



City of Greensboro

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

Meeting Minutes - Final City Council

Tuesday, March 6, 2018

5:30 PM

Council Chamber

Call to Order

This City Council meeting of the City of Greensboro was called to order at 5:30 p.m. on the above date in the Council Chamber of the Melvin Municipal Office Building with the following members present:

Present: 8 - Mayor Nancy Vaughan, Mayor Pro-Tem Yvonne J. Johnson, Councilmember Marikay Abuzuaiter, Councilmember Sharon M. Hightower, Councilmember Nancy Hoffmann, Councilmember Justin Outling, Councilmember Tammi Thurm and Councilmember Goldie F. Wells

Absent: 1 - Councilmember Michelle Kennedy

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

Moment of Silence

The meeting opened with a moment of silence.

Mayor Vaughan asked that the family of Councilmember Kennedy be kept in prayer; and stated Councilmember Kennedy had voiced appreciation for the outpouring of support from the community.

Moved by Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson, seconded by Councilmember Wells to excuse Councilmember Kennedy from attendance at the meeting. The motion carried by voice vote.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Mayor Vaughan recognized Isabel Gil to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag; congratulated her on recently achieving her United States citizenship; and commended Ms. Gil's work in the Community Relations Department.

Recognition of Courier

City Manager Jim Westmoreland recognized Hart Crane of the Planning Department who served as Courier for the meeting.

Mayor Vaughan recognized Guilford County Commissioner Skip Austin in the audience.

Council Procedure for Conduct of the Meeting

Mayor Vaughan explained the Council procedure for conduct of the meeting.

I. CEREMONIAL AND/OR PRESENTATION ITEMS

1. [ID 18-0138](#)

International Civil Rights Museum Update

City Manager Westmoreland recognized Civil Rights Museum CEO John Swaine and members of the Board of

Directors to come forward; stated the Civil Rights Museum had achieved the goal of raising \$1.5 million to allow the City to forgive the loan; that he had served on the board since the agreement had been put in place; spoke to the Sit-In Movement; cornerstone of the Museum; challenges they had faced; and expressed the recommitment of the Museum going forward.

Mr. Swaine voiced appreciation to those who supported the museum; highlighted the number of visitors; economic impact; spoke to the City's role in assisting the museum in receiving tax credits; asked for continued support; spoke to venues the museum had been ranked with on travel sites; to pursuing new goals; and thanked Council for their support.

Richard Koritz, 1801 Murrayhill Road stated he served on the Board of Directors for a number of years; referenced the 50th Anniversary of the event of the North Carolina A&T State University freshman; voiced the challenges of the museum; concern with the lack of cooperation of the News & Record; commended and recognized the work of CEO John Swaine; and thanked him for his determination.

Councilmember Hightower recognized Mr. Swaine; congratulated the museum for the accomplishment; spoke to a continued partnership with the museum; the continued legacy; referenced the sign along the highway regarding the museum; thanked the museum for putting Greensboro on the map; and spoke to work going forward.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mayor Vaughan stated that the speakers were grouped together by topic; and that Council would hear the SCAT riders first.

Larsina Johnson, 5653 Hornaday Road referenced requests she had made to reorganize Greensboro Transit Authority (GTA); voiced her concerns and issues regarding declining service; spoke to the need for fixed routes; affordable fares; better buses; the door to door policy; explained the challenges of riders; asked Council to ride SCAT for a day; and requested improvements to public transportation.

Jamie Gaddy, 4900 Unit-D Tower Road spoke to the specialized community that rode SCAT; stated she had been a client for 11 years; voiced frustration with being picked up outside the window of her appointment time; with the bus step height; expressed that she lived on a fixed income; was speaking on behalf of many SCAT riders; and thanked Council for their time.

Regina Griffith, 4009 Waxford Drive voiced concern with treatment she had received since coming before Council in February; with the unavailability of requested time slots; issues with drop offs and pickups by drivers; with drivers not being able to exit the bus to assist her; and spoke to safety requirements of the drivers.

Councilmember Hightower asked Ms. Griffith if Bruce Adams had met with her and, if so, what the outcome was.

Ms. Griffith responded that Mr. Adams expressed that it was not safe for drivers to lose sight of the bus.

