



CITY OF LITHONIA
MINUTES–PUBLIC HEARING ON 2022 MILLAGE RATE AND
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION VIRTUAL MEETING
Monday, June 20, 2022 @ 5:30 PM

PUBLIC HEARING ON 2022 MILLAGE RATE

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Public Hearing on 2022 Millage Rate was called to order at 5:30 pm by Mayor Shameka S. Reynolds. A roll call was taken, and the following City Council members were present: Diane Howard, Amelia Inman, Yolanda Sheppard, Vanneriah Wynn later joined.

II. Consideration of 2022 Millage Rate

Mayor indicated there were 2 hearings, some for and some against, opened the floor for anyone that would like to speak, asked council if there were any questions or concerns. Howard where are we on the amount. City administrator says, city is proposing an increase of 11.0210. Wynn asked if the percentage could be higher, Mayor Reynolds indicated that a rate has already been introduced.

III. Adjournment

Councilwoman Inman motioned to adjourn the Public Hearing on the Millage Rate, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn and approved by a vote of 4-0.

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The City Council Work Session Virtual Meeting was called to order at 5:37 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 Yolanda Sheppard. Darold Honore joined during the approval of Action Item (b) on the agenda.

II. Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed.

III. Approval of Agenda

Councilwoman Wynn motioned to approve the agenda for the City Council Work Session agenda for Monday June 20, 2022, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Sheppard and approved by a vote of 4-0.

Councilwoman Howard requested additions: Truck Fines as an Action Item letter (b), 3-Way Stop at Swift and Main Street as New Business letter (c).

Councilwoman Wynn withdrew her motion.

Councilwoman Howard motioned to approve the city council work session agenda for Monday June 20, 2022, with the addition of Action Item (b) Truck Fines, and the addition of New business Item (c) 3-Way Stop Sign at Swift and Main Street, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn and approved by a vote of 4-0.

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

Ms. Ajima Witter expressed her experience with the Colorgasm event. Extremely dissatisfied the way that her event was handled by the city as a business, not given the same respect as a promotor, awaiting a park manager and approval process, lied to by the park manager, and the threat of the event being cancelled, told the day of. Stressful and nerve wrecking, stemming from the park manager, proved to be inept, a liar, and thief, confusion, chaos, lies, unscrupulous. Thanked the

Lithonia police department. Clarity needed on what to expect from the park manager, and the presence of the park manager. Hope that changes are made asap.

Mr. Alim Witter touched on more specific detail regarding their experience with the park, it was the worst, 90% had to do with park management, changed the application by adding her own clauses and fees, got \$400 illegally that she should not have obtained, told about overflow parking fees at \$500 for an extra parking lot that she was in control of, was not present during our setup was absent despite numerous calls, asked for \$280 the day before, doing unscrupulous and blatant theft, did not have an exclusive entrance into their event, our patrons were informed that they needed to pay for parking, everything fell apart, the park manager did not do her job, not what we expected or anticipated to happen. The decision with the new park manager was a terrible decision, not good for business. Thanked Mayor Reynolds for appearing the day before and day of the event.

Mayor Reynolds thanked the Witter's for their public comment and indicated that a response would be provided during the next meeting.

V. Presentation (Limit 3-minutes per person)

a. Dr. Olivia Holmes, First St. Paul AME Church

Dr. Holmes was not present for the call, phone 770-905-5399, wareinfo27@yahoo.com, grant writer, referred by Reverend Crawford.

VI. Action Item

a. 2022 Millage Rate

Councilwoman Howard motioned to approve the Millage Rate at 11.0210, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Inman and approved by a vote of 4-0.

b. Truck Fines

Councilwoman Honore motioned to increase truck fines first offense \$100, second offense \$200, and third offense \$500 to be in compliance with Municode, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn and approved by a vote of 5-0.

VII. New Business

a. GMA Direct Installment Program

Interim Chief DeJarnette stated this program includes outfitting for 3 vehicles, lettering, new tasers, camera systems, and decaling for a term of 3 years. City Administrator Sands indicated a vote would be on the July 5th agenda. Councilwoman Howard, Councilman Honore, Councilwoman Wynn, Councilwoman Inman, and Councilwoman Sheppard are in agreement.

b. Plat Fees for Subdivision Ordinance

City Clerk Blount stated that fees were not adopted during the adoption of the 2019 subdivision ordinance, recommending a \$200 review fee and \$50 administrative fee. Hari Karikaran with Lowe Engineers joined the call to clarify that \$200 is an appropriate fee for the review, the review takes one hour for the entire subdivision.

Councilwoman Inman motioned to approve the \$250 fee for the subdivision ordinance, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn for discussion.

