



City of Greensboro

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

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council Work Session

Tuesday, January 17, 2017

4:00 PM

Plaza Level Conference Room

1. Call To Order

This City Council work session of the City of Greensboro was called to order at 4:01 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 Abuzuaite, Mike Barber, Jamal Fox, Sharon Hightower, Nancy Hoffmann, Justin Outling and Tony Wilkins.

Absent: Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson.

Also present were City Manager Jim Westmoreland, City Attorney Tom Carruthers and City Clerk Elizabeth H. Richardson.

2. Presentations

1. [ID 17-0040](#) Safer City Summit: Addressing Violent Crime Overview - Police Chief Scott

City Manager Jim Westmoreland recognized Police Chief Wayne Scott.

Police Chief Scott provided a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP); explained that he could not play the prezi portion of the presentation that would be shown at the upcoming Safer City Summit (Summit) scheduled for January 31st at the Greensboro Coliseum from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.; and provided the history of trends across the country as it related to increase violent crime.

Councilmember Wilkins entered the meeting at 4:03 p.m.

Police Chief Scott provided the history of violent crime in Greensboro since 1986; explained and emphasized the need to talk about the areas of the City where violent crimes had occurred in 2016; identified areas and the six hot spots that historically had issues around violent crime; spoke to the multitude of persons impacted by the crimes; voiced that the issue belonged to the entire City; and outlined the goal of the Summit. Police Chief Scott added that the Police Department needed assistance in solving the issue; referenced conversations that had taken place; emphasized the need to work together; explained the causes of violent crime; and spoke to the national database the research was based on.

Discussion took place regarding the percentages shown for the causes of violent crime; whether or not the City had a gang problem; national statistics for the report; and an article that the data was based upon.

Mayor Vaughan requested Police Chief Scott provide a copy of the article to Council.

Police Chief Scott addressed contributing factors towards violent crimes; reviewed the goal of the upcoming Summit; spoke to long term plans and best practices; proposed solutions for reducing crime; reiterated the need to work together; highlighted the next steps for project safe neighborhoods; referenced a grant the Police Department had received; and highlighted the service providers.

Councilmember Hightower asked for clarification on the providers for the grant.

Police Chief Scott explained the process for obtaining the public grant; the history of working with the groups; highlighted the goals of the grant; and spoke to the grant opportunity for 2017. Police Chief Scott reviewed the

on-going efforts for enforcement; referenced conversations with the Neighborhood Congress; to leveraging resources; and outlined the steps that the Police Department would take.

Discussion took place regarding incentives and the awards process for Crime Stoppers; if there was an amnesty program; and the procedure for turning in illegal weapons.

Police Chief Scott provided an overview of the Community Engagement Division; spoke to utilizing persons within the community; stolen guns being taken off the streets; emphasized the need to keep guns out of the hands of persons that should not have them; and added that he would not sell excess firearms.

Community Engagement Supervisor Jenny Caviness outlined the proposed agenda, events, and goal for the upcoming Summit; spoke to the process for inviting groups to the Summit; added that a link was available on the City's website; and stated group leaders would get together after the Summit.

Discussion occurred around the City's ability to enact an ordinance; and lobbying the Legislature.

Police Chief Scott added that everyone was invited to the Summit; spoke to persons who could participate in the grants; to what he hoped to achieve through the Summit; to what success would look like; clarified that the success would be incremental; and voiced the importance of getting people talking at the table.

Councilmember Wilkins asked if additional public safety staff would assist in preventing the homicides in the six hot spots, to which Police Chief Scott responded that it was hard to predict due to the amount of factors that played into crime; and voiced that the Summit was about empowering communities within the City.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter voiced appreciation for Police Chief Scott and his staff; and inquired how he would get community members to step forward when a homicide had taken place.

Police Chief Scott stated there were good people throughout the community where homicides took place; voiced the importance in building bridges; energizing people; and highlighted programs the Police Department had to impact change.

