



City of Greensboro

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

Meeting Minutes - Final City Council Work Session

Monday, July 18, 2016

1:00 PM

Plaza Level Conference Room

1. Call To Order

This City Council Work Session of the City of Greensboro was called to order at 1:07 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, Sharon Hightower, Nancy Hoffmann, Justin Outling and Tony Wilkins. Absent: Mayor Pro-Tem Yvonne J. Johnson and Councilmember Jamal Fox.

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

Mayor Vaughan stated Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson and Councilmember Fox would not be in attendance at the meeting; and recognized City Manager Jim Westmoreland.

2. Presentations

1. [ID 16-0618](#) Council Committee Structure Review Update

City Manager Westmoreland spoke to the items on the agenda; provided handouts to Council; referenced the creation of Council Committees last fall; provided an overview of the handout; spoke to the impact of the Committee structure on Council meetings; and outlined the proposed options for Council to consider.

After review of the options discussion took place regarding the advantages of the second option; the lack of work sessions where the entire Council met; the implementation of work sessions prior to the regularly scheduled City Council meetings; and tweaking the process if needed.

Mayor Vaughan stated she preferred a work session prior to the first Council meeting of the month for Council to review the agendas for the upcoming two meetings; and suggested that work sessions take place prior to the second Council meeting of the month on an as needed basis.

Councilmember Wilkins concurred with Mayor Vaughan; and asked if the committee structure would be eliminated.

City Manager Westmoreland confirmed that the committee structure would be eliminated; spoke to Council having the option to focus on the review of upcoming agendas; and the opportunity for Council to cover informational items at the work sessions.

Councilmember Hightower spoke to work sessions being productive; and suggested the work sessions be recorded.

Discussion took place regarding trying a process similar to that of Winston-Salem; the evolution of said process; reviewing the Consent Agenda prior to the Council meetings; holding committee meetings for informational type items; and the elimination for persons coming to multiple meetings.

City Manager Westmoreland stated the process would begin with the first meeting in September; and recognized that the process may need to be tweaked going forward.

(A copy of the handout is filed in Exhibit Drawer Y, Exhibit No. 29, which is hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes.)

2. [ID 16-0619](#) City/County Interlocal Agreement Review Update

City Manager Westmoreland referenced the request for the City/County Interlocal Agreement review; stated he had discussions with the Guilford County Manager who agreed to establish an internal professional staff group that would consist of the two managers and attorneys to provide recommendations after reviewing all of the interlocal agreements. City Manager Westmoreland added that they had discussed the possibility of establishing an elected officials task force; and explained the makeup and charge for said professional task force should there be a desire of the elected officials to have one.

Councilmembers Abuzuaiter and Barber voiced an interest in serving on such a task force.

Councilmember Hightower voiced that she was not a fan of such a task force.

Discussion took place regarding having four elected officials on the proposed task force; what the objective of said task force would be; lack of success of the committee structure; and reservations for creating an additional committee.

City Manager Westmoreland confirmed staff could work through the review of the agreements; and report back to Council in the future.

Councilmember Outling voiced concern with what the charge of the proposed task force would be; and that all Councilmembers would not be receiving the information at the same time.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter suggested the information be presented at a City Council work session; and Councilmember Barber asked for clarification as to where the directive had come from.

Councilmember Hightower stated the directive was given at the June 21st Council meeting; voiced concern with the task force getting into negotiations; Council getting into the weeds; and emphasized that staff knew Council's intent with regard to interlocal agreements.

City Manager Westmoreland confirmed that staff would meet; and report back to Council.

Councilmember Wilkins verified that Council in its entirety would make the final decision regarding interlocal agreements.

3. [ID 16-0617](#) Proposed November, 2016 Bond Discussion

City Manager Westmoreland stated the item was an update on the bond referendum; referenced discussions at the last special meeting; identified items to be added; provided a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP) and handout; spoke to the purpose of the item; outlined options for the process; confirmed that Council would vote on the individual Bond Orders on July 19th; and set out the timeframe for the public hearing and the Bond Referendum.

Mayor Vaughan referenced Council suggestions at the last meeting that made the total bond amount higher; suggested that some reductions be made; and asked for discussion.

Councilmember Barber voiced concern with the amount allocated for housing; referenced the amount of Winston-Salem's housing bonds; spoke to the need for private sector assistance; importance of economic development; the process for Greensboro to foreclose and tear down dilapidated housing; and stated that the item was not supported by the business community.

