



City of Greensboro

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

Meeting Minutes - Final City Council Work Session

Tuesday, March 24, 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 3:00 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 Abuzuaiter, Mike Barber, Jamal Fox, Sharon Hightower, Nancy Hoffmann, Yvonne J. Johnson, Zack Matheny and Tony Wilkins.

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

2. Presentations

ID 15-0264 Recess to Closed Session

Moved by Councilmember Hoffmann, seconded by Councilmember Abuzuaiter to go into closed session to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the City Attorney and Council pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3); and to discuss matters relating to the location 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)(4). Motion carried by voice vote.

Council recessed to closed session at 3:01 p.m. and reconvened at 4:03 p.m. with all members in attendance.

Moved by Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson, seconded by Councilmember Hoffmann to return to open session. The m

ID 15-0232 Update by the Community Sustainability Council (Greenhouse Gas Estimates)

City Manager Westmoreland stated the item would be presented by Bob Powell and Joel Landau, Co-Chairs for the Community Sustainability Council (CSC); and spoke to this being an important piece of work by the CSC.

Mr. Landau referenced the 'Happy Greensboro Day'; spoke to why sustainability mattered; better air quality; being healthy and efficient; and to printing with a smaller font in order to use less toner.

Discussion took place regarding the font size; and staff sending the information to Council.

Mr. Landau continued by referencing a recommendation of CSC for a City Green Team; spoke to the local economy; to a Green Technology forum; sustainability being used as a marketing tool; stated Bob Powell had put in over 100 volunteer hours in the project; and deferred to Mr. Powell for a presentation.

Mr. Powell made a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP); spoke to a greenhouse analysis; to the amount of energy being used; referenced 2007 and 2013 inventory calculations; spoke to energy consumption by sectors; residential and commercial usage; provided a brief history of the CSC; spoke to looking at trends; people becoming more efficient; stated there was a 18% reduction in greenhouse production; spoke to percentages for Greenhouses Gas (GHG) emissions by sector; and stated the per capita uses had gone down.

Councilmember Matheny left the meeting at 4:11 p.m. and returned at 4:13 p.m.

Councilmember Barber asked if that meant Greensboro had lost businesses.

Mr. Powell confirmed that was true; spoke to conservation; electricity uses with the industrial sector; provided the data for natural gas usage; stated there was a decrease in the commercial sector; spoke to a decrease in transportation miles per person; the green dividend for the City; provided usage figures for City operations; spoke to contributing factors to reductions of energy use and greenhouse gas production; and voiced it was not just about energy but about moving forward.

ID 15-0231 Growing Solar in Greensboro Presentation

Human Ecologist for Greenschemes, Elaine Stover recognized others that had worked on the item; spoke to conditions needed for growing; made a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP); highlighted Why Solar, Why Greensboro, and Why Now; spoke to a clean energy source; solar cost going down and electricity going up; possible locations for solar panels; contribution to solar jobs; energy technology; referenced the adoption of the Sustainability Action Plan; spoke to state and federal policies encouraging solar; endorsing and promoting community solar programs; installing solar power on Greensboro buildings; available grants; and setting a goal.

Ms. Stover spoke to available tools; the solar roadmap; appropriate next steps; requested the City to publicly embrace and promote solar; referenced the goals of other cities; and asked what caught Council's attention during the presentation.

Council responded with the decrease in solar pricing; the creation of jobs in green energy; and to realizing a natural resource.

Councilmember Fox spoke to drafting an operational plan; and funding for the item.

Mr. Powell referenced an article regarding a bill for solar financing in Cumberland County; spoke to big box stores that had big roofs; financing; an opportunity for the Legislature to open up solar for the state; and to the Council encouraging the Legislature.

Discussion ensued regarding cost; facilitating the public sector; permitting; and a time frame for moving the item forward.

Councilmember Barber spoke to the City playing catch up; referenced the 'Green in Greensboro'; requested staff to research solar cities; and to set a goal.

Councilmember Hoffmann requested staff to look at best practices; and set realistic goals.

Councilmember Wilkins spoke to City properties; the street light idea; restrictions by Duke Power; and voiced concerns with possible restrictions.

City Manager Westmoreland stated staff would research what Greensboro currently did; coordinate a five to ten year plan; the state promoting solar programs; to benefits and opportunities for the City; researching possible restrictions; typical rates; and to bringing the item back to Council in approximately one month.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson left the meeting at 4:37 p.m. and returned at 4:41 p.m.

Discussion ensued regarding marketing issues; Duke Power requirements; and environmental benefits.

Mr. Powell announced a CSC forum that would take place on April 29th.

ID 15-0096 Update on the Proposed Process for Maintaining Business Ownership and Location Information Upon Expiration of the Privilege License

Assistant City Manager Mary Vigue made a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP); spoke to loss of the Privilege license; outlined the current and potential uses; spoke to individual departments collecting information; introduced staff recommendations of a Business Permit; spoke to rights established by law; outlined the process for requirements; permits per location; stated the item would be a permit not a tax; spoke to a base permit fee of \$ 15; and stated permits would be issued in the Collections area.

Discussion took place regarding potential generated funds from a business permit; and other cities or towns implementing business permits.

City Attorney Carruthers spoke to the General Statutes for regulating fees for cost recovery; intentions of other municipalities; referenced a drafting bill introduced by Guilford County allowing cities the ability to create a business registry and charge a fee; spoke to registration costs; the privilege license being for general funds; tracking businesses; and to limitations of the language regarding cost recovery.

Assistant City Manager Vigue spoke to covering the cost of the privilege license; and requirements for additional City services.

Councilmember Wilkins spoke to consistency across the state; and issuing permits or registrations through the water department.

Assistant City Manager Vigue spoke to what the department was set up to handle currently.

Councilmember Barber left the meeting 4:48 p.m. and returned at 4:51 p.m.

City Attorney Carruthers referenced merging the massage and nightclub permitting into the item if adopted; potentially overloading the Board of Adjustments (BOA); and spoke to the BOA's request for creation of a second quasi judicial board; suggested the renaming of the BOA to the Municipal Review Board; and outlined the proposed duties of the board.

Discussion ensued regarding the BOA workload; feedback from the board; the City being aware of vacant buildings; inadequate staffing; knowledge of business owners for the requirements to have a permit; and listings in the Business Journal.

City Attorney Carruthers stated the BOA was a special type of board; spoke to board members remaining impartial; and the option of a second quasi judicial board.

Discussion took place regarding additional training for the BOA members; the number of cases heard by the board; and the struggles of the Board.

Assistant City Manager Vigue continued the PPP; spoke to business compliance; the next steps; stated staff would bring the Ordinance to Council at the April 21st meeting; and spoke to making adjustments to the budget.

Discussion took place regarding waiting for the Legislature; panhandling permits; and the new permit going into effect on July 1st.

(A copy of the PowerPoint Presentations are filed in Exhibit Drawer X , Exhibit No. 8 which is hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes)

3. Adjournment

Moved by Councilmember Fox, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by voice vote.

THE WORK SESSION ADJOURNED AT 4:56 P.M.

ANGELA R. LORD
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

NANCY VAUGHAN
MAYOR