



**CITY OF LITHONIA**  
**MINUTES–CITY COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING**  
**Monday, March 1, 2021 @ 5:30 PM**

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

The City Council Virtual Meeting was called to order at 5:36pm by Mayor Shameka S. Reynolds. A roll call was taken, and the following City Council Members were present: Diane Howard, Darold Honore, Amelia Inman, Vanneriah Wynn, and Ric Dodd.

**II. Moment of Silence**

A moment of silence was observed.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

Councilman Honore motioned to approve the agenda with the following changes, move up the discussion of presentation time before presentations, remove discussion of Roberts Rules of Order to Work Session, under Other Business remove Courtyard Parking to Councilwoman Amelia Inman updates, the motion was seconded by Councilman Dodd for discussion. Councilwoman Inman requested the courtyard parking topic remain where it is for further discussion and to provide proper closure. Councilwoman Howard would like to add Cities Week to the Work Session agenda; the agenda was approved by a vote of 3-0. Councilman Dodd and Councilwoman Inman were opposed.

**IV. Approval of Council Meeting Minutes**

**a. February 15, 2021 – City Council Work Session Virtual Meeting Minutes (5:30 PM)**

Councilman Dodd motioned to approve the February 15, 2021 City Council Work Session Virtual Meeting Minutes (5:30 pm), the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn; and approved by a vote of 5-0.

**b. February 18, 2021 – Special Called Virtual Meeting Approval to Re-Finance, Annexation, Film Application Minutes (3:00 PM)**

Councilman Dodd motioned to approve the February 18, 2021 Special Called Virtual Meeting Minutes (3:00 pm) for Approval to Re-Finance, Annexation, Film Application Approval, the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore; and approved by a vote of 5-0.

**V. Public Comments Response (Limit 2-minutes)**

Ms. Melody Rouse, Wendover Granite Crossing, stated that local businesses are using their compactor to dispose of garbage, and maintenance spent 4.5 hours cleaning up extra trash recently from one of the event centers, have incurred an increase in their sanitation bill. Concerned that businesses do not have trash dumpster to discard of their trash and bulk items which could lead to infestation, looking for a peaceful resolution.

Ms. Olithia Reid, 2500 Parkway Drive, complimented the city maintenance crew for keeping the streets and park clean and erecting street sign, concerned about code enforcement in the residential area, more is needed for homeowners, Main Street looks good. The out-of-town landlords need to be contacted about the order and care of their property both residential and business. She is being inundated with rats from the home located at 6810 Parkway abhorring food items in the backyard, there are urban campers in the park and suggested that the Chief of Police work together with legal counsel on an ordinance to address this.

Ms. Yvonne Holmes wants to know if there is a resolution yet on the sign for parking behind her businesses for loading/unloading, the Fire Marshall said there should be no issue with it, could be a federal violation for handicap person protection.

Ms. Sharon Inman, Johnson Street, complimented the Mayor and Council on doing a great job and expressed wishes that as a resident and listening during these calls that respect be given. There is a

code enforcement issue again at Martin Tire Shop with the tires there are rats and with summer coming bugs will be a problem, as a resident when walking in the neighborhood the location looks like a junkyard.

**VI. Presentation (Limit 3 minutes per person)**

**a. Mr. Paul Kobetz: Ozark Film Application**

Paul and Josh Forshee were on the call to present Ozark for Netflix, 4<sup>th</sup> and final season, filming driving scenes on Main Street, seeking full control for safety and continuity with a request to close a section of Main Street between Max Cleland and Swift Street on March 23. Prepared to speak with the business liaisons and make any arrangements. Still working on the base camp location. Filming for 10 hours 7am-5pm.

**b. Mr. Clinton Garibaldi: Park Reservation Application(s), April 2,3,4, 2021, June 13, 2021, September 19, 2021**

Organizing a day weekend event April 2 (3-9pm) April 3 (11a-4pm) April 4 (4-9pm), June 13 (4-9pm) for a summer breeze event, adding the date of September 19 (11a-9pm), covid guidelines in accordance with CDC were submitted with the application.

**c. Ms. Ajima Witter: Park Reservation Application, May 30, 2021**

Colorgasm event held at the park since 2016, covid guidelines in accordance with CDC were submitted with the application, the State does not provide a limit on number of patrons that can attend an event, although more precaution on sanitizing and mask wearing. Anticipates 250 attendees.

**d. Mr. Leroux Duncan: Park Reservation Application, July 3, 2021**

Cooler Sandz event since 2019, adhering to covid protocols, up to 300 attendees, looking forward to making Lithonia their home for this vibrant event.

**e. Mr. Dennis Allen: Friends of Lithonia Park Update**

Concerned about the use of motor bikes on the field is becoming an issue. Requesting that City of Lithonia pursue the acquisition of Lithonia Middle School stadium and adjacent baseball field through use of IGA through DeKalb County School District, would require legal involvement. When the city hosts events at the park seeking amicable respect for field use of athletic events. Received an equipment grant from Dick's Sporting Goods to launch a baseball/softball program for distribution on Thursday evening for 50 girls and 75 boys.

