



City of Greensboro

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

Meeting Minutes - Final City Council

Tuesday, February 14, 2017

9:00 AM

Union Square Campus

I. OPENING REMARKS

This City Council Annual Priority Setting Session of the City of Greensboro was called to order at 9:00 a.m. on the above date at the Union Square Campus with the following members present: Mayor Nancy Vaughan, Mayor Pro-Tem Yvonne Johnson, Councilmembers Marikay Abuzaiter, Mike Barber, Sharon Hightower, Nancy Hoffmann, Justin Outling, and Tony Wilkins.

Absent: Councilmember Jamal Fox

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

1. [ID 17-0072](#) Opening Remarks/Agenda Review - Mayor Vaughan, City Manager Westmoreland

City Manager Westmoreland played a video outlining the work and events that had taken place throughout the City of Greensboro in 2016.

Councilmember Wilkins voiced concern that there were no clips from District 5 in the video.

II. PRESENTATION ITEMS

2. [ID 17-0071](#) 2016 Year in Review - City Manager Westmoreland

City Manager Westmoreland spoke to the impact of the accomplishments; to setting priorities for 2017; Campus facilities; provided a brief history of the City's role in the Union Square project; provided an overview of the agenda; and spoke to staff presentations. City Manager Westmoreland stated the City was a benchmark organization; and spoke to setting and discussing goals.

3. [ID 17-0073](#) Organizational Updates - City Manager Westmoreland and Staff

Mayor Vaughan spoke to the City's A goal; to the need to formulate a mission and vision of what drove the City; to the need for a singular focus; and to where the City wanted to be in 5 to 10 years.

Discussion took place regarding National ranking.

Assistant City Manager Chris Wilson referenced the 2016 Accomplishments and Highlights distributed to Council; stated staff presentations had been designed to be brief and informative; and recognized Human Resources Director Connie Hammond.

Ms. Hammond made a PowerPoint Presentation; provided an overview of the Greensboro Compensation plan; spoke to the history and revamping of the program in 2012; implementation of compensation philosophy and strategy; moving employees toward a control point; performance strategies; explained the Green Zone; reviewed pay practices and policies; comparisons to other cities; outlined the standing in relation to market value; and the 408 and 401K plans.

Councilmember Hightower requested staff to provide information to Council during the budget development process on options to continue to move general structure employees from the 'below market range' point; and to

compare Greensboro merit and in-range salaries with that of High Point.

Ms. Hammond outlined benefits practices and policies; explained allowances and markets; the efforts to maintain competitiveness; stated that a mini-market study was conducted every two years; and spoke to the annual structural move of pay plan.

Discussion took place regarding the local and national market areas; the Green zone (GZ); funding and merits; the economy; in-range pay alignments; competitive benefits; differences in the pay scale for supervisors; former employees seeking employment in other municipalities statistics; exit interviews; and employee turnover.

Ms. Hammond highlighted the progress toward GZ since FY 12-13; spoke to challenges; entry level positions; and referenced a minimum wage resolution Council passed in 2016.

Discussion continued regarding strategies; fund allotment; evaluation of peer cities; general and specialized labor; bi-monthly reports; retention of employees; compensations as compared to the private sector; percentages of employees that retire, resign or are dismissed; residency of employees; and to the employees quality of life.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson left the meeting at 9:53 a.m. and returned at 9:56 a.m.

Ms. Hammond spoke to comparisons that were made; public safety positions; general employee pay structures; referenced a pay study; and cost challenges.

Mayor Vaughan referenced the \$15 per hour wage increase that had been adopted by Council; and spoke to the need to honor the resolution.

City Manager Westmoreland spoke to reflections of the past and current Councils; stated staff had designed and implemented a competitive system; spoke to benefited and rostered employees; and to the implementation of the \$15 wage increase by 2020.

Councilmember Hightower left the meeting at 10:03 a.m. and returned at 10:07 a.m.

Discussion continued regarding employee residency requirements for Department Heads and Executive Management; and legal concerns regarding said requirements.

Finance Director Rick Lusk made a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP); outlined the bond project status report for the 2006, 2008, 2009, and 2016 bonds; provided a 2016 Bond Program Implementation Update; outlined the remaining bonds to be issued in October 2018; and spoke to projects under contract.

Discussion ensued regarding available funding in Park and Recreation bonds; fulfillment of the master plan; acquisition of land; the Horse Pen Creek property; expenditures to date; inclusion of under budget projects in the bi-monthly report; allocation of funds; and terms and extension of bonds.

Mayor Vaughan left the meeting at 10:15 a.m. and returned at 10:17 a.m.

Councilmember Wilkins voiced concerns with the execution of the 2016 bond money; and to increased property taxes.

Mr. Lusk continued the PPP; spoke to the project plan; outlined remaining bonds for Transportation and street improvements; provided an overview of the 2016 GO Bonds; outlined the debt service tax rate options; spoke to refinancing; and low interest rates.

City Manager Westmoreland provided available options; spoke to the upcoming budget season; advancement of projects; and to the flexibility for programs.

Councilmember Outling requested staff to provide tax comparisons to other cities; to research feedback from constituents regarding the possible tax increase based on the 2016 bonds; and to provide a timeline in relation to the upcoming election.

Councilmember Wilkins requested staff to maintain the current property tax rate in the development of the upcoming budget.

Discussion ensued regarding Council's goal to not raise taxes; public opinion on a potential tax increase; previous referendum discussions; and funding availability for street and sidewalk improvements.

