



**CITY OF LITHONIA**  
**MINUTES—CITY COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**Monday, December 20, 2021 @ 5:30 PM**

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**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

The City Council Virtual Meeting was called to order at 5:32 pm by Mayor Shameka S. Reynolds. A roll call was taken, and the following City Council Members were present: Diane Howard, Amelia Inman, Vanneriah Wynn, and Ric Dodd. Darold Honore was absent.

**II. Moment of Silence**

A moment of silence was observed.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

Councilwoman Inman motioned to approve the Work Session meeting agenda for Monday, December 20, 2021; the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn and approved by a vote of 4-0.

**IV. Public Comments (Limit 2-minutes per person)**

- a. Dawn Massey (Resident Main Street), going on public record concerning 2 businesses that operate as a restaurant and event center, disturbing the peace of the community, have become a nuisance, it is a huge problem for those who live in the area. Thank you for your efforts in correcting the issue.
- b. Norman Keise (Resident 2579 Wiggins Street), absent.
- c. Sharon Inman (Resident Johnson Street) thanked Mayor/Council and Code Enforcement for doing a good job. There are two issues: 2620 Johnson Street is posing as a restaurant called Black Cup, and 2650 Johnson Street, a white car has been abandoned for 2-3 weeks. Mayor Reynolds acknowledged that a report was made, and code enforcement visited both properties on yesterday.
- d. Allene Harper (Resident Braswell Street), thanked Mayor/Council for all hard work to make our city the best! Expressed concern about the train blocking thoroughfare in the city. Mayor Reynolds acknowledged the on-going issue and efforts to resolve since summer, submitted a petition, with state representatives assisting in the effort as well.
- e. Carlene Anderson (Resident Wiggins Street) expressed gratitude for code enforcement and the need for clarification of the noise ordinance. Further concern on the issue of noise at night and into the morning which creates anxiety, with emphasis on holding business owners to task for an amicable coexistence and good quality of life.

**V. Presentation**

**a. Proclamation Reading for Master Nicholas Buamah**

Mayor Reynolds introduced Nicholas Buamah who then thanked the public for giving him the honor to receive this proclamation and for understanding the importance of child literacy. Mayor then provided the proclamation reading and congratulations for Nicholas.

**b. Kazemde Ajamu – Black Dot Cultural Arts Festival**

Mr. Kaz extended greetings to Mayor/Council/Public, seeking to secure October 8, 2022, for the annual festival to begin procuring sponsorship revenue, requesting to close Main Street between Swift and Johnson, adding a children's section to include art, games, and activity with a stage on the opposite side of Main Street, hours 12 noon until 6pm, vendor set up at 10 am.

*Response from Council:* Councilwoman Howard complimented the event and asked for plans proposed in writing. Councilwoman Inman complimented the last event and exposure to the city, would like to see a plan as well to see how the city can partner and help through the community budget. Councilwoman Wynn looks forward to working together during the festival. Councilman

Dodd, no questions.

**c. Clark Jones – Old Skool Car Show**

No Show.

**VI. Action Item**

**a. Advisory Committee Job Description**

Councilwoman Howard described the position and if interested to contact her personally, will begin meeting around the first of the year, wants advisors for each district to target issues, concerns, and ideas around the city.

*Response from Council:* Councilman Dodd feels that it is a fantastic idea, and in accordance with the charter, the Mayor would assign a chairperson. Councilwoman Howard stated that Mayor Reynolds appointed her as the advisory chair several months ago and that she would forward the minutes of that meeting to Mayor Reynolds. Mayor Reynolds will check with the attorney on the charter reference in the meantime.

**VII. New Business**

**a. Amphitheatre**

Mayor Reynolds stated that Commissioner Mereda Johnson met with her a few weeks ago with an idea for remodeling, she will be presenting in January for further discussion.

**b. City Council Meeting Time**

City Administrator Sands would like to verify a time of preference and contacted council a few weeks ago to inquire about what time they would like to meet, some said 7pm, some said 5:30pm, with no definite answer. Councilwoman Howard, Councilwoman Inman, and Councilwoman Wynn are good with 5:30pm. Councilman Dodd would prefer 6:00 pm or later to allow attendance for people getting home from work. Mayor Reynolds wants to revisit this topic.

**c. MLK Day Parade**

Mayor Reynolds was approached by a new Stonecrest councilmember to start doing things with the City of Lithonia. Mayors' recommendation is to partner on a parade for 2023 to allow for planning and asked council if they were interested in doing something together. All councilmembers were in favor of partnering in 2023.

**d. Speed Limit**

Councilwoman Howard in response to the truck activity in the city especially early in the morning, bringing to councils' attention to lower the speed limit to 20-25 mph on Max Cleland, Swift, and Conyers to discourage people from rushing and speeding through the city, researched residential areas where the speed limit is as low as 20 mph, Lithonia is at 35 mph. Councilwoman Inman would like to see an increase in the fine amount. Councilwoman Wynn stated that on Conyers and Bruce Street the speed limit is 25 mph and people are still overlooking that the city is not a truck route. Councilman Dodd had no comment.