**VII. Action Item**

**a. Ozark Film Application**

Councilwoman Howard motioned to approve the Ozark Film Application, the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore, and approved by a vote of 4-0. Councilman Dodd opposed.

**b. Park Reservation Application(s): Mr. Clinton Garibaldi**

Councilman Dodd motioned to approve the park reservation applications for Mr. Clinton Garibaldi for discussion, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Howard.

Councilman Dodd withdrew his motion.

Councilwoman Howard motioned to approve April 2-3, June 13, sept 19 with the ability to cancel or postpone according to any new covid regulations, the motion was seconded by Councilman Dodd, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

*Mr. Garibaldi expressed consideration that his event is a 3-day event of preference, if the dates need to change to accommodate 2-days that his preference is April 3-4. Mayor*

*Reynolds indicated that this could return to council and further discussed in a Special Called Meeting at a very near future date.*

**c. Park Reservation Application: Ms. Ajima Witter**

Councilwoman Howard motioned to approve the May 30 park reservation application for discussion for Ms. Ajima Witter with the disclaimer to have the ability to cancel or postpone according to any new covid regulations, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

*Ms. Witter expressed concern; what type of notice will the promoter receive? Mayor Reynolds suggested putting a contract or agreement in place with guidelines that will protect the promoter and the City in the event the covid numbers show an increase causing an event to be cancelled or postponed. Councilwoman Inman and Wynn agree, and that a meeting should take place as soon as possible. Councilman Dodd stated that it would be in best interest to monitor the numbers through the state, county, and CDC guidelines, check on the event insurance and have a special called meeting.*

**d. Park Reservation Application: Mr. Leroux Duncan**

Councilwoman Howard motioned to approve the park reservation application for Mr. Leroux Duncan July 3, the motion was seconded by Councilman Dodd, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

**e. Asset Disposition Services Agreement**

Councilwoman Howard motioned to approve the Asset Disposition Services Agreement, the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

**f. Film Permit Fees**

Councilwoman Howard motioned to approve the film permit fees presented, the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

*Councilwoman Inman expressed concern that business owners receive notification of sidewalk closure and Mayor Reynolds suggested that this topic is discussed during the Work Session.*

**g. Auditor Request For Proposal**

Councilwoman Howard motioned to approve the request for a proposal for a new auditor, the motion was seconded by Councilman Dodd, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

**h. Resolution No. 21-03-01 Comprehensive Plan Update**

Councilwoman Inman motioned to approve Resolution No. 21-03-01 with the correction of the date, the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

**i. Business Sanitation**

Councilwoman Howard motioned to erect a no dumping sign at all large dumpsters, and to invoke a fine of \$200.00 for any business or resident who illegally dumps trash, the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

**j. Police Fleet**

Councilman Dodd motioned to approve the police fleet for discussion, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Inman.

Councilman Dodd (YES) reiterated back to his comments during the budget meeting that it is feasible where some funds are available out of storm water. Councilwoman Howard (NO)

reiterated back to the budget meeting and stated the city's financial advisor strongly suggested the City hold off on making any large purchases. Councilman Honore (NO) expressed a concern about the city's recent payroll deficit of \$48,000.00. Councilwoman Inman (YES) acknowledged the deficit with payroll however with things being put in place will make up for the lack of that, that storm water funds can be used, and the emphasis of the goal of annexation being impactful in the very near future. Councilwoman Wynn (NO) would rather wait until the latter part of the year.

**k. Referendum for November 2021**

Councilman Dodd motioned to add annexation to the referendum for November 2021, the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

**VIII. Other Business**

~~a. Mrs. Yvonne Holmes: No Parking, Loading/Unloading~~ *moved to Councilwoman Inman Update*

**b. Addressing Blight on Main Street (Commercial Bldg.)**

Kazemde Ajamu (LBA) and Jhavon Green (LDDA/LBA) prior to the meeting provided Mayor and Council with documentation that GMA provided during a meeting that took place in 2019 to include City Administrator Sands. The documentation provided evidence on what other cities are doing to address blight by invoking consequences through the city's ordinances. The Roundtable provides a platform for further discussion before taking action to adopt an ordinance that will address these issues in the business and residential communities. Councilwoman Inman suggested the involvement of code enforcement and would like to revisit the adoption of International codes or DeKalb County codes. Councilman Dodd stated emphasis on millage rate in accordance with proposed language for the ordinance. Councilman Honore and Councilwoman Howard agree to move this item to the work session for review of the ordinance.

**c. Wendover (Granite Crossing)**

Brian Hartnett reflected on the partnership accomplishments with the City of Lithonia and acknowledged the scholarship fund conversation previously presented during the construction phase of Wendover to offset some of the tax abatement in place for the pollution mediation. For the last 3 years Wendover has been in a legal battle with DeKalb County, who incorrectly assessed their tax value which conflicts with the state statute for affordable housing low-income properties. Brian is asking for City involvement during the appeal process (can provide more detail and a written narrative of explanation) for assistance when approaching the County Commissioners, to have them look at their County Assessor's formula of charging a market rate property value that does not have rent rate restrictions. Once this is resolved they can revisit scholarship, community investment, or any program that Wendover and the City can develop together for residents.