Discussion took place regarding the location and start time of the Summit; if the Family Justice Center and Irvin Allen's group had been invited; and an increase in monetary awards to informants in the Crime Stoppers program.

2. [ID 17-0041](#) PIRT Policy Update - Carla Banks

City Manager Westmoreland recognized Communications Director Carla Banks for the PIRT Policy update.

Councilmember Fox entered the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

Ms. Banks provided several handouts to Council; made a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP) that highlighted the comparison numbers between 2014 and 2016; spoke to the reduction to a part time position; to the average completion time for requests; outlined enhancements that had been made to the PIRT System; meetings with the public; and the process for completing PIRT requests. Ms. Banks provided an overview and highlights for the new Open Data Portal; and reviewed the Flow Chart handout.

Discussion took place regarding the release and review of emails; efficiency of the new system; documentation on the website; and costs of the new system.

City Manager Westmoreland interjected that the new technology would provide better efficiency and response times; spoke to the review and release of emails containing economic development and personnel information; and added that staff would continue to review technology.

Additional discussion took place regarding actual reduction of staff time; number of persons involved in the process; automation of existing public records; implementation process; lack of inclusion of staff emails in the release; comparison to the current process; and the process that would be used to disseminate information to the public.

City Manager Westmoreland explained that at least one media agent had requested all of Council emails; and that the proposed process would make it easier for staff to achieve that goal going forward.

Ms. Banks continued the PPP; spoke to the length of time emails would remain on the portal; confirmed the City would begin the process in February; reviewed the changes to the Public Records Policy, specifically Sections D and E; and outlined the proposed charge for requests.

Discussion took place regarding the process for charging for requests; what similar size cities charged; the need to communicate to the requestor the approximate charge prior to fulfilling the public records request to allow them to identify information and narrow the request down; examples of burdensome requests; purchasing software to assist staff; and setting parameters for charging for requests.

City Attorney Carruthers spoke to the legal options for charging for requests; and to the options of the requestor if a request was deemed burdensome.

Ms. Banks advised Council of staff's recommendation.

Mayor Vaughan voiced concern that the issue whether or not to charge was unclear.

Council discussed flexibility of the charge process; the need to set a limit of when to charge in the policy; the ability for staff to fine tune the policy and process; and if the information would be placed on the website.

City Manager Westmoreland verified it was the consensus of Council to set the limit at 1000 emails and/or documents; verified that PIRT requests would not be captured in the new Open Portal; and suggested staff evaluate the process for charging and come back to Council.

Moved by Councilmember Outling, seconded by Councilmember Barber to adopt the policy. The motion carried by voice vote with Councilmember Fox abstaining.

City Attorney Carruthers provided an overview of the process to release closed session minutes; referenced the process utilized by the City of Durham; stated other cities were protective of releasing strategy discussions that took place during closed sessions pertaining to litigation and attorney/client privilege matters; and advised that the closed session minutes for 2016 would be placed on the website February 1st.

Councilmember Barber requested that Council recommit to complying with state laws regarding closed session.

City Attorney Carruthers advised that staff wanted to be effective and consistent with other cities.

(Copies of the Handouts and PowerPoint Presentations are filed in Exhibit Drawer Z, Exhibit No. 1, which is hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes.)

3. [ID 17-0046](#) Recess to Closed Session

Moved by Councilmember Abuzuaiter, seconded by Councilmember Hightower to go into closed to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the City Attorney and Council and to discuss matters relating to the relocation or expansion of industries or other businesses, including potential economic development incentives that may be offered in negotiations, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a) (3)& (a)(4). The motion carried by voice vote.

Council recessed to closed session at 5:11 p.m.

Council reconvened into open session at 5:32 p.m. with all members in attendance.

Moved by Councilmember Fox, seconded by Councilmember Hoffmann to return to open session. The motion carried by voice vote.

3. Adjournment

Moved by Councilmember Fox, seconded by Councilmember Hightower, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by voice vote.

THE CITY COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 5:34 P.M.

ELIZABETH H. RICHARDSON
CITY CLERK

NANCY VAUGHAN
MAYOR