Councilmember Hightower voiced that she would reach back out to Mr. Adams; and requested Transportation Director Adam Fischer speak with Ms. Griffith.

N. Carley Swaim Walker, 5110 Lawndale Drive provided a presentation on Other Voices; voiced appreciation for the program; recognized the Other Voices Alumni in the audience; stated the program had been in existence for 25 years; provided the history and original members of the program; and highlighted the mission and work of the program.

Ivey Ghee, 601 Friendway Road stated she was a graduate of Other Voices; expressed appreciation for the opportunity to have her voice heard; referenced connections to the community as a result of Other Voices; relationships that were formed; and spoke to meeting with a diverse group of people from different backgrounds.

Barry Davis, 201 N. Elm Street spoke to his experience in the Other Voices program; diversity having a voice in the

program; expressed what he had learned through dialogue within the group; provided a quote from James Comer; expressed the need for better communication; and voiced the importance of the program in the community.

Angie Besecker, 4 Hillwind Court provided the history of the traffic issues at Page High School (Page); referenced the number of students; student drivers; conversations with Adam Fischer; voiced concern with the lack of sidewalks and crosswalks on the campus; provided an overview of communication she had with the City; stated a student had been hit on January 23rd; provided photographs of the campus; and asked for assistance to remedy the situation.

Assistant City Manager David Parrish spoke to the status of sidewalk and crosswalk projects.

Trisha Edwards, 902 West Cornwallis Drive referenced the accident on campus in January; asked that a representative come to Page to witness the congestion during drop off and pick up times; spoke to ingress and egress along Alma Pinnix Drive; to issues with students getting to and from their respective parking lots; the lack of sidewalks and crosswalks; stated the issue had gone unaddressed for a long time; requested a traffic officer be present in the afternoons; and emphasized the City had a duty to provide for the safety of the community.

Kelly Rose, 14 Independence Court voiced concerns she had while dropping and picking her son up from school; with the lack of lanes; and stated there was a need for additional sidewalks and clearly marked crosswalks.

Maere Adams, 704 Topwater Lane stated she was involved in the incident on January 23rd; emphasized she wanted to advocate for better traffic safety on the campus; confirmed that no violations were made that caused the accident; stated there was an online petition in support of increased safety regulations; and requested Council invest their time to ensure safety on the campus.

Armani Priester, 2834 Wild Poplar stated she had been a witness to the accident on January 23rd; spoke to where crosswalks should be installed; the lack of visibility; to the entrance and exit of the senior lot; and suggested a traffic signal be installed in the area.

Austin Connors, 1213 Hammel Road emphasized the need for a crosswalk to the Sherwood Tennis Club where some students parked; suggested a crosswalk with flashing lights; spoke to the dangers of crossing Alma Pinnex Drive; and asked that Council advocate for student safety.

Ava Besecker, 4 Hillwind Court spoke to not being able to walk or ride her bike to school due to the traffic; requested traffic improvements; and highlighted the benefits of students walking or riding a bike to school.

Jullian Heard, 2404 Vernada Lane provided an overview of the congestion and parking situation on the campus; spoke to persons entering and exiting the area; voiced concerns with parents parking along Alma Pinnix Drive; the dangers of students trying to cross in the area; the need for carpool lanes; vehicles blocking her parking space; and spoke to the student population at Page.

Mykel Berrie, 2310 Golden Gate Drive highlighted her fears and experiences when walking to and from school due to traffic issues and congestion; outlined her route; spoke to the lack of sidewalks; and voiced the need for persons to have a set area to cross the road to access the school.

Cary Ivey, 5124 Smith Dairy Road outlined his route to leave campus; spoke to congestion along Alma Pinnix Drive; the length of time to make a left hand turn; timing of the traffic signal at Golden Gate Drive and Church Street; and requested staff observe Page during dismissal.

Richard Brown, 17 Bluff Ridge Court referenced similar traffic issues when he attended Page from 2010 to 2012.

Mayor Vaughan requested staff accelerate researching the issue before spring break; and requested a police presence to ensure traffic was moving properly.