Councilmember Outling voiced agreement with some of Councilmember Barber's points; spoke to the importance for Council to be leaders; verified that the housing bonds were spent along with private sector funds; and spoke to investments by the private sector.

Interim Assistant City Manager Barbara Harris reviewed the leveraging aspects should the bond be reduced to \$25 million; provided an overview of the bond package; and outlined the process of a family of four with a median income of \$79,000 or less to receive assistance.

Discussion took place regarding Work Force Housing; federal funding for housing; impact of the bond program; limitations to how the funding could be spent; and the ability of the City to keep pace with the housing demand.

Councilmember Barber voiced concern with the lack of requirements for those on the housing assistance waiting list; and stated there was not an incentive to come off the list.

Interim Assistant City Manager Harris provided an overview of the process; who could apply; verified that not everyone was eligible; and emphasized the City's goal was to help the economy by placing more people into homes.

Discussion continued regarding using the funds to attract middle class workers in need of assistance; the importance for neighborhoods to have home ownership rather than rental units; Greensboro having a transient society; home ownership not being a function of local government; other governmental agencies not fulfilling their responsibilities to provide housing; the need to figure out a solution; and the traditional role of local government and federal functions.

Councilmember Hightower voiced that the bond referendum was community tax dollars that put money back into taxpayer neighborhoods; spoke to the need to consider all taxpayers when making a decision; to provide not just rental housing but safe, affordable housing; for the City to step up and provide means and ways for residents to invest back into their community; and spoke to the importance for public input on the issue.

Discussion continued around hiring additional housing inspectors; housing being an issue in all districts; reducing the housing bonds to \$25 million; justification for the difference in bond amounts for Winston-Salem and Greensboro; differences between Greensboro and Winston-Salem; focus of Greensboro; and the need to move to the next item.

It was the consensus of Council to reduce the Housing Bond proposal to \$25 million with Councilmembers Barber and Wilkins opposed.

City Manager Westmoreland introduced the Community Development Bond item.

Mayor Vaughan expressed that she would like the title changed to Community and Economic Development.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter voiced that she would like to reduce the total amount to \$20 million; stated that other items had been reduced; and voiced the need to be fair and make reductions across the board.

Discussion took place regarding staff's recommendation; use of the 2006 bonds; limitations on the use of bond funds that had previously been adopted; use of funds for street resurfacing; revenue that would be generated from the vehicle registration increase to go towards street resurfacing projects; the importance of sidewalk and pedestrian funding; and clarification that \$18.50 of the \$20.00 vehicle registration fee would go towards street resurfacing.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter inquired about the Bypass Plan; stated that enhancements and intersection improvements had not been mentioned; and asked about improvements to dangerous intersections.

Transportation Director Adam Fischer explained the process for the City to obtain matches to grant funds; stated that a total of \$10 million would be needed to cover costs for sidewalks and intersection improvements; addressed funding that would be needed over the next 10 years for transportation; and spoke to the need for grant funds.

Discussion took place regarding funding for public transportation; bus shelters; placing all transportation needs under one category; and the need to stay focused on the transportation discussion.

City Manager Westmoreland suggested that funding for transportation be included in the street and sidewalk improvements category for a total of \$10 million; and that the \$5.2 million public transportation bond category be eliminated.

Additional discussion took place regarding bus shelters; and clarification as to what would be eliminated with regard to transportation.

Councilmember Wilkins inquired about the Gate City Boulevard – Phase III Streetscape funding; and spoke to the location of Phase II.

Mayor Vaughan asked Council to vote on the amount of \$10 million for sidewalks, intersection and public transportation. The motion carried by a 4-3 consensus of Council.

Councilmember Wilkins asked for clarification of what they were being asked to vote on; and inquired if the Gate City Boulevard Phase 3 Streetscape would be eliminated.

Discussion took place regarding clarification as to what they were being asked to vote on.

Mayor Vaughan clarified that Council was being asked to vote to reduce the street and sidewalk improvement bonds to \$10 million; include various transportation needs in said category; and eliminate the Gate City Boulevard streetscape project; and stated Council would take another vote. The motion carried by a 4-3 consensus of Council.

Councilmember Outling spoke to his vote.

Mayor Vaughan requested staff to find \$200,000 in the budget to cover the construction of bus shelters.

