a meeting with the County for Economic Development.

City Manager Westmoreland stated he would take the Council's feedback to implement a plan; and spoke to defining goals and setting priorities.

Discussion ensued concerning one or two Work Sessions. The consensus of Council was to go back to the old schedule with two Work Sessions per month.

### **ID 14-0572                      Heritage House Update**

Interim City Attorney Tom Carruthers spoke to the reason for condemnation; to the history of action taken; showed a map of the facility; and reviewed a PowerPoint Presentation. Attorney Carruthers continued with offering options to work with the existing ownership group or precede under the redevelopment authorities under the State of North Carolina; moving to the Planning Board for determination of a blighted property or parcel; and spoke to the process for public hearings.

Councilmember Barber left the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

Planning Director Sue Schwartz spoke to redevelopment laws; planning process and public hearings; fair market value; eminent domain process; presenting on September 17th at the Planning board; funding; and equity.

Council and Staff discussed condemnation for public safety; the Heritage House being structurally sound; clearing up prostitution and drugs related to Heritage House; bulldozing or selling of the Heritage House; the need for safe affordable housing; calls from people interested in buying the Heritage House; current owners rights; and establishing as a blighted property.

Ms. Schwartz spoke to the courts standing on eminent domain laws; and the North Carolina General Statute.

Discussion continued regarding private developers; location of Heritage House in relation to nursing facilities; thinking of the needs of the nursing home residents; the condition of the building; developing a property with a focus on senior citizens; paying citizens that own units; water and tax liens; money owed to Duke Power; and staff reporting back to Council after September 17th.

It was the consensus of Council for Staff to move forward with the blighted property request.

### **High Point Road Project Update**

Assistant City Manager David Parrish provided an update on the history of the High Point Road Project.

Mayor Pro-Tem inquired about the hold up in the project; and to the M/WBE participation.

Councilmember Matheny left the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Assistant City Manager Parrish spoke to the bid process; the minority contractors not meeting goals; the proposals received; projected start times of construction; and returning to Council in October for the rewarding of a contract.

Councilmember Wilkins inquired about the projected cost of the project; spoke to previously voted on projects and bonds; questioned the prioritization of projects; and voiced concern for the Downtown debt.

Assistant City Manager Parrish stated projects were prioritized by staff and council; spoke to the debt capacity; and annual CIP reports.

Councilmember Hoffmann stated that smaller projects could be done due to the availability of funds.

Councilmember Wilkins voiced thanks to Assistant City Manager Parrish for answering his questions.

### **3. Adjournment**

Motion made by Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson, seconded by Councilmember Fox to adjourn the meeting; the motion carried by a voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

(Copies of the PowerPoint Presentations are filed in Exhibit Drawer W, Exhibit No. W-18 which is hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes.)

ANGELA R. LORD  
ACTING DEPUTY CITY CLERK

NANCY VAUGHAN  
MAYOR