~~d. Roberts Rules of Order~~ *moved to March 15, 2021 Work Session*

**e. Reduction of Presentations from 8 minutes to 3 minutes**

Councilman Honore motioned to change the presentation time from 8 minutes to 3 minutes, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Howard, and approved by a vote of 3-0. Councilwoman Inman abstained; Councilman Dodd was opposed.

*This item was voted on prior to Presentations.*

**f. Traffic Light – Family Dollar Area**

Councilwoman Inman expressed concern as a safety issue in the area directly across the street from Family Dollar at the corner where the tax office is located and if the Splost Fund could be used to obtain a traffic light. Councilman Honore stated that a stop sign was replaced with a yield sign, with the stop sign there was a break in traffic. Councilwoman Wynn feels it should be looked at. Mayor Reynolds has a concern about the Klondike/Main intersection as well and indicated having a study performed. Chief Pollard suggested a 3-way stop sign at Klondike/Main to allow for breaks in traffic. Mayor Reynolds would like the topic to return to the work session.

**g. City Administrator Report**

Update with TAN, Citizens Trust received the information, waiting to hear back. For restructuring the loan, a bond lawyer is needed, Denmark's office suggested the law office of Jim Woodard. Great meeting with Dekalb regarding fire hydrants that are moving to the color silver with the suggestion for a citizens group that could volunteer to do the painting, Dekalb will purchase the paint, Councilman Honore can volunteer the Boy Scouts group. Councilman Dodd wanted to know if the hydrant pressures were tested throughout the city, City Administrator Sands will put in a work order request for this, Councilman Dodd wants a report. Website on the final stages with plans to send everyone a test run to preview. Working on other projects that fall under storm water. Quotes for the drain on Swift Street were obtained, asking for direction if council wants to pursue the owner of the truck to pay for the repair. CA Sands and CA McGurn are working with Dekalb on obtaining a flow chart on how storm water funds are disbursed. CA Sands is asking for guidance on masonic lodge insurance reimbursement to move forward on the work or wait on the TAN funding.

**h. Police Department Report – Code Enforcement**

Chief Pollard stated the code enforcement officer has been making some rounds, he has been speaking with DeKalb's code enforcement seeking advice in some areas, there are plans to send him to training. On Swift Street there are 2 locations where 25 cars have been given 3 weeks to move the vehicles or citations will be issued, cars on Rock Chapel, Parkview Drive. Trying to figure out a way to deal with the rodent situation on Phillips Street. Councilman Honore expressed concern that the code enforcement report was inadequately prepared and asked that it not happen again. Councilwoman Inman would like to get code enforcements perspective on the type of code that should be used international standard or Dekalb's, Chief Pollard redirected back to council for discussion of preferences. Councilwoman Wynn is asking about the likelihood of a community ambassador's program to involve citizens, Chief Pollard indicated that he could dedicate a section on the Nixel site for citizens to provide tips. Councilwoman Wynn asked for an update on 7458 Conyers Street.

PD Report, the monthly GCIC reporting at \$4,900.00, fines were at \$1,500.00. The police report is forthcoming, some of the information must be redacted. Ms. Olithia Reid (resident) is asking if Dekalb County Rodent Department can come out, a few years ago Dekalb partnered with Lithonia and performed home inspections. Chief Pollard will reach out to Dekalb.

**i. Annexation Update**

Councilman Dodd confirmed that ads were placed in the Champion and On Common Ground, and one week away from knocking on doors.

**j. Mayors Report, Councilmember District Updates**

Mayor Reynolds made a recommendation to begin a discussion on finding a manager for the

park, with placement on the March 15 Work Session Agenda. Councilwoman Howard had no updates. Councilman Honore is continuing to speak with residents about covid, mostly young persons, with upcoming plans to sponsor a movie night and ice cream social. Councilwoman Inman indicated that pictures of the area on Hollingsworth where the grease trap is located for Von's Bar-b-que were provided to Mayor and Council in a group text and illustrate where they can and cannot park-wants to place this on the agenda again reiterating the value of everyone for respect and fairness, access is needed into that area for handicap persons only needing 20 minutes to do so. Councilwoman Wynn stated that tomorrow night a virtual call will take place as a forum for citizens and Dekalb's Sustainability and Planning group on the topic of the truck stop-it would really mean a lot to have everyone call in and to let others know. Councilman Dodd reiterating that everyone attend that call tomorrow, and that Bill Johnston (COL Zoning Administrator) is checking on the procedure for the rezoning as is. Mayor Reynolds closed by informing everyone of a March 27 Council Retreat with GMA, not sure of the time yet which is forthcoming.

**IX. Executive Session (NONE)**

**X. Adjournment**

Councilwoman Howard motioned to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Inman; the motion was approved by a vote of 5-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:09 pm.