Councilwoman Howard motioned to approve the plat fees at \$250.00, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn and approved by a vote of 5-0.

c. Vacant Building Ordinance

Councilwoman Inman indicated that she spoke to Mr. Jhavon Green/LDDA about insight taken away from a visit to Monroe Georgia some time ago, and the need to address the vacant buildings in the downtown area, Monroe Georgia experienced the same issues as downtown Lithonia. Would like to see measures taken within the next 2 months. Councilwoman Howard feels this is a great idea and suggested an annual inspection on all vacant buildings to ensure code (Councilwoman Inman indicated the assessment of a fee). Mayor Reynolds recommended that fees assessed are not minimal and asked if council could review Monroe's ordinance and get moving on this before the fall, and revisit next meeting.

d. Monetizing Digital Sign

Councilwoman Inman is proposing a preferred rate of \$50/month for City of Lithonia businesses for the first year, businesses outside of the city would be charged more, 12 businesses for the year, would love to make this an action item at the next meeting, additional fees if graphics are involved, get thoughts to move forward. Mayor Reynolds asked council to be mindful that business license fees are going to increase. Councilwoman Sheppard asked who would manage the digital sign, Mayor Reynolds indicated that City Administrator Sands would, and stated the item would be on the next meeting agenda.

e. 3-Way Stop Sign at Swift and Main Street

Councilwoman Howard had a meeting with Hari/Lowe Engineers, suggesting that stop signs are moved forward closer to the intersection at the railroad sign area location of Swift and Main, for a 3-way stop. Councilman Honore stated this would prevent any traffic accidents in that area. Councilwoman Inman feels that it is a good idea. Councilwoman Sheppard agrees, it is long overdue. Councilwoman Wynn agrees with everyone to make it a 3-way stop. Councilwoman Howard additionally stated the engineers also cited the intersection at Max Cleland, new lines repainted, handicap ramp re-directed. Mayor Reynolds suggested placing the Max Cleland area on next agenda. Councilwoman Sheppard asked about funding for the project in the budget. Councilwoman Howard stated the cost would be \$6k for all corrections to include Max Cleland, further suggesting a Building Fund is created, Splost could be a possibility. Councilwoman Sheppard is recommending to place the stop sign up for now and deal with the upgrades later based on the funding piece. City Administrator Sands will provide council with the estimates provided by Lowes and will be discussed during the next meeting.

VIII. Old Business

a. Old City Hall Building

Councilwoman Howard suggested that funds are needed for the Old City Hall Building and Masonic Lodge as a building or construction fund to work on projects, should be included in the budget. Mayor Reynolds indicated that someone wants to rent the Old City Hall Building

b. Masonic Lodge Repairs

Mayor Reynolds indicated the window coverings need to be replaced, City Administrator Sands will follow up with Public Works.

IX. Other Business

a. City Administrator Report

City engineer contract services will be presented at the next meeting, A Defensive Drivers Course will take place on July 14 from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm and include a working lunch, 6-hour course in council chambers for anyone who can operate a city vehicle. Spoke with the attorney regarding the liens on the abandoned buildings. Spoke in more detail with zoning and the attorney on hotel/motel rentals. Reminding council to start working on the proposed uses by right before the moratorium ends, 60 days remaining. Met with park management last week and as we regroup, recommending to not move forward with the contract for the park manager until some kind of

organization is met, having a park ranger to be on site at the beginning and end of events. Would like to part ways with park management until some things are resolved. Councilman Honore stated that insurance companies offer a 10-50% discount when taking the course, send the certificate to your insurance company, good for 2 years, then must be renewed.

b. Police Department Report

Interim Chief of Police Dejarnette stated Department of Public Safety came out and assisted with the enforcement of no trucks as a joint operation, DOPS posted on their social media, will do this once every 2-3 weeks, will also send out state troopers, went over well, very positive. The shooter of a 15-year-old girl was identified. Extended an invitation to 2 of the trucking companies to join the council meeting calls and voice their opinions. All no truck signs are up to date coming into the city. Hired a new full-time officer today.

c. Mayors Report, Councilmember District Update

Mayor Reynolds mentioned that she hopes to fellowship with council during the upcoming Savannah convention. The senior fashion show has been canceled for now because of the heat advisory. Great time with all the Juneteenth events, grateful for the friends of St Paul. Met with the park manager, Ms. Annette Radford regarding the issues with event organizers, sees the need to make some changes for the better to be discussed further in an open meeting.

Councilwoman Sheppard stated that another conversation is needed based on the feedback from the Colorgasm organizers. Councilwoman Wynn agrees with Councilwoman Sheppard, very concerned, open to hear what the public has to say, asking that to be very tasteful about how we say things, and the need not to tear anyone's character down. Councilwoman Inman would like to come together for dinner while in Savannah, perhaps on Sunday. Councilman Honore missed this month's LDDA meeting will have info to share at next meeting.

Councilwoman Howard indicated during the last Advisory Committee meeting the abundance issue of rodents in the city was addressed, Dekalb County can assist, and she will be meeting with Mr. Monson and someone from Dekalb on how to handle the issue. Interim Chief DJ handled Ms. Harper's mention of the 18-wheeler parked at Rock Chapel. Mr. Norris (Public Works) cleared out the dumping which took place on Parkway at Good News Church and placed a barrier to prevent any further dumping. Mayor Reynolds indicated it was someone from Gwinnett county. Councilwoman Howard indicated a need to address the speeding on Bruce Street, and the path behind the library on Max Cleland should be closed as it poses a danger. Councilwoman Wynn concurred both areas to be dangerous, the need to keep people safe, and something needs to be placed in those areas. Mayor Reynolds indicated it may be a concern if the Max Cleland path is closed off completely. Councilwoman Sheppard suggested placing a flasher in the area on Bruce Street to prevent parking in front of driveways, Councilwoman Wynn purchased "do not park in the driveway" signs on Bruce Street. Councilwoman Howard will check with public works to see if any additional signs are available, "slow down children at play" near the park to make people mindful. Councilwoman Sheppard suggested obtaining signatures to place a speed bump in the area for prevention.

VIII. Executive Session for Personnel (NONE)

IX. Adjournment

Councilwoman Howard motioned to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Sheppard; the motion was approved by a vote of 5-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.