

OFFICIALS PRESENT: Danny Dunagan, Ruth Bruner, George Wangemann, Sam Couvillon, Zack Thompson, Barbara Brooks
STAFF PRESENT: Bryan Lackey, Angela Sheppard, Catiel Felts, Jeremy Perry, Matt Hamby, Denise Jordan

City Manager Bryan Lackey welcomed everyone to the 2017 Council Retreat. This meeting serves as the official kickoff to the budget process and will address all operations except water.

FY17 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

City Manager Bryan Lackey provided an update on the capital improvement projects indicating \$4.1 million was budgeted from the fund balance to address them. Notable comments are provided below:

- The jail demolition has not occurred but discussions are underway.
- An RFP has been released for development of the Main Street lots.
- Good weather has provided a longer window of time to address paving projects.

VISION /MISSION

City Manager Bryan Lackey stated the city's vision, mission and values remain the same and serve as the foundation for the budget process. The strategic priorities were reviewed noting additions and/or changes were made in regards to the Downtown Master Plan; industrial parks; the I/T Master Plan; Project Management System for capital projects; the Lake Lanier Olympic Park Master Plan; traffic flow and infrastructure improvements along major corridors; and housing initiatives. The following was noted:

1. There was a desire to discuss/implement a funding strategy, maybe a five year plan, for the Lake Lanier Olympic Park Master Plan.
2. There was an inquiry about pocket parks in the Bradford Street area.
3. There was a desire for more flowers along the exits entering into Gainesville.
4. There was discussion about the revitalization of Atlanta Street and an opportunity to partner with the Housing Authority to further enhance the project.
5. The General Assembly has already introduced several bills of concern.
6. The Service Delivery Strategy update, the tax digest and population growth were identified as challenges for Fiscal Year 2018.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Chief Financial Officer Jeremy Perry provided an overview of the city's financial status that began with a ten year comparison of various revenue and expense data. He reviewed the projected fund balance information for 6/30/2017 which indicated \$3.4 million would be available for capital projects and operating transfers. Mr. Perry provided a seven year comparison of fund balance information and a nine year comparison of General Fund transfers to other funds. He shared SPLOST VII information and closed by sharing Hotel/Motel Tax Revenue information.

NOTE: Council Member Wangemann left at 10:15 AM.

RECESS: 10:22 AM
RECONVENE: 10:32 AM

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Director Rusty Ligon presented statistical information related to residential, planned multi-family and commercial development activity. He stated Gainesville will be the first in the State of Georgia to have the new Golden Corral design.

There was some discussion about the Walton Summit Project after which Assistant City Manager Angela Sheppard reported a small section of Atlanta Street was not abandoned. Staff was working to transfer it to the Housing Authority for inclusion in the project. A Work Session agenda item was forthcoming.

Mr. Ligon also discussed housing grant activities and displayed several before/after photographs documenting the impact of grant funds. He discussed the recent housing sweep that resulted in the distribution of 63 violation letters that allowed 60 days to complete repairs.

Mr. Ligon discussed upcoming development in the midtown area, i.e., the Enclave Project and the Liberty Midtown Project. He stated prequalified bids would be announced soon for demolition of the old Hall County Jail; and, he shared a concept plan for the site. In closing, Mr. Ligon stated bids were due by February 16 on the Main Street streetscaping project.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Chris Rotalsky commented on streetscaping projects and beautification along E.E. Butler and Spring Street; Washington and Bradford Street; "The Moat"; and E.E. Butler and Spring Street. He stated beautification projects along Exit 20 would occur in five phases.

Mr. Rotalsky provided an overview of the Transportation Master Plan as it relates to the SR369 turn lane project; Jesse Jewell/Queen City Intersection; Green Street Study; Oak Tree Drive; Intelligent Transportation System and Dawsonville Highway. He requested input from the governing body to form a stakeholders group for the Oak Tree Drive Project.

Mr. Rotalsky discussed the public service side of the department by highlighting the accomplishments of the Solid Waste, Public Lands and Buildings, Vehicle Services and Streets Divisions. He commented on the sidewalk program and the Free Ground Memorial Project that would conclude with a dedication ceremony recognizing 1100 unmarked graves. Mr. Rotalsky discussed the progress of the downtown square landscaping and closed the presentation after discussing two ongoing projects at Lee Gilmer Memorial Airport.

RECESS: 12:10 PM
RECONVENE: 12:20 PM

NOTE: Council Member Brooks did not return when the group reconvened.

NOTE: Council Member Wangemann returned to the meeting.

CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU/TOURISM

Communications and Tourism Director Catiel Felts discussed the local economic impact of tourism by creating jobs and generating revenue. She shared statistical information related to the Main Street Program noting downtown merchants are sponsoring events. Mrs. Felts reported hotel tax had doubled from Fiscal Year 2010 to Fiscal Year 2016. She also provided a social media update revealing a significant increase in usage over the last four years. Mrs. Felts briefly discussed upcoming activities/events and announced the Tourism Manager position had been filled.

COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER

Community Service Center Director Phillippa Lewis Moss commented on the Gainesville-Hall County Senior Life Center Renovation Project funded by SPLOST VII noting the work is scheduled to begin in May with anticipated completion in December. She distributed GoGo Bus Shelter photographs to show how this project has beautified the community. Mrs. Moss commented on the increasing demand for transit and provided a preview of forthcoming recommendations.

There was a brief discussion about the reorganization of the Meals on Wheels Program followed by an inquiry as to whether other governmental entities were discussing cost sharing for transit services.

BREAK: 12:58 PM
RECONVENE: 1:10 PM

NOTE: Council Member Brooks returned to the meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Administrative Services Director Janeann Allison provided a brief overview of the 2016 Pay Study and indicated Appropriation Resolution 2015-14 required a pay study every three years. She commented on new software applications and efforts to reduce paper usage. Mrs. Allison closed by providing benefit updates noting it may be time to obtain bids for clinic management services.

Information Technologies (IT) Manager Jonathan Reich reviewed accomplishments and discussed the key initiatives for the division. It was noted that IT would be processing some capital improvement projects in conjunction with implementing the IT Master Plan.

CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney Abb Hayes presented a rewrite of the Ethics Ordinance noting it was an amended version of the Georgia Municipal Association's model ordinance. He thoroughly reviewed the ordinance and addressed questions.

RECESS: 2:02 PM
RECONVENE: 2:10 PM

NOTE: All department directors joined the meeting.

NON-PRESENTING DEPARTMENTS

Fire Department

Fire Chief Jerome Yarbrough stated the next ISO rating would be determined largely upon how the city addresses growth. He also expressed a need for replacement radios, traffic preemption system and a training vehicle.

There was a brief discussion about the acquisition of property for Fire Station 2, a fire station on Dawsonville Highway and fire service options for the Athens Highway area.

Police Department

Police Chief Carol Martin reported the need for a satellite precinct along the 53W corridor, a training facility and additional officers to address growth.

Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Agency Director Melvin Cooper briefly discussed the agency's strategic plan. He also commented on development of a new ten-year Park Master Plan and provided an overview of six capital projects. In closing, he expressed the need for a conference center based upon the requests received at the Civic Center.

Chattahoochee Golf Course

Director of Golf Rodger Hogan reported the golf course had a great year before discussing improvements and purchases to occur in the near future. He also commented on the junior golfer's tournament. It was suggested that it become an annual event due to the growing market.

GOALS/COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Wangemann

1. Address traffic with specific focus on traffic calming.
2. Address public safety with specific focus on drugs.
3. Continue to promote the importance of code enforcement.

Council Member Bruner

1. Develop a long term plan for a convention center.
2. Consider downtown housing as part of the downtown master plan.
3. Expressed excitement about the senior center renovation project.
4. Revisit some of the Community Service Center services.

Council Member Couvillon

1. Continue sidewalks and street paving.
2. Reserve funds for stormwater projects during the good years.

Council Member Thompson

1. Continue the energy and enthusiasm of the midtown projects.
2. Identify a funding source for stormwater.
3. Increase participation and awareness of the Citizen Alert System.
4. Increase social media followers.
5. Develop a plan to improve services related to medical transport.

Council Member Brooks

1. Continue housing initiatives.
2. Provide public transportation on Saturday.
3. Develop a plan for a skate park.

Mayor Dunagan

1. Expressed concern about keeping up with transportation needs.
2. Provide a conference center.
3. Expressed concern about the Service Delivery Strategy negotiations.
4. Expressed concern about challenges associated with growth.

NOTE: All department directors left except Chief Financial Officer Jeremy Perry.

OTHER BUSINESS

Meeting with State Officials

Mayor Dunagan recalled a recent meeting with state officials and briefly shared comments about Glades Farm. He reported there was a desire (not by Gainesville) to annex a large tract of property into the City of Gainesville via legislative action. He discussed the details as well as the challenges. He stated key staff and the City Attorney were involved in these discussions.

ADJOURNMENT: 3:56 PM

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C. Danny Dunagan, Jr., Mayor

Denise O. Jordan, City Clerk