**e. Americorps Vista Program**

Councilwoman Inman stated that she reached out to Charley Anderson he is leaving this year and plays a vital role with the farmers market and newsletter, who will be the replacement and next steps. City Administrator Sands stated there are 3 vistas: Charley is a 5<sup>th</sup> year vista, Gladys Pruitt and Karen Warfield. Through advertising, Charley recommended someone who did not follow up

with Vista for an interview. Dekalb reached out about a traveling farmers market that Administrator Sands is looking into in the event that no one is willing to step up into that role, and plans to meet with all 3 vista's in January. Councilwoman Inman proposed that the city provide a stipend and publicize an RFP to have someone spearhead the farmer's market. Councilwoman Howard was under the impression that Gladys was being groomed to replace Charley. Councilwoman Inman indicated that Gladys has new employment with Dekalb County Worksource and no longer doing Vista. Administrator Sands indicated that Gladys is still submitting a timesheet and will look into it.

## VIII. **Old Business**

### **a. Stormwater Truck**

Public Works Director Monson submitted 2 quotes on SUV's and recommended pursuing the pick-up truck as pricing is comparable. Councilwoman Howard would like to see a list of other expenditures that are coming out of stormwater be it projects in the city or hiring a new employee to see what needs to be prioritized. Administrator Sands indicated by next fiscal year that stormwater will be required to have a line-item budget. Councilwoman Inman had no comments, Councilwoman Wynn had no comments, Councilman Dodd asked if Mr. Monson was using his personal vehicle, Mr. Monson stated only for parts to pick up and has not used his personal vehicle for the past month, however, is paying for gas out of pocket. Councilwoman Wynn asked which vehicle would best be served, Mr. Monson stated the pickup truck would. Mayor Reynolds would like to revisit this item during the January work session.

### **b. Business Operational Hours**

Councilman Honore placed this item on the agenda, however not present for the meeting. Councilwoman Howard suggested the item return to the next meeting.

### **c. Blight Ordinance / Code Enforcement**

Councilwoman Inman acknowledged Officer Roseberry on the call to speak on the next roundtable on January 20 to residents and business owners. Officer Roseberry thanked mayor/council/and chief of police for her return to the city of Lithonia, and stated the citizens are not fully aware of Municode and it has not been applied within the city. Councilwoman Howard thanked Roseberry for all that she is doing in the city and asked if a trifold is available to list the Municode especially those that are repeatedly used in the city that can be a handout or mass mailing to residents. Councilwoman Wynn thanked Roseberry and asked about procedures when issuing citations and if pamphlets are available; Roseberry stated that citations are posted on the mailbox and mailed through the post office, and that pamphlets and doorhangers are available and can be placed at the residence. Councilman Dodd thanked Roseberry for coming back, and being here, and to have a merry Christmas. Mayor Reynolds indicated that common violations are on the website and recommended that the Lithonia High School Volunteers can be utilized for a doorhanger project.

### **d. Truck Route**

Councilwoman Howard emphasized the importance of stopping trucks from entering into the city that are not doing business in the city, the siting of 18 wheelers on Swift, Conyers, Center, and Rogers Lake. Proposing a no-truck route, looked at other cities such as Avondale where there are no trucks that go through the residential area. Mr. Monson advised routing through Lithonia Industrial to avoid coming into the city. Chief Pollard stated that he is working in tangent with Administrator Sands and Mr. Monson and can ban trucks and fine for excessive speed via radar for commercial, 10 ton and 18 wheelers, will also look into dump trucks. Councilwoman Howard is asking that Truck Route and Speed Limit is on the next agenda as an action item. Councilwoman Inman is in support, Councilwoman Wynn felt that a vote previously took place and council should continue to go forth with it, Councilman Dodd is fine with it.

**e. Masonic Lodge Repairs**

PW Director Monson stated the units will be installed on Wednesday and the gas also needs to be turned on. Councilwoman Howard commended Mr. Monson on a job well done!

**IX. Other Business**

**a. City Administrator Report**

Annexation notebooks are ready for pickup, encouraged council to drop in for potluck sweet table on Wednesday. Items working on with city attorney include alcohol issue, business compliance, purchasing policy, EOS, updated personnel policy where a committee is needed as well. Acknowledged that it has been a great year, merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

**b. Police Department Report**

Chief Pollard wished everyone a happy holiday season and merry Christmas. Officer Roseberry has been a pleasant addition to the city. Supporting major functions with toys for tots in the city. Looking forward to 2022, awaiting on the COPS award letter to provide further details.

**c. Mayors Report, Councilmember District Update**

Mayor Reynolds asked for council's thoughts to return in person for council meetings. Councilwoman Inman wants to remain on zoom because of Omnicron it would be safer, 5:30 pm is a good time. Councilwoman Howard is ready to return in person at 5:30 pm. Councilwoman Wynn wants to remain on zoom until there is more insight on the various viruses, 5:30 pm is good. Councilman Dodd feels that returning to chambers is good if CDC guidelines are followed, 7:00 pm preferred. Council agreed with Mayor Reynolds to have the first meeting of the year and the swearing-in, in person at city hall.

Councilwoman Howard expressed a merry Christmas to everyone. Councilwoman Inman plugged in the Lithonia Roundtable reminder for January 20, 2022, at 5:30 pm, to include Code Enforcement Officer Roseberry, next quarterly cleanup on January 22 from 10am-12 noon, and merry Christmas to all! Councilwoman Wynn provided a heartfelt prayer for everyone on the call. Councilman Dodd wished everyone a merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Mayor Reynolds asked that everyone share in a clap of hands for Councilman Dodd as his term ends and wished a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone on the call.

**VIII. Executive Session (NONE)**

**IX. Adjournment**

Councilwoman Howard motioned to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Inman; the motion was approved by a vote of 4-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:41 pm.