Assistant City Manager Wilson provided a Capital Improvements Program Summary handout; spoke to an educational campaign; private interests; a proposed schedule; and to opportunities for moving projects forward.

Mayor Vaughan declared a recess at 10:37 a.m. Council reconvened at 10:55 a.m. with all members in attendance except Councilmember Fox.

Assistant City Manager Wilson distributed an Organizational Financial Status Review packet; and recognized Budget and Evaluation Director Larry Davis.

Mr. Davis made a PowerPoint Presentation; spoke to assessed valuation growth; referenced challenges in FY 13-14 and FY 14-15; highlighted major general fund revenues; spoke to increased state sales tax; building permit fees; outlined the general fund revenues and expenditures; spoke to projections and projects for the current year; an increase of expenditures; health insurance costs; provided an overview of the Coliseum complex facilities; and addressed the impact of HB2.

Discussion took place regarding average increases to health insurance; the impact of HB2 on the budget; future bond referendums; Council goals; full time position growth and reductions; vacant positions; service enhancements; departmental regularity needs; the advancement of technology eliminating jobs; economic impact; and an increased focus on youth programs.

Mr. Davis spoke to high cost claims; employee healthcare cost contributions; the need for roof replacements; and organizational technology and infrastructure needs.

Discussion continued regarding investment approximations; sales tax reform; and a proposed business license fee.

Councilmember Wilkins requested staff to evaluate the needs of developing a business registry.

City Attorney Tom Carruthers spoke to staff research for lobbyist groups to provide legislative assistance to the City; submitted proposals; a goal to improve communications with the General Assembly; and highlighted the experience and expertise of McGuireWoods Consulting as staff's recommendation.

Councilmember Wilkins requested staff review McGuireWoods performance after the completion of the General Assembly Long Session.

Discussion ensued regarding the benefits of hiring a lobbying group; municipal interests; improvement of relationships; and services that would be provided.

Moved by Councilmember Outling, seconded by Councilmember Hoffmann to accept the staff recommendation to enter into a contract with McGuireWoods. The motion carried by voice vote.

(A copy of the PowerPoint Presentations and Handout's are filed in Exhibit Drawer Z, Exhibit No. 4 which are hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes).

4. [ID 17-0107](#) Lunch 11:45 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Mayor Vaughan declared a recess at 11:53 a.m. Council reconvened at 12:41 p.m. with all members in attendance except Councilmember Fox.

5. [ID 17-0074](#) City Council 2017 Priority Setting Session - City Council

City Manager Westmoreland spoke to the 2017 Organization Forecast; made a PowerPoint Presentation; spoke to an Economic Development focus; the effectiveness of the 2016 Bond; and highlighted other areas of focus.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson requested staff to have the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce attend an upcoming work session to discuss recruitment and training projections.

Councilmember Wilkins requested staff to research Greensboro bid losses to include what cities Greensboro had been in competition with for businesses; and why businesses selected other cities over Greensboro on the local, state and national levels.

City Manager Westmoreland spoke to job creation; to maintaining and enhancing public infrastructures; provided an update on the comprehensive plan; highlighted the Greensboro Police Department Headquarter renovations; Steven B Tanger Center for Performing Arts; spoke to the Cultural Arts Task Force; and outlined Capital Project advancements. City Manager Westmoreland spoke to Public Safety and Customer Service goals; to Fiscal Stewardship; and implementation of the Community Partners Board.

Councilmember Outling requested staff to research the development of a Citation and Release Policy; and to provide Council with 'failure to appear' statistics.

Discussion ensued regarding property taxes; water rates; and a proposed sliding scale of fees.

Councilmember Wilkins requested staff to provide information on Solid Waste (taxes vs. fees) as part of the budget development process.

Assistant City Manager Barbara Harris reviewed the 2017 goal categories; and requested Council to speak to items that were of high priority to each member of Council.

Council requested staff to research branding and marketing for the City; and to include local colleges in the research efforts.

Council discussed job training with Economic Development; a revision of the Greensboro logo; and promotion of local businesses.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson left the meeting at 1:27 p.m. returned at 1:29p.m.

Councilmember Hightower requested staff include East Greensboro in the local business profiling segments on Greensboro Television Network.

Discussion continued regarding infill development; attracting companies to Greensboro; the Redevelopment Commission; infrastructure concerns; health and safety; the homeless population; addressing panhandling concerns; enhancement of Gate City Boulevard; and private sector investments.

Councilmember Hightower requested staff to include Randleman Road in the redevelopment plans.

Councilmember Hoffmann left the meeting at 1:46 p.m. and returned at 1:49 p.m.

Council continued with discussing the teen summit; mentoring and internship programs; town hall meetings; development of relations; a racial equity plan; and avoiding future tax increases.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter requested staff research employee feedback on ideas for Customer Service improvements; and to reinstate the Employee of the Year Recognition.

Assistant City Manager Harris provided instructions to Council for prioritizing items on the 5 Goal Boards in which Councilmembers placed colored coordinating dots on the boards to rank items in order of priority.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson left the meeting at 2:09 p.m.

6. [ID 17-0075](#) Next Steps - City Manager Westmoreland

City Manager Westmoreland expressed thanks to the City team and the catering company; and stated staff would rank goals based on the highest priorities of all 5 goals marked by Council.

(A copy of the Highest Priorities of All Five Goals is filed in Exhibit Drawer Z, Exhibit No. 4 which is hereby referred to and made a part of these minutes)

III. ADJOURNMENT

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

The City Council Annual Priority Setting Session meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

ANGELA R. LORD
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

NANCY VAUGHAN
MAYOR