Assistant City Manager Parrish provided the history of conversations between Page and City staff; ensured that staff would continue to reach out; and look at the options.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson commended the students for voicing their concerns; spoke to the need to rectify the issue; confirmed a partnership was needed to look at the entire ingress and egress area; and emphasized Council did not want anyone to lose his or her life.

Council requested City Manager Westmoreland have staff meet and partner with Guilford County Schools and Page High School regarding requests for additional crosswalks and sidewalks along Alma Pinnix Drive; lengthening the stop light timing onto Golden Gate Drive; having staff observe traffic during peak drop off and pick up times at the school; and to provide police to monitor ingress and egress in the vicinity.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter thanked the speakers for attending the meeting; and voiced confidence in staff to remedy the situation.

Councilmember Hightower thanked the students for coming out; and spoke to looking at adjusting the stop light to allow longer times.

Mayor Vaughan suggested the City have a portal to better communicate with students and parents.

Emma Bumgardner, 312 Murray Street a Grimsley High School student voiced concern with and referenced school shootings throughout the nation; explained the impact shootings had on students; provided a flyer announcing the National School WALKOUT on March 14, 2018; and stated students should not fear going to school.

John Hill, 430 North Eugene Street expressed concern with construction vehicles blocking the entrance to his business along Eugene Street; reminded Council that his business was crippled during the road closure a year ago; stated that the next several months were crucial to his business; spoke to two other businesses that were impacted; asked that a barrier be placed over the sidewalk; referenced conversations he had with staff; failed attempts to reach out to the Carroll Corporation; and asked for assistance in ensuring that Eugene Street remain passable at all times.

City Manager Westmoreland was requested to provide an update to Council with regard to Mr. Hill's concerns.

Mayor Vaughan suggested reserving some parking places for the businesses.

Councilmember Outling voiced concern with Council setting policy at the meeting; requested staff come back with recommendations that would be equitable for the entire City; reminded Council that the project was being constructed by a private entity; requested that Council treat like situations alike; and voiced the need for consistency.

Discussion took place regarding the impact to small businesses; developing policy that applied equally to everyone; the need to be thoughtful and consistent across the board; Mr. Hill's situation being unique; and not every situation having the same needs.

Rebecca Cress, 4114 Walker Avenue voiced concerns with the treatment of circus animals; provided photographs; spoke to animal's feelings; welfare; and asked the City to ban roadside zoos and circuses.

Mayor Vaughan confirmed that there were no upcoming circus events scheduled in Greensboro.

Mike Pippin, 1907 Gracewood Drive voiced concern with Council behavior regarding the assets of African American people; spoke to the policies of Council; local businesses; the existence of the creator; to the opportunities for black people other than sports or entertainment; gun violence; improvements to the NANO Joint School of Engineering in East Greensboro; and to the City's educational assets.

Richard Vought, 305 West Lee Street stated he was homeless, referenced the pan handling ordinance; spoke to his experience while incarcerated; voiced he could not obtain a panhandling license due to pending charges; the need to come up with solutions; provided suggestions for improving the panhandling license process; and emphasized the need for changes.

Marcus Hyde, 211 South Mendenhall Street asked that the City repeal the panhandling ordinances; voiced the need to talk with poor persons regarding poverty; referenced Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandates; County funding received from HUD; voiced that the current ordinances were unconstitutional violations of First Amendment rights; spoke to lawsuits that had been brought on the federal level; laws that discriminated against the poor; and asked that the City repeal its panhandling ordinances.

Mayor Vaughan stated that several Councilmembers had started working on panhandling and homelessness issues; verified that Council took the issue seriously; was committed to resolving poverty; and spoke to the dangers of persons panhandling in the median.

Wayne Abraham, 815 Kemp Road West stated he was the Chair of the Participatory Budgeting Steering Committee (PB), provided an overview of the role of the PB; stated the process allowed for citizen participation; that there were currently nine vacancies on the committee; inquired about funding for Phase 3 of the program; requested that a permanent staff person be hired to oversee the process; that funding be increased to \$150,000 per district; that Council consider removing the restrictions for capital improvements only; and that the committee be made a standing City committee.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson informed Council she had requested Mr. Abraham provide an update to Council in order for Council to decide how to proceed.