Discussion took place regarding the elimination of \$20 million for street resurfacing; approximate \$4 million in revenue from the vehicle registration fee; total cost of financing \$20 million over a twenty year period; recommendations from Field Operations Director Dale Wyrick; whether the \$4 million would be sufficient to cover the cost for street resurfacing; the need to dedicate additional funds for street resurfacing; verification that \$18.50 of the \$20.00 vehicle registration fee would go towards street resurfacing; and whether the vehicle registration fee would bring the City's street resurfacing to where it needed to be. Additional discussion took place around the City being behind in its street resurfacing; the street resurfacing item being added at the last meeting; the City contracting out paving.

City Manager Westmoreland addressed funding received from the General Assembly; limitations on contractors; street miles that could be resurfaced; and the sale of bonds.

Councilmember Barber voiced that the resurfacing bond would provide a benefit to all citizens; and stated he would like the item left on the ballot.

Councilmember Wilkins concurred; and stated it would be a popular item.

Mayor Vaughan suggested it be rolled into with the sidewalk and intersection item.

Councilmember Barber provided an explanation as to why it should stand alone.

City Manager Westmoreland stated that Council had reduced the total bond amount to approximately \$134,500,000; that Council would have the ability to amend the items going forward; and that the public hearing would take place on August 1st.

Discussion ensued regarding people getting bond fatigue; the need for a la cart items; what items would or would not pass; allowing for greater flexibility; and the final date the items could be amended.

City Attorney Carruthers spoke to the bond language on the ballot; and verified that the bond questions would need to be solidified at the meeting tomorrow evening.

Councilmember Outling voiced concern that the total number was too high; and moved that the street resurfacing item be eliminated.

Discussion took place regarding the difference between street resurfacing and housing bonds; the street resurfacing bond being the bond item that would pass; and the need to work hard to bring the total number down.

The motion to remove street resurfacing carried by a 4-3 consensus of Council.

Mayor Vaughan stated that Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson was in favor of removing the street resurfacing item.

Discussion took place whether or not to consider the vote of Councilmembers who were not in attendance.

Mayor Vaughan stated Council would move on to the Parks and Recreation item.

Councilmember Hightower spoke to the amount for Barber Park and Gateway Gardens; and voiced concern that the City needed additional investment from Greensboro Beautiful for Gateway Gardens.

Parks and Recreation Director Wade Walcutt outlined what would be covered should the amount be reduced. It was the consensus of Council to reduce the line to \$4.5 million.

Councilmember Hightower referenced the amount for the Windsor/Chavis Joint Facility Initial Development; and asked what would be incorporated in the initial development phase.

Library Director Brigitte Blanton provided an overview of the project from the library perspective.

Councilmember Outling voiced concern with the length of time for completion of the project; asked about the start up number; and for the amount that would be needed for work done over the next two to three years.

Mr. Walcutt spoke to the challenges of planning now and building later.

Ms. Blanton stated staff would be willing to do the project earlier; spoke to programming at Windsor Center; and explained the plan and reason for the combination of the facilities.

Council discussed reducing the item to \$1.5 or \$2 million; the need for a library in the area; unknown factors of the project; and the possibility of reducing the amount to \$2 million for planning and engineering of the project. It was the consensus of Council to reduce the Windsor/Chavis Joint Facility line item to \$2 million.

Councilmember Barber moved that the \$20 million allotted for street resurfacing be rolled into the sidewalk line item; and asked about outstanding bonds for housing.

Interim Assistant City Manager Harris and Finance Director Larry Davis stated that there was \$655,000 remaining in the housing bonds.

Discussion took place regarding handicapped housing for disabled citizens; grants to assist with said needs; faith organizations assisting with providing ramps; and having the Community Relations Department coordinate efforts with local churches and non-profit organizations.

City Manager Westmoreland stated that the total bond amount had been reduced to \$106 million excluding street resurfacing; and verified the street resurfacing allotment of \$20 million would be in the sidewalk item which would bring the total up to \$126 million.

Discussion continued regarding the requirements of businesses for disabled persons; the existence of a revolving loan fund; and the need to look at the loan process.

City Manager Westmoreland confirmed that the amount was at \$126 million.

Councilmember Hightower asked if street resurfacing could be reduced by \$5 million. There was not a consensus of Council to reduce street resurfacing.

City Attorney Carruthers reviewed the goals and priorities set for projects and amounts; stated Council had gone from six to four bond questions; spoke to the legally binding questions that would be presented to the voters; and outlined the flexibility of the language in the bond questions.

(A copy of the PPP is filed in Exhibit Drawer Y, Exhibit No. 29, which is hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes.)

3. Adjournment

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

THE CITY COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 3:40 P.M.

ELIZABETH H. RICHARDSON
CITY CLERK

NANCY VAUGHAN
MAYOR