Councilmember Thurm stated there was a meeting scheduled to discuss a plan moving forward; and referenced looking at several different options.

Discussion took place regarding action taken at a previous work session.

Councilmember Hightower asked about the status of the committee; voiced concerns with vacant positions; decisions made by the committee; spoke to the need to keep people engaged in the process; and asked if the phase for 2017 had been skipped.

City Clerk Betsey Richardson confirmed that the committee was not a standing City board; and provided an overview of the previous application process.

Mr. Abraham provided a response regarding the 2017 project status; and stated the committee was moving forward as it could.

City Manager Westmoreland spoke to the process he had recalled; stated he would research the issue and bring it back to Council; and that some good ideas had been raised this evening.

Councilmember Hoffmann asked for the number of participants since PB had been in place.

Mr. Abraham responded approximately 4,600 over the past two years; and spoke to having the ability for residents to vote at schools.

III. ITEMS CALLING PUBLIC HEARINGS (One Vote)

There were no items calling public hearings on the agenda.

Matters to be discussed by the Mayor and Members of the Council

Councilmember Hightower expressed condolences to Councilmember Kennedy and her family; stated she had

attended the funeral of Mr. Beal; and stated her birthday was this coming Thursday.

Councilmember Thurm requested that the local preference matter be placed on the March 20th work session agenda; and gave a shoutout to Sedgfield Elementary School.

Councilmember Outling congratulated the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) Men's Basketball team; and reiterated the request to have the local preference item on a March work session.

City Manager Westmoreland stated that March 20th was the next date for a work session; and that the item would require some discussion.

Councilmember Abuzuaiter stated she had provided information regarding the economic development impact from events of the Greensboro Sports Commission; congratulated UNCG; extended condolences to Councilmember Kennedy, former Councilmember Florence Gatten, and Senator Gladys Robinson; spoke to a collaborative effort and agreement between Greensboro, High Point and Guilford County for the joint funding of an assistant agent position to support community in school garden opportunities; to the various opportunities the position would provide throughout the area; referenced the Ladies Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament; and thanked Greensboro Department of Transportation for their work and efforts in working with the community and North Carolina Department of Transportation along Battleground/Lawndale/Old Battleground Avenue corridor.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson expressed sympathy to Councilmember Kennedy, Senator Robinson, and former Councilmember Gatten; and requested City Attorney Carruthers review the legality of the City's panhandling ordinances.

City Attorney Carruthers confirmed he would research the issue.

Councilmember Wells expressed condolences to those who had lost loved ones; stated she read at Jefferson School; spoke to the North Buffalo repurposing project; referenced Community Day at the Renaissance Center; and expressed excitement for the Printworks projects and things taking place in District 2.

Mayor Vaughan expressed sympathy to Councilmember Kennedy on her loss; congratulated City Manager Westmoreland on his upcoming retirement; and thanked him for his work at the City.

Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson stated she would be speaking at Lindley Elementary School on civil rights.

Councilmember Wells extended congratulations to Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson on her 53rd wedding anniversary.

Moved by Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson, seconded by Councilmember Hightower to recess to closed session to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the City Attorney and Council and to consult with and give instructions to the City Attorney concerning the handling of a claim, or judicial action and to view the body worn camera footage, addressed in the Matter of Custodial Law Enforcement Agency Recording sought by the City of Greensboro in 17 CVS 9673 and 17 CVS 9674 pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(3) and (a)(10), and to consider the performance and hear or investigate a complaint concerning public officers as detailed in Administrative Investigation EC 2017-043 pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(6). The motion carried by voice vote.

Council recessed to closed session at 8:04 p.m. Council reconvened at 8:40 p.m. with all members in attendance except Councilmember Kennedy.

Moved by Councilmember Wells, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Johnson to return to open session. The motion carried by voice vote.

Mayor Vaughan stated that the City Council had decided not to view the video; and would request an appeal to Judge Bray's

Matters to be presented by the City Manager

There were no items for discussion by the City Manager.

Matters to be presented by the City Attorney

There were no items for discussion by the City Attorney.

Adjournment

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

THE CITY COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 8:42 P.M.

ELIZABETH H. RICHARDSON
CITY CLERK

NANCY VAUGHAN
MAYOR